

By Jan Rahn

Managing Editor

An agenda item that had been discussed for several weeks was approved by Grant City Council during their recent meeting last week. The well pump at Pheasant Run Golf Course, north of Grant, will be replaced in the near future.

In a 3-1 vote, council members approved replacement of the well pump during their April 9 meeting.

Council accepted a bid from Sargent Irrigation to do the work after lots of negotiation and reworking of the original bid.

Council members Tim Pofahl (who conducted the meeting in the absence of Mayor Mike Wyatt), Kirk York and Ben Long voted for the pump replacement. Councilman Bob Tatum cast the nay vote because the cost is not in the budget.

After negotiations and taking rebates and trade-ins into consideration, replacement of the well pump will cost the city roughly between \$63,000-\$64,000.

Total cost of the project is approximately \$78,000.

The golf club has pledged \$15,000 toward the project—funding they will acquire through cart sales, donations and possible fundraisers.

Members of the golf club were present to express their opinion and desire for a pump with variable frequency drive (VFD) and the high efficiency motor option—which was also recommended by Glenn Taubenheim of Sargent Irrigation Company who is doing the work.

Taubenheim said the VFD is the best option because of electrical savings and its ability to control pressure during different seasons of the year.

According to the specs on the bid, Sargent Irrigation will have the new pump installed by June 28.

Water Tower Project

Grant's water tower is scheduled to be painted sometime after June 1.

For a minimum of 25-30 days, possibly longer, the water tower will be empty.

City Administrator Dana Harris and members of the council have spent much time discussing options for backup power to pump water for city residents in the event electricity goes out while the water tower is empty.

Harris has researched options of providing water during the upcoming painting and maintenance project, in addition to assuring that if the city is ever left without backup power in the future—whether because of an emergency or for maintenance/repairs—residents will have water.

The 10-year contract with Utility Service Company, Inc., of Georgia which council approved back in August 2012 says the water tower will be taken out of service for at least four days every other year for the duration of the contract.

Care and maintenance of the city's 200,000 gallon water tank includes exterior/interior painting, repairs, cleaning and annual inspections.

Harris presented her findings to the council on three separate options: 1) buying a generator, 2) renting a generator, 3) renting a tractor with a PTO drive to pump the well in place of a generator.

Harris said that even though the money to purchase a generator is not in the budget, she would like to see the city invest in one.

“If you buy one you have it 365 days a year for any type of emergency,” she said. Examples include loss of power from summer storms or winter storms.

Harris pointed out that Nebraska Health and Human Services’ proposed changes to their regulations include requiring communities to have an auxiliary power source for water supplies within two years. Although the measure has not been passed, purchasing a generator for backup now would place the City of Grant ahead of what could be forced upon them in the future.

Council members gave 4-0 approval to seek bids on purchasing a generator to get a feel for the cost, which is probably in the neighborhood of \$36,000 or above.

Library Roof

The weather is not cooperating right now for workers to get started on replacement of the roof at Hastings Memorial Library.

Harris said according to specifications of the bid, the work will be completed by May 15.

Council awarded the bid for the project to Weathercraft Roofing Company of Ogallala during their Feb. 12 meeting at a cost of \$29,920.

In Other Business

- City Administrator Dana Harris reported to council: 1) An ADA plan mandated by the Nebraska Department of Roads is being pursued, 2) Work is underway on sewer lagoons south of town.

- Council unanimously approved publication of an Arbor Day Proclamation. Arbor Day in Nebraska is Friday, April 26.

- Council members voted 3-1 to pass an ordinance vacating the alley west of Perkins County Health Services. York voted against the ordinance.

The decision was made to give the alley to the hospital for the upcoming expansion project. Utilities will be rerouted at no cost to the city and the hospital will be responsible for the cost. Representing Perkins County Health Services, Tim Rowley and Jeremy Klima were present to report on the progress of moving the utilities in the alley. Great Plains Communications has already done so; Source Gas will be taking care of their portion soon.

The sewer line in the alley will be moved during the first phase of the hospital’s construction project so that the cost of removal can be tied together into the first phase of the expansion. Until that time, the city has an easement on the property.

- Water, lotto and enforcement reports for the month of March were released.

—Water: There were 4,228,400 gallons of water consumed during the month of March which is a decrease of 582,400 gallons compared to what was consumed during February.

In a year-to-year comparison there were 4,228,000 gallons used in March of this year compared to 5,055,200 consumed in March 2012.

—Lotto: Sales of lotto during March at DJs Bar and Grill totaled \$3,457 with a payout of \$1,599.50 leaving a net of \$1,857.50. An amount of \$6 went unclaimed.