Although it wasn't part of the agenda for the July 7 city council meeting, council members spent the following day working on airport planning.

Council members were asked by City Supt. Mark Brown to attend two meetings with Armstrong Consultants Inc. on Wednesday, July 8.

The meetings were for planning purposes regarding the airport. The city hired the group to look into planning of expansion, improvement and layout of the Holyoke Municipal Airport. The company helps facilitate and guide airports with planning.

Council members, commissioners and other city officials met with Dennis Corsi and Daniel Spencer of Armstrong Consultants Inc. prior to the public meeting July 8.

Corsi and Spencer presented multiple alternative plans and discussion was welcomed from all those present. The plans gave the city multiple ideas for layout possibilities.

After the two-hour meeting, council members along with Corsi and Spencer had an idea of what to present to the public. Landowners and farmers around the airport were invited to sit in and voice their opinions.

The main goal for the city is to ease congestion on the tarmac when larger planes fly in. Agricultural operations such as Steggs Aerial Spraying and Cornhusker Ag need to be able to get their planes on and off the runway without experiencing congestion.

Expansion of an apron for parking is a top priority for the airport. Brown said it came down to selecting reasonable approaches.

"What do we really need or really want to see out there (at the airport)," Brown said. "And that was what their (Corsi and Spencer) whole objective was."

Peckham takes oath

J.C. Peckham became the newest member of Holyoke City Council after taking the oath of office July 7.

Karla Pargas was present to talk with the board about the 4th of July free swim day. New rules were implemented this year regarding ages and guardians. Instead of the four hours like last year, the event was shortened to two hours and children ages 8 and under had to be with an adult or person over 18 years of age.

Pargas said they saw 71 total people take part in the free swim with 59 of those being children and 12 were adults. 143 people took part in last year's free swim.

"It worked very well," Pargas said. "I liked the two hours instead of the four."

During Brown's City Supt. report he mentioned they didn't have any problems during application of the seal coat application.

"Seal coat went off really well," Brown said.

Police Chief reports

Police Chief Phil Biersdorfer said he had a tree limb removed on S. Belford Ave. that was hanging over/into the street and presenting a public safety issue.

He also mentioned Holyoke Police Dept. is investigating a couple of forgery issues as well as two motor vehicle thefts.

City code enforcement officer Dawn Worley said she is glad to see progress moving forward regarding city ordinances. She reported she is beginning to see compliance from residents.

She also reported someone approached her about a problem with cats in town. Holyoke does not have an ordinance regarding stray cats, but many have been seen in and around town.

“There is a huge population in town,” she said. “Some are looking pretty sickly.”

Committee reports

The police committee met after the June 16 meeting to discuss questions concerning code enforcement. Council members, during last week’s meeting discussed questions concerning Worley and whether or not to allow her to enforce additional codes brought to the board’s attention.

Councilman Barry Winckler said they would not like to have Worley add additional codes to her workload unless they present a public safety issue.

The board, along with Biersdorfer and Worley agree the position is moving ahead smoothly as planned.

“It’s a work in progress,” Worley said. “It’s something that’s never been tackled and managed. I think with Al (Wall) and judge (Dave) Colver we’re kind of laying a foundation of groundwork and it’s requiring a lot of leg work.”