Holyoke City Council will plan to hire a code enforcement officer after some more discussion at its Tuesday, Oct. 16 regular meeting.

City Clerk/Treasurer Kathy Olofson said she has given two applications out to interested parties.

Council members agreed they still need to advertise the position, but there was some disagreement as to when to begin the process.

Some of the council members think they shouldn't begin looking until after the first of the year, while others think beginning now wouldn't hurt.

Councilman David Churchwell said he feels they should start looking at the first of the year.

There was also some question as to whether those who have already shown interest will stick around until the city is ready to begin the hiring process.

"I think we should do something to have them in place and on the job April 1," councilman Steve Moore said. "On their own, April 1."

Police Chief Doug Bergstrom said he will need some time, about a month, with the new code officer to train them on the streets and ordinances.

Council members all agreed to begin advertising for the position in January. Ads will run for four weeks and then the interview process will begin.

Councilman Scott Murray said they should think about putting something in the budget in case

the job would move to a full-time position if an animal shelter gets off the ground. Council members agreed the position most likely wouldn't become full-time within the first year.

City approves budget for 125th celebration

Olofson said a committee met Monday, Oct. 15 to continue planning for Holyoke's 125th Anniversary celebration. The committee is trying to get several chairpersons from different groups together to get things rolling on the celebration.

Tentatively, an event will be held at the school Wednesday, April 24 (the actual date of Holyoke's 125th). Olofson said the committee would like to see the city serve cake. The committee has spoken with the Phillips County Players to see if they would be willing to put on a play or skit to celebrate the 125th.

A larger event will be held June 14-15 in conjunction with Dandelion Daze. Olofson said the committee wants to see the city entertain that Friday evening with a pie and ice cream social, depending on the race schedule.

Saturday evening a meal is planned. Olofson asked the council to consider what they would be willing to provide.

The committee has also begun reaching out to other organizations to see if they would help throughout the weekend with different events. Events such as a pancake feed are in the works. Olofson said the organizations running certain events may charge for them to help cover any costs.

Council members wanted to see what a meal such as Community Night costs to provide to the public. There was also some question as to how many people would attend.

Olofson said Washington County recently held a county celebration and they served around 700 people and ran out of food. Olofson noted this was a county-wide event and not a city celebration.

The committee has thought about reaching out to see if donations can be found to help provide the meals.

Churchwell said the city needs to just set a budget and if the committee goes over, they will have to go somewhere else to find money.

“They think this is our show and they’re just helping us. And we think it’s their show and we’re helping them, but they have no money and they want us to provide for them so I guess it’s our show and they’re just helping,” Churchwell said.

“What we need to do here is arrive at a consensus of what we need because it’s got to go in the budget anyway,” Mayor Orville Tonsing said.

Council members agreed to budget $10,000 for the 125th Anniversary celebration.

“Whatever donations we get for food sure helps,” councilman Brian Akey said.

“It doesn’t mean we have to spend the whole thing either,” Tonsing added. “But we have to have something to put in the budget.”

“I’d plan on spending it,” Churchwell said.

Animal shelter work continues

Brown said he recently spoke with the head of the state on animal shelters and received a name of a company out of Boulder to help put some plans in place. He said he spent quite a bit of time on the phone and received a proposal that would cost $4,800 for just architectural drawings only.

Brown said they will continue to look into the project.

City Attorney Al Wall said he has spoken with representatives from Leadville who spent $180,000 on their facility. Wall can't imagine Holyoke spending anywhere near that amount. He said when Roberta Tonsing was on the council, they were looking into something more around the $30,000 price range.

Council tables eCIVIS proposal

Olofson received a call from a group that offers grants management software that helps locate grant funding. Council members were a little concerned jumping on something without some kind of background or reference check.

They agreed to look into the company a bit and bring it back to the special meeting planned for Monday, Oct. 29. If they decide to utilize the company, they can vote on it and still meet the discounted price deadline.

Reports of city officials

Council members heard reports from city supt. Brown and police chief Bergstrom at last week's meeting.

Brown said the electric crew had been working out at the cemetery the past few days. The cemetery board approved a donor recognition wall to be installed. Brown said they contracted with Kirkpatrick Masonry of Grant, Neb. to brick the project. The city had the foundation poured last Tuesday morning.

Brown also said sprinkler systems were being blown out by the water department due to the early freeze. He also noted they began picking up leaves around town.

On Oct. 11, Brown said they found a leak on a service tap to a home in the 500 Block of S. Coleman. After digging down they found a flare on a valve had been improperly installed many years ago, causing the problem.

The city supt. also noted the new bleachers have been set in place at the ball park.

At the end of the meeting, Churchwell questioned Brown on the condition of the picnic tables owned by the city that are rented out to organizations to use. He wanted to know if that is something the city wants to get out of or continue providing.

Brown said those tables are the same ones that were there when he began working. He said it would be wonderful to get out of it, but there is definitely a demand.

Churchwell also questioned city information on a website. He said kids were recently given an assignment at school and there is no place online that says who the city council members are.

Bergstrom said the police department received a call from the school about a suspicious vehicle a week earlier. He noted they made contact with the vehicle which turned out to be a delivery vehicle. “People are kind of watching out for some other things now that this has come up, so we are trying to keep an eye on the school as well,” Bergstrom said.

Other business

In other business Oct. 16, council members:

—approved the first reading of an ordinance amending a chapter of the municipal code relating to zoning. The change will now read “any territory annexed to the City will be annexed as A-O Agricultural and Open District unless the annexation ordinance provides for a zoning other than A-O Agricultural and Open District. Final reading and passage is scheduled for Nov. 5.

—accepted the airport liability renewal quote from CIRSA for 2012-13 at $6,930.

—appointed Dale O’Neal to serve another three-year term on the cemetery board.

—accepted recommendation from the Holyoke Planning Commission.

—approved purchase request from Kurtzer’s LLC for $8,230 for Walker mower snow implements including implement hitch $990, 47-inch rotary broom $2,925, 42-inch snowblower $2,295, operator cab $1,620 and wheels for the broom $400.

—approved travel request for Bergstrom to attend instructor course training.

—approved agreement for city water service to Seaboard Foods feed mill.

—approved variable width utility easement from Seaboard Foods, LLC.

—held a short committee meeting on junk ordinances following the council meeting.

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