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Black Angus

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City restarts process to bid former trailer park property

A Hoopeston man had hoped for a green light Tuesday to start his monument and engraving business. Instead, the process was delayed for at least another month.

The Hoopeston City Council had planned to announce a special meeting to open bids for the former Baer's Trailer Park property. Instead, a special meeting will be held Sept. 13 to approve creating an ordinance allowing the property to be bid, followed by a 30-day waiting period before action can be taken.

The news was not good for Lee Cox, who wants to open a monument and engraving business on

the land, at the corner of Rtes. 1 and 9.

The council had previously voted 5-2 to give Cox the land in exchange for cleaning the property. City attorney Brian Manion later told the council that state statute mandates that land be sold by bid.

Cox was unhappy about the delay. "This is costing me thousands of dollars, thousands of dollars," he said.

When the ordinance to sell the property is approved, the city must re-advertise the land. The city had run a legal notice seeking bids on the property to which Alderman Bill Goodwine took exception.

Former resident makes corn-y proposal at Festival parade

It seems natural that former Hoopeston resident Jeff Eyrich would pick the Sweetcorn Festival as the place to mark an important event in his life.

Eyrich was born on the first day of the 1978 festival (Aug. 31) to Stephen Eyrich and Carolyn Eyrich-Mastin.

This year, he began a new chapter of his life and chose the festival as the backdrop for it.

For the past several years, Eyrich, who lives in Colorado, has returned to Hoopeston for the festival to help his family shuck, cook and serve tons of corn to festival attendees.

This year, however, Eyrich had more on his mind than corn.

Before the official start of Saturday's parade, Eyrich, accompanied by family amidst the smoke of steam en-

Photo contributed

Jeff Eyrich proposes to Bethany Hooker Saturday on Main St. before the National Sweetcorn Festival parade.



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City continued from other side

The notice said bids would be accepted on two parcels, one for a motel and the other for an engraving business. Goodwine said he agreed with specifying the motel because of it would be “instrumental for economic growth.” It was the other specification that concerned him, as he asked if an engraving business is “essential to economic growth and something the people of Hoopeston should subsidize? Why don’t we want to know what others are willing to give for the property?”

Cox disagreed with changing the notice, saying it would be “discrimination” and further questioned why the new CVS property had not been bid. City officials did not respond to the question.

Goodwine told the council that he received numerous calls about Cox’ plan for the corner, nearly as many calls as he received several years ago about the landfill expansion issue. “Within the city, a lot of people don’t understand why the use is being limited,” he said.

Cox asked if Goodwine received calls in favor of his plan. Goodwine responded that only one caller ap-

proved.

Manion said the limitation was placed based on statute, which allows the city to specify conditions for a sale, such as its intended use.

Mayor Bill DeWitt said Cox has already saved money for the city by taking concrete from the property. Taking other waste from the site to the landfill cost the city \$8,000, excluding equipment costs and manpower, he said.

“It doesn’t seem to make much difference to me one way or the other,” DeWitt said. “My personal opinion is I don’t see what’s wrong with it. I, for one, intend to do everything possible to make my word good.”

When selling the property comes to a vote, any approved use must pass by a three-fourths majority. Rejection of any bids can be done with a simple majority.

In unrelated discussion, the board accepted a 1974 ladder truck from the Watseka Fire Department.

See PROPOSAL on other side

Proposal continued from other side

gines, got off the engine. In the middle of Main St., with early parade-goers as witnesses, dressed in bibs and a t-shirt, Eyrich dropped to one knee and proposed to his girlfriend, Bethany Hooker.

Family members knew for some time that Eyrich planned to propose sometime during the festival. Hooker suspected, too, but didn’t know when the question would come.

“I told her she had to be here this weekend,” said Eyrich.

His request led Hooker to believe the big question was coming. “I knew it was going to be this weekend,” she said. “I just didn’t know when he would do it.” But she already knew what her answer would be.

“She said ‘yes,’” Eyrich simply said later.

Hooker bent down to kiss her fiancé, the two hugged, then, steam engines chugging, continued to the park.

“Did I do ok,” Eyrich later asked her.

“You did good,” she said.

People who know the couple might be sur-

“It’s a significant addition to our department for zero dollars,” said fire committee chairman Alderman Brandon Hamilton.

After the meeting, fireman Ross Johnson, training officer, said the truck has five functions: it may be used as a pumper; has a 500 gallon storage capacity; has preconnected lines with nozzles; has several ground and roof ladders; and can be used aerially to fight fires or fore evacuations.

Hamilton said the truck could help lower the city’s ISO (Insurance Services Office) rating from a five to a four, which could result in lower insurance rates for home and business owners in Hoopeston.

In related discussion, Hamilton said the city will seek bids on a decommissioned fire truck which may be seen behind the Main St. station. Bids will be opened Sept. 27. Questions about the truck should be directed to Fire Chief Greg Shipman.

Alderman Jerry Yonkers wondered whether the city should donate the truck to another department

prised that they were in the same place for the proposal. They met in Colorado when Hooker was visiting her godmother. The two hit it off and began what has been a two-year relationship, he in Colorado and she at Furman University in South Carolina and now as an intern at Peachtree Publishers in Atlanta. The two flew

Police News



A 44-year-old woman reported Tuesday that her cell phone was taken while she was at McFerren Park.

A 45-year-old woman reported Tuesday that a 24” teal Roadmaster 10 speed bike was taken from her home in the 300 block of West Elm.

Weather



Chance of rain today and tonight. High 85, low 62. Tomorrow, partly cloudy. High 86, low 62.

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

but Hamilton said it has no use as a truck and would be purchased by a collector but not a fire department.

In unrelated business, the council:

- heard a request from Alderman Carl Ankenbrand to increase the number of special event licenses at McFerren Park from five to 12. Many members voiced approval; a vote is expected to be taken at the Sept. 20 meeting.
- tabled accepting the former Amvets building,

Briefly

Return uniforms

Any Hoopeston Area Youth Baseball (Little League) parent, player or coach who still has a uniform or equipment to return, please contact Kevin Jett (283-4422) or deliver to his home (728 S. Fifth St.) or office (221 S. Market)

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