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Residents opine on alcohol in park, council takes no action

A proposed ordinance amendment regarding special event liquor licenses brought proponents of both sides of the issue to the Hoopeston City Council meeting Tuesday night.

Approximately 40 people attended the meeting, which was to include discussion on modifying an ordinance allowing alcohol to be served on city property.

Currently, one ordinance bans alcohol in places such as McFerren Park but another allows 12 special event licenses for activities that include liquor.

Todd Rush, chairman of this year's National Sweet-

corn Festival, led off discussion, saying that banning alcohol in the park "would be a mistake." Money the Jaycees raise at the beer tent during the festival is used for worthwhile projects in Hoopeston, he said.

Joel Bird, representing the Hoopeston Fire Department, said the department's annual Firemen's Ball, at which liquor is sold, generates money to help the department purchase equipment. Firemen have other fundraisers, such as a chili supper, but none equal the turnout for the ball, Bird said.

See COUNCIL on other side

Hoopeston Area athletes to sell 'Cornjerker Gold Cards'

On Saturday November 19 from 1-3 p.m., Hoopeston Area High School sports teams will be going door to door to sell "Cornjerker Gold Cards." Proceeds from this fund-raiser will benefit the athletes and the sports programs at Hoopeston Area. The cards will sell for only \$10 with discounts available at several area businesses.

Locally the card is good at: Margarita's, 50 cents off a half order; Pizza King, 10 percent off any purchase; The Computer Works, 10 percent off any in-stock ink cartridge; Unger's Jewelry, 10 percent off all regular priced purchases (excluding repairs); Rod's Home & Auto/Radio Shack, 10 percent off any Radio Shack purchase (excluding TVs, computers, printers & ink); Haga's Party Options, 10 percent off total purchase; China Wok \$2 off any \$10 or more menu purchase; Classic Details free eyebrow arch with any perm or color service; also, with Lisa, receive \$5 off a full set of gel nails; Hoopeston Star Chrysler, buy one wiper blade at regular price, get one free; McDonald's, free sandwich with the purchase of sandwich and drink; at participating Casey's General Stores, buy any large regular-priced specialty pizza, receive a medium one-topping pizza free.

Others include Burger King in Danville, Taco Bell, Fazzoli's, La Potosina; and in Champaign, Buffalo Wild Wings, Ned Kelly's, Rocky Rococo, MC Sports & Cheddar's. For more discounts, visit the Varsity Gold website and print out coupons for other areas.

After Nov. 19, cards will be available at Unger's Jewelry and during the Turkey Tournament Friday Nov. 26 & Sat. Nov. 27 at the high school.

This is a great way to support the Hoopeston Area athletic programs & our great local businesses.

Salon hair products on sale.
Kids toys \$2-\$5 & sure to keep the kids busy
over Thanksgiving.
\$1 closeouts on new gifts.
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Lunch for Santa Held by Hoopeston Jaycees



This event will take place Saturday November 19th
from 11:00am to 5:00 pm at Dixie Business Plaza, Rt.
1 in Hoopeston.

The dinner price is \$8.50. This will include 1/2 slab
ribs, coleslaw, baked beans, and Texas toast. You may
dine in or carry out if you'd like.

The money made will go to help paying for toys for
kids, senior citizen Christmas party, and the under-
privileged children's party.

We hope you can make it and have a fantastic dinner
while helping to make others' Christmas special!

Designed by Alex Lugo/ DACC Step Ahead

COUNTRYSIDE

will be at the
Dixie Business Plaza Flea Market
this weekend!

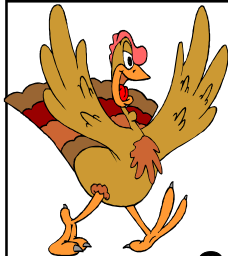
Now accepting Mastercard, Visa & Discover
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Remember, Christmas is coming soon!

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will be open 6 a.m.-2 p.m.

