

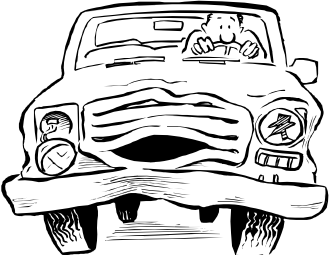
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Council debates hiring policy, makes no changes in ordinance

Hoopeston's new police chief will be hired by the police commission, despite some aldermen's disapproval.

At Tuesday's Hoopeston city council meeting, aldermen John Haughee and Dave Borders requested the ordinance governing the commission's hiring of the chief be changed to allow the council to have the final say in who the next chief is.

However, other aldermen and the acting chief of police argued against the proposed change.

"It's a very important decision in our community," Borders said. "I've had many complaints about the police, but face it, they're not the most popular guys in any town. I'd like to see the ordinance changed so that we have some say in it."

Borders said he was only interested in changing the portion of the ordinance that deals with hiring a new chief, not with sections covering discipline and promotion.

Haughee argued for the change saying that some aldermen were unaware that the commission made the final decision. "If council is of the opinion that it should be best left alone, that's one opinion, but if some council members want to have a say, there should be a change in the ordinance," he said.

Arguing against the change were council members Bill Goodwine, Mark Drollinger and Susan Comstock, city clerk Don Dean, Mayor Bob Ault and acting police chief Joe Gaffney.

See ORDINANCE on other side

Rossville ordinance to crack down on snowmobilers in village

ROSSVILLE—Snowmobilers in Rossville will be skating on thin ice if they violate an ordinance passed by the village board Monday night.

The ordinance follows state guidelines, limiting the ages of snowmobilers and where the vehicles may travel. It also requires that owners register their snowmobiles.

Snowmobilers who are 12 to 15 years old must be accompanied by a licensed adult, said Mayor Merv Smith. And snowmobile routes are "basically limited to the alleys" with a speed limit of 15 miles per hour, he said.

The ordinance was drafted after the village received several complaints from residents regarding young children driving the machines and snowmobilers driving through private yards.

The ordinance still requires some fine-tuning. While routes are limited to alleys, the law does not include a

way for snowmobilers to leave the city limits, Smith said.

The ordinance is expected to be amended to cover that item at the board's Feb. 17 meeting.

The new law comes under nuisance ordinances and is punishable by various fines.

In other action, trustees approved a payment plan for those having difficulty paying village gas bills.

The plan will allow those having financial problems to pay 60 percent of the bill immediately. The remainder must be paid within four months, said village clerk Kathy Roark. No penalties will be charged to those in financial need, she said.

The policy change resulted from a 30 percent increase in gas prices made by the village approximately two months ago.

In other business, the board established a drug and alcohol policy for gas, sewer and water treatment

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Police News

James W.T. Kostecka, 34, of 841 E. Seminary, was arrested at 7:05 p.m. Monday, charged with driving on revocation, following a traffic stop in the 800 block of East Seminary.

Kostecka was released on a notice to appear.

Larry Stephen of the Second Chance Saloon, 102 N. Market, reported Tuesday that someone kicked out the front door safety glass, breaking trim and the door jamb.

Nothing was taken from the business.

★

Ordinance continued from other side

“If I were on the police commission, I’d resign because, right or wrong, I’d feel there was a lack of confidence,” Goodwine said.

Drollinger, a Vermilion County Sheriff’s Department investigator said “I’ve worked for departments in other states where (playing politics) happened. I saw how many directions that poor guy got pulled in. He didn’t last long and I’m afraid that’s going to happen here.”

Ault said an ordinance change should have been suggested when retired chief Orval Kaag began discussing his retirement last summer, while Dean said the council could not vote on an ordinance change without a written copy of that change.

Gaffney suggested that since the position was advertised as being under the commission, the council

should leave it that way. A change, he said, would “open yourselves up to more problems” with potential lawsuits.

City attorney Jim Spiros urged the council’s police committee to talk to the commission to see if the committee may participate in interviews for three finalists for the job. “Before you assume no, I think you should ask,” he said.

In other business, 36 street lights will be installed by Central Illinois Public Service along Route 9 between the east and west city limits. The lights and extension

Obituaries

ORR - Eugene Orr, 78, of Hoopeston, died at 4:48 p.m. Monday, Jan. 20, 1997, at Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana. Funeral services will be at 11 a. m. Friday at the Hamilton-Orr Funeral Home. Burial, with military graveside rites, will be in Floral Hill Cemetery. Visitation will be 4-8 p.m. Thursday at the funeral home. Memorials are suggested to the United Methodist Church of Hoopeston.

In the Hospital

Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital
Jan. 20, 1997

Admitted: none.

Discharged: Carolyn Burkert and Delbert Crawford both of Hoopeston.

Weather

Cloudy today with a 70 percent chance of morning showers. High in the mid 40s. Tonight, scattered showers. Low in the low 30s. Tomorrow, chance of flurries early. High near 39, low near 33.




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