

# Windsor letter gives details about proposed park land swap

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Facebook page.

"Here is the official proposal from Windsor," Toups wrote. "These are the facts, let the people decide."

The letter, drafted by Ajinomoto Windsor general counsel Paul Taylor, states the company is planning a \$40 million-\$60 million expansion of the 131,000-square-foot facility in Lampasas.

"This expansion will create approximately 100,000 square feet of additional production area and allow Ajinomoto to add two or three additional food production lines to the five lines currently in operation," the letter states.

Other additions, according to the letter, would include space for new receiving docks and new parking spaces for employees.

The company would like to start major construction by October 2016, complete it by November 2017 and start new production by December 2017, according to a fact sheet at the end of the letter.

The proposed expansion is projected to create as many as 200 jobs -- "about 100 within one year or so and another 100 over time as business develops," the letter says.

"The bulk of these new jobs," it continues, "will be entry-level jobs at an initial hourly wage of about \$20 (including benefits). Some additional higher paying skilled labor and management jobs will also be created."

The letter states Ajinomoto Windsor is looking for a location in the United States to add production capacity. The company has identified the Lampasas facility as the "top choice" for the expansion. The document, however, states the only property in Lampasas the company can use for its expansion is the park land across Second Street immediately north of the existing food plant.

For the manufacturing facility to expand across Second Street, Ajinomoto Windsor would need the city to vacate Second Street between Pecan and Hackberry streets, and relocate all utilities.

The letter also explains a pro-

posed land swap.

As the Dispatch Record has reported previously, Ajinomoto Windsor would like to buy about two acres on the south side of Campbell Park.

"Although owned by the city and technically part of the park, the Park Parcel is currently not being used by the Park," the letter states. "Indeed, due to the geography of the area -- in particular, the creek that flows east and west just north of this parcel -- this land is not conducive to use by the city as part of the statue garden or the park in general."

In exchange for the two acres of park land it would like to buy, Ajinomoto Windsor has proposed to give the city a 2.33-acre property -- next to the park along Live Oak Street -- that includes the old Santa Fe train depot.

"The owner of this property is a company by the name of Hardin Investments," Ajinomoto Windsor's letter states. "Hardin is prepared to sell us this parcel of land (the 'Hardin Parcel') and we are prepared to purchase it

from Hardin if the city approves the overall plan. Ajinomoto and the city would essentially swap the Hardin Parcel for the Park Parcel."

Because of geographic factors, Ajinomoto Windsor's letter states, the train depot property "is more easily integrated into the park and statue garden [than is the land Ajinomoto wants to buy from the city], if the city were to choose to move in that direction."

Also, the company states the train depot is in good condition and could be preserved for use as a "historical site and tourist attraction as well as a public meeting area."

The letter notes the depot property is slightly larger than the land Ajinomoto Windsor wants to buy from the city and has a higher appraised value.

"So even if the city chooses not to use the Hardin Parcel for the development/expansion of the park, the city could sell the parcel for a profit, essentially converting real property to cash," the letter states.

Along with proposing to swap

the train depot property for about two acres on the south side of Campbell Park, Ajinomoto Windsor is prepared, the letter states, to spend as much as \$300,000 "for specific park developments."

After explaining the company's proposal, the document emphasizes the importance of prompt action.

"We need a final decision from the city on this proposal as soon as possible," the letter states. "Due to a variety of internal business changes at Ajinomoto, we need to select an expansion location and complete the one-year expansion project by summer of 2017, so time is short."

"We urge the council to move on this decision as quickly as possible," the letter continues. "If we cannot get approval from the city council soon, we will be forced to consider other locations for this expansion, including our existing facility in Mississippi."

In an earlier interview, City Manager Finley deGraffenried told the Dispatch Record that state law requires all sales or

conveyances of park land to be approved by voters. The City Council recently voted not to include the proposed land sale on the May 7 ballot, however, so the next opportunity for the plan to be presented to voters would be in November.

Asked if the delay has made Ajinomoto Windsor back off from its Lampasas proposal, the firm's attorney said the company has not made a final decision.

"We're working closely with Mayor Toups, the City Council and the city manager to find a way to do the expansion in Lampasas, which we think will add significant jobs and spur general economic growth there," Taylor said.

In a Facebook message to the Dispatch Record, Toups also confirmed city officials are continuing to talk with Ajinomoto Windsor representatives about possibilities for expansion in Lampasas.

Taylor said the company is "very much committed to Lampasas and working with the city to find a way to do this that is mutually beneficial."

# Commissioners discuss jail, worker's compensation policy

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close the jail down and depopulate it completely," the judge said.

During the public comment portion of Monday's meeting, one audience member spoke about the jail.

Kempner resident Bobby Carroll -- who recently won the Republican primary to succeed Vincent when the commissioner retires at the end of the year -- said he thinks county officials should spend more time looking at all jail options before paying for a schematic design and cost estimate for a new facility.

Carroll emphasized he voted for a 2007 bond proposal that would have funded a new jail, and he said he recognizes the need for a new facility.

"I'm very much for a jail ... maybe not today but in the very near future," Carroll said. "I think it's very well needed."

On the other hand, he said if the county seeks plans and a cost estimate now and then has to spend a year or so resolving funding questions, the estimate could be obsolete by the time jail construction could start.

"So, I think we just need to look into it a little bit deeper," Carroll said.

In other business, the court voted 4-0 to supplement the pay an animal control officer received when he was out of work and receiving worker's compensation.

Worker's compensation pays 70 percent of the salary of an employee injured in the line of duty. Vincent and Munn said in the past the county has paid the additional 30 percent so employees' pay does not decrease while they recover from a work-related injury.

