

By Jan Rahn

Managing Editor

With one member absent, Grant City Council voted 3-0 to pass a resolution increasing electric rates effective April 1.

The 12 percent increase at the recommendation of the Board of Public Works will offset an increase of 9.75 percent by MEAN, the wholesale supplier, and smaller increases in the billing and maintenance contracts with Midwest Electric.

Present at the council meeting as a representative of the Board of Public Works was Glenn Taubenheim who provided information on the board's reasons for the recommendation.

The city lost money on the electrical system last year and was \$26,000 over budget. When the cost of buying electricity increases, the city must increase rates to avoid losing money, explains City Administrator Dana Harris.

Customers will see rate increases on the electrical portion of their bill that will average to around one cent per kilowatt hour.

Of concern to Taubenheim is that the data show 750,000 fewer kilowatt hours sold in 2012 than in 2011. The discrepancy will be investigated by the board, said Taubenheim.

Absent from the meeting was councilman Ben Long.

In Other Business

- Council released water, enforcement and lotto reports for the month of February.
- City Administrator Dana Harris discussed renting equipment to keep the well in service in the event of a power failure while the water tower is empty and being painted this summer.
- The first reading was held on an ordinance to vacate the alley west of Perkins County Health Services as part of the hospital's expansion project scheduled to begin in a couple of months.
- A second reading was given for an ordinance to assess collection on a nuisance abatement project at 204 Hancock Avenue.
- Approval was given by council for a temporary liquor license at the Perkins County Fairgrounds for a fundraising event by the animal shelter in mid-April.
- Council approved the mayoral recommendation of Kevin Poppe to the Economic Development Committee.

Water/lotto released

Water and lotto reports for February include:

- Water usage during the month of February totaled 4,810,400 which was a decrease of 831,800 gallons from the previous month of January when 5,642,200 gallons were consumed. In a yearly comparison, 775,900 fewer gallons were used this February than in February 2012

when 5,586,300 gallons were used.

- Lotto: Sales during February at DJs Bar and Grill totaled \$6,649.50 with a payout of \$4,729.25 leaving a net of \$1,920.25. Unclaimed was an amount of \$32.