

Seabrook mayor thinks early council promise is still legally binding

By MARK TOOHEY
Staff Writer

The Seabrook city council has voted to override a veto by Mayor Jack Campbell, and recommend that the Texas Air Control Board

(TACB) deny a Bayport construction permit to B. F. Goodrich. Council voted to pass the resolution last week claiming the B. F. Goodrich plant would have a "serious and adverse impact" on the city of Seabrook.

Campbell, who was absent from last week's council session, said he vetoed the resolution because he feared the city might be sued by B. F. Goodrich.

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"I live in Seabrook too and I'm not in favor of chemical plants being on my back door either," Campbell said.

"But I don't want to get sued. I'd like an opinion from the city attorney," Campbell added.

Before Martin could respond, Councilman Joe Pirtle said it is "unfair" to "dump a political opinion on the city attorney."

"Anyway, we can be sued for breathing too deeply or for walking across the street," said Pirtle.

"The city attorney is here to give us a legal opinion. His opinion will not affect my vote," Pirtle added.

The threat of a B. F. Goodrich law suit is just a "smoke screen", according to Pirtle.

"Mayor, you are all for industrial development and I am too. If it's clean," said Pirtle.

"But the plant will manufacture benzene which may cause cancer," he added.

Campbell cited an industrial agreement council made with Friendwood Development Com-

pany in 1972 which indicated the city's support of Bayport industrial development.

"But this council is not silenced by what another council did seven years ago," said Pirtle.

"I don't like industrial districts when they avoid paying taxes," he added.

Pirtle said council has the responsibility of protecting the "health, safety and welfare" of its residents.

Councilman Don McCarty told Campbell the city could not be held liable to the TACB decision on the B. F. Goodrich request.

"We're a party to the hearing and cannot be held liable," McCarty said.

City Attorney Burke Martin explained Campbell could veto council's decision again.

"But if the council passes it again, it will take effect," he said.

Council will meet again in regular session at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 7 at City Hall, 1700 First Street.

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