In an effort to be consistent with past action, the Commissioners Court voted to provide the supplement for the animal control officer.

Human Resources Director Dorothy Person emphasized that the employee in question did not ask the county to give him more than he already has received. Ms. Person said the question of a supplement arose because the county auditor's office requested clarification for payroll purposes.

Although the Commissioners Court followed precedent in its vote Monday, officials found no record of a written policy that addresses supplementation of worker's compensation checks.

The county may approach the issue differently in the future. At an upcoming meeting, the Commissioners Court plans to consider setting a county policy of not supplementing worker's compensation payments.

Ms. Person recommended that policy, as she said the majority of Texas counties and other employers do not supplement worker's compensation checks.

Ms. Person said Lampasas County has been fortunate that its employees try to return to work as quickly as possible after medical absences. She said providing full pay to those on worker's compensation could create a large cost for the county, however -- particularly if

employees do not feel a strong incentive to return to their duties after an injury.

Ms. Person also said the county's rates for worker's compensation will increase if employees take a long time returning to their jobs. The county pays about \$40,000 per year for worker's compensation insurance, she said.

Vincent defended the practice of supplementing worker's compensation. The commissioner said providing the 30 percent of pay is a way for the county to show appreciation for its employees.

Ivey, on the other hand, said he opposes supplementation.

Lindeman said he would like for the county to aid its employees, but it is important to consider long-term liabilities.

On another matter, the court voted 3-0, with Vincent abstaining, to pass a resolution stating that property at FM 580 West and County Road 1403 in Nix is surplus property the county does not need.

The property by the old service station and store used to be part of FM 580, Boultinghouse said. The judge said nearby property owners would like to purchase the land from the Texas Department of Transportation and close it off to the public.

TxDOT has said it does not need the property, Boultinghouse said, and the resolution states the county agrees with disposal of the property.

Vincent, however, said it bothers him to pass a resolution saying the state may sell the property because the county has no need for it. The commissioner said the county in the past has been required to pay various costs associated with land acquisition for state roads, such as FM 580.

In items discussed briefly Monday, the Commissioners Court:

- awarded a contract for asphalt and emulsion to Ergon, the county's current provider.

Also Monday, the court discussed but took no action on:

- two matters relating to private roads.
- the position of county fire marshal.

The county has not had a fire marshal since Gene Harrison retired in 2012, and officials have talked about appointing one. Ivey and Lindeman, however, said they believe the county is doing fine with its current arrangement of contracting with the Lampasas Fire Department for fire inspections and investigations.

the appointment of Lindeman to sell surplus property in Precinct 2.

Lindeman said Precinct 2 has moved its precinct barn operations to Lometa, where the city donated property for a new barn. The commissioner said it may be possible for the county to sell the old precinct barn property in Nix.

On Monday, Lindeman said the effort is "very much in its

infancy" and the county needed to clarify whether it actually owns the land on which the barn in Nix sits. When contacted again Wednesday afternoon, Lindeman said the county has verified it owns the property. He said the Commissioners Court likely will discuss at its March 28 meeting how it will sell the old precinct barn property.

Septic system inspector F.A. Taylor's request to be paid \$1,600 per month instead of submitting documentation for payment each time he provides services for the county. The proposed monthly payment would equate to \$19,200 per year.

Munn said last fiscal year, the county paid Taylor \$17,655.

## How Should You Respond to Market "Correction"?

As an investor, you may be gaining familiarity with the term "market correction." But what does it mean? And, more importantly, what does it mean to you?

A correction occurs when a key index, such as the S&P 500, declines at least 10% from its previous high. A correction, by definition, is short-term in nature and has historically happened fairly regularly -- about once a year. However, over the past several years, we've experienced fewer corrections, so when we have one now, it seems particularly jarring to investors.

How should you respond to a market correction? The answer may depend, to some extent, on your stage of life.

- If you're still working ... If you are in the early or middle parts of your working life, you might not have to concern yourself much about a market correction because you have decades to overcome a short-term downturn. Instead of selling stocks, and stock-based investments, to supposedly "cut your losses," you may find that now is a good time to buy more shares of quality companies, when their price is down.
- Also, you may want to use the opportunity of a correction to become aware of the need to periodically review and rebalance your portfolio. Stocks, and investments containing stocks, often perform well before a correction. If their price has risen greatly, they may account for a greater percentage of the total value of your portfolio -- so much so, in fact, that you might become "overweighted" in stocks, relative to your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon. That's why it's important for you to proactively rebalance your portfolio -- or, during a correction, the market may do it for you. To cite one aspect of rebalancing, if your portfolio ever does become too "stock-heavy," you may need to add some bonds or other fixed-rate vehicles. Not only can these investments help keep your portfolio in balance, but they also may hold up better during a correction.
- If you're retired ... After you retire, you may need to take money from your investment accounts -- that is, sell some investments -- to help pay for your cost of living. Ideally, however, you don't want to sell stocks, or stock-based vehicles, during a correction -- because when you do, you may be "selling low." (Remember the most common rule of investing: Buy low and sell high. It's not always easy to follow, but it's still pretty good advice.)

So, to avoid being forced into selling, you need to be prepared. During your retirement years, try to keep at least a year's worth of cash instruments on hand as well as short-term fixed income investments. By having this money to draw on, you may be able to leave your stocks alone and give them a chance to recover, post-correction.

And it's important to maintain a reasonable percentage of stocks, and stock-based vehicles, in your portfolio, even during retirement -- because these investments may provide the growth necessary to help keep you ahead of inflation. Consequently, as a retiree, you should have a balance of stocks and stock-based vehicles, along with fixed-income vehicles, such as bonds, certificates of deposit, government securities and so on.

Being prepared can help you get through a correction -- no matter where you are on life's journey.

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