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Lourdine Florek
owner/publisher

Just the Facts[©]

Phone/Fax:
(217) 283-9348

Email:

publish@justthefacts.net

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Library to get windfall from unpaid personal property tax

Hoopeston Public Library will get an unexpected windfall from Hoopeston.

At Tuesday night's Hoopeston City Council meeting, Alderman Bill Goodwine, city finance committee chairman, said the city will pay \$133,599 to the library as its share of personal property replacement tax for the last 10 years.

"In 1997 when they formed a library district, it was our understanding that they became their own taxing body and we didn't have to pay that percentage of personal property tax," Goodwine said. The library's portion was roughly \$13,000 per year, he added.

Former city attorney Brian Manion researched the issue and, after consulting with other attorneys and the Illinois Municipal League, learned that the library was

owed the money, "which came as a surprise to us and, I think, was a pleasant surprise to the library," Goodwine said.

The city will pay the library from its landfill account.

In other action, the council unanimously approved the 2007 Motor Fuel Tax budget with projects totaling \$225,000. Included in that are hot asphalt projects on Second Ave., from Washington to Orange; Scott Dr., the turnaround on Sycamore Ave., from Birch to South Fifth Ave.; Penn from Second Ave. to the railroad tracks and the library alley between Fourth and Fifth Sts.

Part of Motor Fuel Tax money will also be used to reinstate the 50-50 sidewalk repair program, said Alderman Jerry Yonkers, street and alley committee chair-

See WINDFALL on other side

City reaches tentative agreement on well-capping for motel

Tentative agreements have been reached with property owners concerning capping wells surrounding property designated for a new city motel.

At Tuesday's Hoopeston City Council meeting, Alderman Bill Crusinberry, water/sewer committee chairman, said tentative agreements have been reached concerning three properties with a total of four wells.

Under the tentative agreements, wells on the properties would be capped and city water made available.

In one case, a new well will be dug at a different site because water from one site is used for applying farm chemicals. Using city water would make the chemicals less effective because it has a higher Ph level than well water, said Alderman Bill Goodwine.

Crusinberry said the city has been negotiating with property owners since the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency said wells surrounding the former Baer's Trailer Park property had to be capped.

Initially, the IEPA wanted wells in a one-mile radius to be capped but the city and state negotiated down to the three adjoining properties, he said.

Currently, officials are seeking bids on capping the wells and digging the new one. Bids will be opened April 13.

Once the work is completed and inspected by the IEPA, the city will receive a No Further Remediation letter from the IEPA. When that happens, Bhupendra Naik of Danville is expected to build a motel on the property.

Since Naik agreed to build the motel about two years ago, the city has had to ask for two time extensions to accommodate negotiating with property owners. The current extension expires in May and officials will have to get a third extension to enable the work to be done and the IEPA to issue a final report, said economic developer Shannon Ruh.

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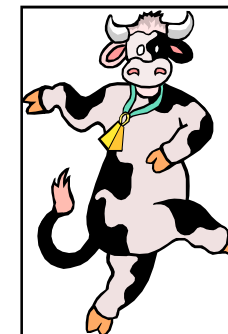


Steak Fry

Friday
5:30-8 p.m.

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Windfall *continued from other side*

man.
The exact amount to be put in the sidewalk program has not been determined and will depend on whether the city receives a state sidewalk grant.
The grant, with a \$400,000 maximum, is tied to proximity to schools. It would pay engineering and installation costs for sidewalks within one mile of grade/middle schools which, in Hoopeston, covers the entire town. The grant will pay for repairs to existing sidewalks and installation of new sidewalks where none exist.

Yonkers said an engineer from Sodemann & Associates and economic developer Shannon Ruh are assisting with the grant, which must be submitted by May 15. Grants are expected to be awarded in June.
In unrelated business, the council:
• Heard from Alice Ellsworth, member of the Mayor's Youth Council. Ellsworth said the group holds a youth center, "Overtime," at the Hoopeston Multi Agency and that attendance of high school age students has been good. Middle schoolers have had their own time slot and activities but a lack of attendance has forced the group to stop the middle school portion.
She requested that the group is looking for televisions with PS2 or X-box in-ports to be used at Overtime.
Ellsworth also reported that members of the youth council will be involved in the April 14 citywide cleanup day.
• Heard from Grant Township Supervisor Bill Boose

about hikes in Charter Cable rates. Boose said residents have said the increase was caused by an increase in the franchise fee paid to the city by Charter.
However, Goodwine said the fee has not been raised in years.
Mayor Bill DeWitt said the city is aware of the increase and has tried to contact Charter but officials there have not yet responded. "We're on top of it, we know about it and we're going to see what we can do about it, if anything," DeWitt said.
• Accepted a \$5,302.50 bid from Farming with Flowers for spring/summer perpetual care urns. Other bids received were from Schuler's at \$6,940 and Dawn Lawson, \$5,506.25.
• Changed the next meeting to April 16 to accommodate the April 17 election.
• Learned the city is seeking bids for a new fence around the McFerren Park swimming pool.



Police News



A 15-year-old boy was arrested at 7:33 p.m. Tuesday, charged with battery on a complaint from a 21-year-old Hoopeston man, who alleged the boy struck him in the face.
A juvenile petition was filed on the boy, who was released to his mother.
Renee Colunga, 19, of 322 W. Lincoln, was arrested at 8:16 p.m. Tuesday in the 200 block of East Main. She was charged with battery on a complaint from a 16-year-old girl who alleged Colunga struck her.
Colunga was released on a notice to appear.
Blair M. Sheahan, 17, of 805 S. Fourth St., and Jessica L. Barr, 17, of 41384 Main St., East Lynn, were arrested after a traffic stop at 12:37 a.m. Monday at South Fifth St. and East Lincoln.
Police said Officer Quentin Morgan's K-9 partner, Rheia, indicated on the car, and open alcohol was alleg-

edly found.
Sheahan and Barr were each charged with illegal transportation of alcohol and were released on a notice to appear.
The vehicle was towed from the scene.

Classifieds

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LOST & FOUND

Found: 5-6 mo. old yellow Lab (possibly Lab mix) pup. Found March 23 on south side of Hoopeston off Sixth Ave. Owner may call (217) 283-4611.

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Weather



Partly cloudy today and tonight. High 42, low 24. Tomorrow, partly cloudy. High 41, low 21.
For current weather conditions, call Hoopeston Weather Service, (217) 283-6221.