

Truck parking on city streets is council topic

Written by Chris Lee

Truck parking on city streets in Holyoke was a topic of discussion for council members at their April 20 meeting. Councilman Ray Bailey said he would like clarification on the ordinance because trucks are still being parked on streets in town.

Bailey said he reads the ordinance as saying no trucks should be parked on city streets and would like the council to take a look at the ordinance to alleviate some of the problem areas.

When the ordinance was looked at a few years ago, the council took out the part requiring permits.

As it reads now, trucks are not allowed to park in areas zoned residential RE, R1 or R2, or where posted. Some of the trucks in town are parking in areas zoned commercial which, according to the ordinance, is OK.

Council members agreed to look into how many signs it would take to post areas for no truck parking.

City Supt. Mark Brown suggested the police committee sit down with the police department and discuss problem areas to post.

Another issue addressed was enforcement. Council members agreed enforcement should come into play.

Mayor David Nygaard suggested continuing enforcement in areas zoned RE, R1 and R2 until the council can decide what to do with the ordinance.

City Attorney Al Wall suggested ticketing the owners of illegally parked trucks instead of trying to find the drivers. Police Sergeant Doug Bergstrom said they don't knock on doors when they come upon an illegally parked truck late at night.

First reading of ordinance approved

Council members approved the first reading of an ordinance amending Title 15 of the Holyoke municipal code and adopting by reference the appropriate referenced code.

The code involved is the uniform code for the abatement of dangerous buildings.

City Attorney Wall explained three amendments. They included:

—the building official set forth in said Title shall be the City Superintendent of the City of Holyoke, or his designated agent.

—section 802 of the Uniform Code shall be amended to provide that the cost of such work shall be paid from such fund as designated by the City of Holyoke.

—the Board of Appeals provided in the 1997 Uniform Code for the Abatement of Dangerous Buildings shall be the City Council of the City of Holyoke.

The entire ordinance may be found elsewhere in this week's issue of the Enterprise.

Newly elected council members JC Peckham, Steve Moore and Brian Akey took the oath of office. The re-organization of the new council was an item on the agenda and Orville Tonsing emerged as Mayor Pro Tem. Committee positions remained the same with the exception of Moore being named to the CIRSA committee and Akey to the golf club and Phillips County on Board committees.

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Mayor Nygaard tabled the item to read charter and adopt rules and procedures. He would like to see some changes on meeting agendas.

Reports of city officials

City Supt. Brown said things have picked up a little, keeping city crews busy. The electric department replaced some light poles that were damaged in a couple of auto accidents.

Brown reported a water main broke at the intersection of S. Coleman Ave. and E. Furry St. Monday, April 12. There was also a sewer back up in the 200 block of E. Emerson St. April 15.

The lab technician from the Sterling waste water plant who has done waste water testing for Holyoke is retiring, according to Brown. He said he is currently searching for a new lab to conduct the tests.

Brown said the street department has been busy patching streets around town.

A minor power problem was reported at the airport in a couple of hangars and the main pilot lounge which houses the Automatic Weather Observation System (AWOS). Brown said once they got the power turned back on, the AWOS computer system would not turn on right away. He said they hope to get through the rest of the year and then include a new system in next year's budget.

Another issue concerning computers was at the swimming pool. The switch to fiber optics made the current system obsolete, according to Brown. The company that installed the system 15 years ago has been contacted and Brown hopes they can get the situation taken care of.

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The final item in Brown's report dealt with radios city crews currently use. He said due to FCC frequency changes, the radios will need to be reconfigured. The problem is some of the current radios are too old to undergo the change. The deadline to become compliant isn't until January 2013.

Councilman Orville Tonsing said the library board extended the work contract to June 15 without any penalty.

Other business

In other business April 20, council members:

—recognized Jerry Banaka and Barry Winckler for their time spent on the council.

—approved travel request for Brown, Jeremy Thompson and Lennie Fisbeck for an Action Now seminar.

—held a 30-minute executive session for a conference with the city attorney for the purpose of receiving legal advice.

—approved donations to Dragon's Wagon Preschool and Holyoke Volunteer Fire Department.

—accepted local highway finance report.

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