

***By Jan Rahn***

***Managing Editor***

Further discussion was held on a possible water rate increase by Grant City Council members during their regular meeting Tuesday, Oct. 12.

The purpose of an increase would be to have funds on hand for major projects down the road.

The discussion centered around whether it's better to try to build a cash reserve to pay for a major repair by raising rates versus waiting until something big happens and taking out a bond to pay for it.

Rate increases could be as much as eight or nine dollars a month for water users if council decides to raise rates enough to build the reserve.

Water rates have not increased for over five years.

"We've been living on equity," said Mayor Mike Wyatt. "Now it's time to pay the piper."

During a meeting in late September, council members took a look at water, sewer, waste and electric rates, breaking down the city's future infrastructure needs into facilities, equipment, inventory and potential projects.

At the city's next meeting on Oct. 26, council members will be presented with a resolution concerning water rate increases, said City Superintendent Tyson McGreer. It will be up to

members to decide whether to increase rates the first of the year.

Some of the items listed for potential repair or installation in the future include a backup generator for well six at an estimated cost of \$60,000; a new water main from First to Eighth Street on Washington which is a \$240,000 cost estimate; \$90,000 for a water main replacement on Fifth Street from Central to Logan; a new water main from First to Eighth on Logan that could cost as much as \$250,000; a water main on Sherman, \$130,000; all of Sixth Street on the west side of Central, \$110,000; and a new main from Hall to Warren on Third Street that is estimated at \$30,000.

Among the top 10 itemized projects for the water department was water meters at a cost of \$700,000.

Next spring the water tower is scheduled for cleaning and inspection which has not been done for seven years. The fee of \$10,000 is included in the budget.

Also listed on the 10-year plan is repainting the water tower—an estimated cost of \$75,000. The 200,000 gallon capacity tower was last painted in 1991.

## **In Other Business**

Other agenda items at last week's meeting included:

- Members were informed of a new Eagle Scout project slated to begin at the cemetery.

The city's cemetery board approved replacing pulleys, ropes and clips on the flag poles as an Eagle Scout project of Christian Miyamoto.

- Council members unanimously approved the mayoral recommendation of Shannon Malmkar to the Airport Advisory Committee. He replaces Larry Harden who resigned from the committee.

It was stated that Malmkar owns several airplanes and has a vested interest in the airport and its operation.

His term will expire in 2012.

- In a 4-0 vote, council members approved a 2011 maintenance agreement with the Nebraska Department of Roads. Mayor Wyatt was given the approval to sign the \$1,100 snow removal contract.

- At \$55 per acre, Josh Day Farms was given an extended three-year lease agreement on the city's ground. Members approved the extended lease in a 4-0 vote. Payments will be due twice a year.

- An electric billing surcharge increase of 25 cents per month was unanimously approved by council at the recommendation of Glenn Taubenheim, president of the Board of Public Works.

### **Water/Lotto Reports**

- *Water:* There was a 3.5 million gallon decrease in water usage during September compared to August. There were 20,474,200 gallons used in September.

This is also a decrease from the same month one year ago.

- *Lotto:* Sales at DJ's totaled \$9,619 for September with a payout of \$5,060, leaving a net of

\$4,559 and \$1.50 unclaimed.

□

□