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Serving Roast turkey & dressing
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Rt. 1 South, Rossville (217) 748-6201



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49th annual

Turkey Walk & Dance

Saturday, Nov. 19

Turkey Walks

50/50 Raffles

Door Prize

Smoke River Band

8:30-12:30

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Council continued from other side

On the other side of the issue, the Rev. Steve Nelson of the First Baptist Church, said he understood, J.S. McFerren, who donated land for the park, did not want alcohol in the area. "Mr. McFerren, as a family man, wouldn't approve of that," he said. Also, the festival beer tent used to be in the back of the park but has been moved closer to the front. "It looks to me like phase two or phase three and I wonder where it's going to stop." Nelson added that his congregation "en masse, reject the idea of going forward with alcohol in the park."

Mayor Bill DeWitt responded that when the Jaycees started the beer tent, it was held in the annex. "I'm not saying it's good, I'm not saying it's bad," he said. "I'm not trying to influence anybody."

Taking up the McFerren stipulation of no alcohol in the park, Ron Cloud asked "what part of that don't we understand? Is alcohol the only way this city can make money?"

Resident Jean Minnick, who has researched the McFerren issue, said she found no liquor-related stipulations in the deeds or will. Minnick later said those who do not want alcohol available on city property should band together to figure out a way to build a community center large enough for activities at which alcohol could be served.

Teen dances held by the Jaycees in the beer tent on Sundays when alcohol is not served also came under fire. "Kids get acclimated to the beer tent," Nelson said. "It's only a couple years until they're right there."

The park at festival time is not a family-friendly place, said Earl Martin, youth minister at First Baptist. "I was very disappointed in the atmosphere," he said. "I have no desire to take my kids back there."

Officials also waded into the fray. "It's supposed to be a family park, not a saloon," said Alderman Jerry Yonkers, who is against alcohol in the park and who wrote a letter to the editor of local papers asking like-minded people to attend Tuesday's meeting. "Actually, we've been breaking the law right along with our own ordinances."

Alderman Brandon Hamilton defended the Firemen's Ball, saying the event is policed and the men take pride in their endeavor, which has been held for 80 years.

Alderman Carl Ankenbrand, parks committee chairman, said the city increased the number of special event

licenses to accommodate not only regular events such as the festival, but larger wedding receptions and other activities.

Ankenbrand, who was scheduled to make the motion to approve the amendment, tabled the issue until the next meeting.

In unrelated business, the council:

- Accepted a \$1,256.15 bid from Berry's Garden Center, Danville, for perpetual care urns. It was the only bid received, said Alderwoman Gail Lane.

- Tabled accepting a redevelopment agreement between the city and Bhupendra Naik, who is set to build a motel at Rtes. 1 and 9. Under the planned agreement, Naik would forfeit the land if he fails to build a 20- 25-room motel on the property, said Alderman Bill Goodwine. Also, while Naik would like Tax Increment Financing of the lesser of eligible costs of \$80,000, Goodwine said the city would like to repay the money over seven years instead of the five years Naik requested.

- The agreement is contingent upon Naik getting conventional funding for the project and the city receiving a No Further Remediation letter from the Environmental Protection Agency.

- Approved a \$581,200 tax levy, up less than two percent from last year, said Goodwine, city finance committee chairman. The levy is 2.7 percent less than it was two years ago. Good news for taxpayers, "that's going to make it tough to balance the budget come spring," he said.

- Learned the city and hospital are looking at ways to purchase a new ambulance. Hamilton, committee chairman, said a grant was used to purchase the last ambulance. The hospital has identified the grant and is researching criteria for it to see they may apply again.

- Heard from Goodwine that the 60s museum interested in the Willdon Building would like to meet with Vermilion Advantage officials to see about other available properties should it locate here and need to expand.

Weather



Sunny today. High 52. Tonight, clear. Low 50. Tomorrow, mostly sunny. High 62, low 42.

For current weather conditions, call Hoopeston Weather Service (217) 283-6221.

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Hoopeston American Legion
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