

City discusses local airport improvements

Written by Kyle Arnoldy

Discussions on the Holyoke Municipal Airport Capital Improvement Plan dominated much of the Tuesday, March 19 Holyoke City Council meeting.

Mike Garcia, representative from Armstrong Consultants, attended the meeting to help clarify some of the upcoming improvements scheduled for the airport. Garcia praised the City of Holyoke for the ongoing maintenance and care provided for the airport while informing board members that Holyoke has risen to the top of the CIP and should have improvements in mind for the money.

Every year, the airport receives \$150,000 from the Federal Aviation Administration. Those funds are often split between airports from the same region. This year the money will be transferred to Sterling for a new taxiway and ramp west of the terminal.

In 2014 Holyoke will use the funds, with help from Greeley, Buena Vista and Sterling, to build a partial parallel taxiway that will allow planes to exit the runway and greatly reduce the likelihood of runway incursions.

In 2015 the Holyoke Municipal Airport will construct a building to house the snow removal equipment and will remodel the terminal building to make it ADA compliant. The city may consider combining the two buildings.

Early plans have also been made to install a wildlife/security fence in 2016 and acquire snow removal equipment and fog seal and remark all airport pavement in 2017.

In 2020 the airport will likely see the biggest upgrade as a complete rehabilitation of the runway is scheduled. The purpose of the rehabilitation will be so the runway can support the much heavier jets that frequent the airport.

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Animal shelter making progress

Mayor Orville Tonsing signed a service agreement with Holyoke Veterinary Service for the purpose of housing sick dogs at Tuesday's meeting.

According to City Superintendent Mark Brown, the agreement saves the city a lot of money and time because without the help of Holyoke Veterinary Service, an isolated area to quarantine sick animals would have to be added to the building plans and the inspection process would have to start over.

"We're one step closer, so hopefully we don't have too many more steps to go," commented Brown.

City officials report

Brown notified council members that a park well has been redone on Kellogg Street.

Because chlorine was used to disinfect the well during the maintenance, the water quality had been compromised. City workers pumped the water into the street Monday, March 25 to lower the chlorine levels in the water.

Brown also mentioned that there is a scheduled power outage Sunday, April 7 from 1-8 a.m. so Western Area Power Administration can energize a transformer.

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At the March 5 meeting Brown informed the council of the problems at the pool with a boiler and a leak in the roof of the boiler room. On Tuesday he updated council members that while the part to fix the boiler is still on the way, he had contacted Wern Air Inc., who installed the boiler, and they have agreed to reimburse the city for the costs of fixing the leak.

Police Chief Doug Bergstrom reported that from Feb. 28-March 13 there were 65 calls for service, one citation, three reports and 11 warnings.

Bergstrom and council member Steve Moore also announced that the search for an applicant to fill the code enforcement position has hit a dead end and they will have to start over.

Moore stated that he anticipates finding someone to fill the spot as a part-time position will be difficult because at the first opportunity for a full-time job, a candidate will likely leave. The council decided to table the topic until the April 2 meeting to discuss the next step in finding a qualified candidate.

City Clerk/treasurer Kathy Olofson informed the board that the library grant to replace some brickwork, a portion of the sidewalk and the carpet on the front porch of the Heginbotham Library is due April 1. The City of Holyoke will be asking for \$35,000, approximately 36 percent of the estimated \$98,000 from the State Historical Fund to complete the project.

Olofson also announced that Allyn Robinson will be cooking the meal for the 125th celebration. He will be providing the service at cost. She also asked members of the board if they would be open to helping serve the meal, to which many responded with a yes.

Other business

In other business March 19, the city council:

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—approved liquor license renewals for The Skillet and Holyoke Golf Club, Inc.

—agreed to pay Barbie Corey of Yuma for travel expenses to teach lifeguard certification classes at the Holyoke swimming pool April 1-3.

—agreed to allow special events permits to the fair board to serve alcohol at the beer garden during the fair July 26-28 and for the beer garden at each of the auto races throughout the summer.

—agreed to a liquor license hearing for Cobblestone Inn and Suites Tuesday, April 16 in the Holyoke Council Chambers at 7 p.m.

—agreed to purchase a transformer from Highline for \$77,055.

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