

City Council discusses traffic visibility issues

Written by Chris Lee

Holyoke Council members discussed parking visibility issues along Highway 6 between InterOcean and Baxter at the conclusion of the Tuesday, June 5 meeting.

Mayor Orville Tonsing said it is nearly impossible to see oncoming traffic when entering Denver Street from the north. He said the city needs to look into eliminating the parking spot on the north side of the street located closest to the intersection of Denver and Baxter.

He also said the same should be looked at coming out of the alley behind Holyoke Community Federal Credit Union.

Current plans don't show a driveway coming out of the Family Dollar store entering Denver Street, rather vehicles will enter and exit on Baxter Street as well as the alley.

City Supt. Mark Brown said they have tossed around the idea of making it a right turn only out of the parking lot onto Baxter which would help alleviate multiple cars entering Denver Street, possibly in a blind fashion.

No decision was made at last week's meeting as construction on the new store will be blocking off the parking spots once work begins on the curb and gutter.

"I think it's a simple solution to a problem," Tonsing said.

A possible solution is to paint the curb and post "No parking from here to corner" once the new curb and gutter is completed, according to Brown.

Code enforcement officer asks for clarification

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Code enforcement officer Dawn Worley asked the council for a clarification when it comes to the number of dogs an owner has running at large and the appropriate fines that should be administered.

If an owner has two dogs at large, Worley wanted to know if she should ticket each dog for \$50 apiece or both dogs for only \$50.

Council members all agreed it should be \$50 per dog.

Police Sergeant Damon Ellis said he ran into a similar situation a few years ago and wrote a ticket for \$50 per dog. He said the fine was reduced to \$50 when it went to court.

A motion was made to instruct the enforcement officer to write tickets per dog. Councilman Scott Murray added an amendment that they go by the ordinance. He later withdrew his amendment. Council members said they are simply providing direction for Worley.

It was stated the council needs to go back and look at the ordinance and if something needs to be changed, they will look into it.

Reports of city officials

Council members heard reports from city supt. Brown police sergeant Damon Ellis and city clerk/treasurer Kathy Olofson at last week's meeting.

Brown noted the annual seal coat program is scheduled for Thursday-Friday, June 21-22.

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Brown said there are a number of issues at the airport that need to be taken care of. He said the VHF radio had to receive a new power supply and the UHF radio will need to be narrow banded by Jan. 1, 2013.

Brown also said he received notice from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment that under their storm water permit, Holyoke will have quarterly drain sample requirements on the runoff water. Samples will have to be pulled every quarter and sent to a certified lab to have results read and sent to the health department.

“This is going to be a challenge for us,” Brown said. The samples have to be taken from the tarmac and they will only have so long to get the samples to a lab. Sample dates will be left up to Mother Nature.

Finally, Brown noted he was contacted by the contract company who is working for EAGLE-Net to install fiber optic lines in northeast Colorado. Brown said they will begin in Akron, then Lone Star, Sterling, Fleming, Haxtun, Holyoke and then Julesburg. Fiber optics will be laid directly to the schools and libraries.

Currently, cable, gas and phone companies operating in the city are doing so under a franchise agreement.

“This kind of caught us by surprise,” Brown said. He said the contractor was in seeking a permit to occupy street right-of-ways with the fiber line. Brown said the city has no mechanism in place to allow or disallow. He said he had been in contact with city attorney Al Wall and asked the council stay after last week’s meeting to talk about the issue in a work session format.

Police sergeant Ellis said officer Larry Drake as of June 1, was off the training program and patrolling on his own.

Olofson said the city’s auditor suggested the summer umpires be routed through the city payroll

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each summer. Olofson said that would be a lot of paperwork and time for the minimal pay the umpires receive. She spoke with summer rec director Theresa Tharp who had already contacted the Lions Club which agreed to pay the umpires as well as continue to feed them each night they work.

Other business

In other business June 5, council members:

—approved an ordinance authorizing the sale of real land to Tom Bennett.

—accepted the recommendation from the Holyoke Planning Commission to waive the impact report for the annexation of the First Baptist Church of Holyoke.

—accepted the waiver of the impact report from the Phillips County Commissioners for the annexation of the First Baptist Church of Holyoke.

—accepted the recommendation from the Holyoke Planning Commission to not change the zoning in the West 1/2 of Block 7, Lots 1-15 in the Heginbotham Addition.

—hired new lifeguard Becca Brandt and Rey Rafols as a new Water Safety Instructor (WSI).

—increased wages for lifeguards Ashley Humphreys, Jeremy Loutensock and Malena McWilliams for earning their WSI.

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—accepted request from Holyoke Housing Authority to waive the building permit fee for re-shingling project.

—donated \$100 to American Cancer Society Relay for Life.

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