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Thursday, March 4, 2010

Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication

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Lourdine Florek, owner

www.justthefacts.net

Hoopeston officials' testing to determine grant eligibility

Hoopeston officials will hit the books to make sure the city is eligible for federal grants.

Michelle Rice, of Vermilion County Emergency Management Agency, presented information on the National Incident Management System (NIMS), a federal program that provides a system for governmental and non-governmental agencies and the private sector to work together in the case of emergencies. "They want to know what you're doing to protect the people in your area," Rice said.

Local officials - both elected and appointed - will review information and take online tests for the NIMS program, which, in turn, will allow the city to be eligible for federal grants.

The council unanimously approved a resolution to participate in the program, which is part of Homeland Security. After reviewing information packets, the council will decide whether they will hold a study session with Rice prior to taking the test.

Rice said tests for mayors and police chiefs are more extensive than those for council members.

Federal money will not be available to any government entity in which all required members are qualified, Rice said.

In unrelated business, the proposed contractor registration ordinance will not receive support from at least two city officials.

Mayor Bill Crusinberry told the council that he has had "nobody in favor" of the proposed ordinance, sponsored by Alderwoman Sue Comstock. "At this time, I will probably not support it unless you can show me otherwise." He added that the idea for such an ordinance did not originate with the council, reiterating that three contractors approached the city about four years ago about the need for such an ordinance.

"The feedback I get," said Alderman Bill Goodwine,



Michelle Rice of Vermilion County Emergency Management Agency, prepares to hand out information packets to officials at Tuesday's Hoopeston City Council meeting.

"is that it's a solution looking for a problem."

Comstock, visibly upset by the comments, said "misinformation" had been disseminated about her proposal. "It's not a tax," she said. "We don't want to do this to make money." She added that she heard positive comments about the proposal.

Comstock also raised the issue of creating a skate park in Hoopeston, saying the city will look into grants for the project, estimated to cost \$40,000 to \$60,000.

Comstock compared the skate park to the use of golf cars in the city. After Alderman Ed Lotz told Comstock about 20 golf carts are registered in Hoopeston, Com-

See OFFICIALS on other side

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Briefly

RCO Community Awards

Rossville Community Organization is sponsoring the seventh annual Community Awards Banquet at 6 p.m. Friday, March 19, at Hubbard Trail Country Club. The ceremony will follow the dinner, which will be catered by Merita's.

Ballots for the five community awards, in which the entire community may nominate the citizen of their choice, may be picked up at the bank, village hall, post office or Larkin's Barber Shop. Deadline to return the ballots is March 5.

If you can't attend the banquet, please participate by voting for the people you feel deserve to win.

Senior citizen freeze help

Help for senior citizens in filling out their Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption will be available from 1-4 p.m. March 11 at Grant Township Office, 526 S. Market.

Letters to the Editor

More thoughts on contractor registration

Quick! Somebody please find Alderwoman Sue Comstock a worthwhile project to pour her energy into. Instead of trying to take money out of people's pockets, maybe she can use that energy to find a way to put it into pockets.

If this ridiculous ordinance passes, the contractor fee will have to be passed onto the consumer. I am quite able to make my own decision on whom I have

do projects on/around my home. As of today I have not been found to be incompetent in my ability to do these things.

I already have the government up my rear-end enough, there is no room for the City of Hoopeston.

I am highly insulted by the very implication that I need this unsolicited rescue. Please put a stop to this.

Cathy Brown
Hoopeston

Officials continued from other side

stock said "if we could keep 20 kids of the street, it would be worth it."

The idea for a skate park was originally raised by Alderman Carl Ankenbrand, who planned to put the park at Cheese (Northside) Park and who had hoped for fund-raising involvement from local youth. Instead, "they want everybody to do it for them" he said. "I'd like to see them put forth some effort."

In unrelated business, the council:

- Heard from Alderwoman Nancy Stipp that specifications for bids for cemetery urns are available at city hall. Bids will be opened April 6.
- Heard from Comstock that a loan has been approved for East Central Illinois Community Action Program for Prairie Meadows, the affordable workforce housing development. The city must make available the \$400,000 it agreed to contribute to the program, she said.

Reminded by Ankenbrand that the amount could be in cash or in-kind contributions, Comstock told the council the city "doesn't have in-kind."

Crusinberry said the money will come from the city's Tax Increment Financing (TIF) fund.

Closing on the site for the development, on the former Hoopeston Industrial Corp. ground on Rout 9, is expected to be done next month, with groundbreaking in May, Crusinberry said.

- Approved a resolution to pay a \$2,500 overage in street work done last summer. Funds will come from the Motor Fuel Tax program.
- Heard from Alderman Bill McElhaney that with spring thaws also come water main leaks and breaks.

He also suggested residents consider updating lines going from their homes to the city's water lines to avoid leaks in those areas

Weather

Mostly sunny today. High 41. Tonight, mostly clear. Low 21. Tomorrow, sunny. High 45, low 22.

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

Police News

A silver Huffy bicycle was found Monday. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.

Doris A. Schultz, 49, of Hoopeston, turned herself in to police at 4:49 p.m. Monday. Wanted on a Vermilion County traffic warrant, she was released on \$196 cash bond.

Thursday Lunch Special

Panfried Chicken

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Classifieds

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hoopeston Area CUSD #11 is seeking a qualified person to fill a vacated seat on the Board of Education. The individual must be a registered voter within the "Old Hoopeston School District." Anyone interested in being considered for this seat should submit a letter of interest to the Superintendent's Office by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 12, 2010. The board will seat the new member at the March 18, 2010 school board meeting. If you have any questions concerning candidate qualifications, please contact the Superintendent's Office at (217) 283-6668.

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