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 Friday, December 21, 2012
 Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication
 P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston, IL. 60942 www.justthefacts.net

City looks in good shape to get loan for water tank repairs

Hoopeston officials' plan to get a low interest Environmental Protection Agency loan to refurbish its water tanks is looking good.

About 30 percent of plans have been submitted to IEPA, Mike Streff, engineer with Foth Infrastructure and Environment, said at Tuesday's Hoopeston City Council meeting.

Streff said EPA primary reviewer Chris Rice said things seem to be in order at this time and that everything requested seems to have been submitted. A preliminary loan agreement should be ready by early February.

Streff said Gov. Pat Quinn's \$1.2 billion Clean Water Initiative, there should be plenty of money available and that



Hoopeston City Clerk Gail Lane swears in Joe Fell as Ward 1 alderman at Tuesday's Hoopeston City Council meeting, as Mayor Bill Crusinberry looks on.

the interest rate, which has been 1.95 percent, might even be lowered.

In October, the council heard from Larry Johnson, also of Foth, who estimated the proposed water tower project at a little more than \$2.3 million, including repairing and recoating existing tanks and construction of a smaller contact tank for additional ground storage.

If the loan is approved, it would be repaid over 20 years.

In other business, the council:

• Approved the annual tax levy, of \$643,000, up 2.73 percent from last year, said Alderman Bill Goodwine,

See REPAIRS on page 4

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Driving Economic Development in Hoopeston

Editor's note: the following, written by Linda Bolton, appeared in a recent issue of the Vermilion Advantage Tabloid. It is being reprinted with permission of Vermilion Advantage and Ms. Bolton.

By LINDA BOLTON

Director, Vermilion Advantage

Business Development & Government Relations

That first day on a new job can be a real challenge, can't it? There is that whole adjustment period as you get to know names/faces and begin to understand the rhythm of a new environment. Amazingly, I am into my third year here at Vermilion Advantage. My "adjustment" was a whirl; actually, I just hit the ground running and have not stopped. I recall moving some things into my office, finding out how to work the phone (well, ok, I am still working on that), and determined where the bathrooms are (I am old, after all); the next thing I knew I was in a van heading to Indiana to go into a coal mine 450 feet below ground; just a normal day at Vermilion Advantage.

Once I recovered from my visit to the world below, I found myself trying to get familiar with our massive files and understand the processes of what we do. In the midst of all the adjusting and high level pressure of dealing with potential new businesses, and trying to get out to call on our existing businesses, I also began my almost weekly visits to Hoopeston. While all of the communities in Vermilion County are important to us, Hoopeston is a very active member of Vermilion Advantage. Hoopeston's Mayor, Bill Crusinberry sets on our Vermilion Advantage Board of Directors, and is an active supporter of the Vermilion County Mayors' Council.

Almost every Tuesday I head north to meet with Hoopeston's economic development team that includes the mayor and business people, to discuss business/job opportunities, help with school and workforce development, brainstorm about what they can do to encourage Hoopeston's growth and look for opportunities to grow Hoopeston. They welcome our participation in those meetings. And they have never been anything but welcoming to me since the first day I showed up.

By making so many trips to Hoopeston and working with the team, as well as making local calls, we have gotten to know some of the major employers in the community, including Hoopeston Community Memorial

Hospital, which is now the largest employer in Hoopeston. Our office worked with CEO Harry Brockus and the city of Hoopeston to ensure changes and improvements in water lines were completed so the hospital's expansion and nursing home plans could move forward. We have had the pleasure of getting to know the folks at Hoopeston/Teasdale Foods, Silgan, Schumacher Electric, and others, like Keith Allen, who has renovated his great KBA Limited warehouse space and started up a new bottled water business. Hoopeston has struggled for several years now, trying to re-invent their business community and recover from the loos of their canning industry. But they are making progress and it is great to be part of that.

A new business that has come to town is J and R Used Tire. Rodney Rogers opened his tire recycling/shredding business in Potomac only a few short years ago, but the business grew so rapidly he needed more room. He contacted me a couple of years ago about the old FMC building which was in foreclosure and had been vacant for many years. The massive old manufacturing facility was rapidly deteriorating at the time and it seemed likely that its future would only be demolition. By working with the bank owners, we were able to get Rodney moved in and operating. He recently took full ownership of the building and is already expanding as there is growing demand for the shredded tires that can be used in a multitude of ways. I have often told people that this project that saved that giant old facility and put it to good use is one of the high points of the time I have spent here at Vermilion Advantage to date.

The Hoopeston economic development team continues to look for opportunities to grow their community. They are working closely with Hank Hornbeck and the Hoopeston Area school district to consider what they may be able to do to support workforce development in their community. Just about the entire Hoopeston community is anticipating the moment in the near future when the doors will open on the Hoopeston campus of Danville Area Community College; what a great project this is for the entire north end of Vermilion County.

What little adjustment period I had for this job is only a fleeting memory. And now, when I head up the Dixie Highway on Tuesdays for a Hoopeston economic development team meeting, it's almost like going home. I know

See HOOPESTON on other side

This holiday season...

you can honor or remember loved ones with a donation to Gibson area Hospital.

The GAH Auxiliary is celebrating gifts to the hospital with the "Love Lights a Tree" holiday light displays and fundraiser November First through January First.

Visit www.gibsonhospital.org or call 217-784-2600 to find out how you can give the Gift of Love and Light.

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Repairs continued from page 1

finance committee chairman. How accurate that will be is undetermined since the equalized assessed valuation is not known. Last year, Goodwine said, the city estimated an EAV of \$30,500,000 but the actual EAV came in at \$29,929,000.

- approved employee health insurance with Coventry, at a cost of \$396,147 per year for 26 employees.
- Approved hiring Curt Ellis to oversee the city's web-page at a cost of \$190 per month.
- Approved putting electricity aggregation on the April ballot. Whether the city will do it separately from the already-approved county plan or go solo is undecided, said Mayor Bill Crusinberry.
- Approved Joe Fell as new Ward 1 alderman.

Obituaries

SMITH - Landus F. "Landy" Smith, 60, of Hoopeston, died at 8:25 a.m. Wednesday, December 19, 2012 at his home. Arrangements are pending at Brown-Alkire Funeral Home in Hoopeston.

Hoopeston continued from other side

good people will be waiting for me when I get there, and we will be sitting down to see what we can do to build toward the future of Hoopeston and Vermilion County.

We are blessed with so many good communities here in Vermilion County, and with elected officials in each of them who work hard every day for the people they represent; each of our communities have faced and will continue to face challenges. It is our job here at Vermilion Advantage to help each and every one of our Vermilion County communities in any way we are able, because as they grow, so grows Vermilion County.

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