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Thursday, January 7, 2016
Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication
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Mike Marron, Vermilion County Board Chairman, talks about a possible land bank at Tuesday's Hoopeston City Council meeting. Marron is flanked by District 1 representatives Todd Johnson, left, and Darren Duncan, right.

VC officials outline likely county land bank plan to council

A plan to between Vermilion County and Danville officials to deal with dilapidated properties may be expanded to include other communities.

Mike Marron, Vermilion County Board chairman, along with District 1 representatives Darren Duncan and Todd Johnson, attended Tuesday night's Hoopeston City Council meeting to discuss a planned land bank in the county.

The county and Danville have signed an intergovernmental agreement to work on a land bank, which would be a means of addressing blighted properties in the county. Properties could be deeded to or purchased by the land bank and could undergo improvements prior to the properties being resold and placed back on the tax rolls, Marron said.

The planned Vermilion County bank would be only the third in the state. Others are in Cook County and the

south suburban area of Chicago, including Park Forest, Oak Forest and Blue Island. While new to Illinois, land banks have been done in other states, including Ohio, Pennsylvania and Michigan.

Marron said Vermilion County has earmarked \$50,000 and Danville \$30,000 for costs like working with a consultant to get the program going and finding a director, who is expected to be part time at first. The person hired would be responsible for finding funding for the land bank.

Other communities to join the land bank but is expecting no money from them - for now - because "it could be upfront, the entire focus is on the city of Danville," Marron said. "I'm hesitant to ask for an investment (from other communities) and (the communities) not see results."

See BANK on other side

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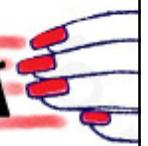
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Briefly

Birthday card shower for Molly

Molly Parker Culbert will turn 92 on January 8 and would enjoy receiving cards and letters. They may be sent to her at Heritage Health Therapy and Senior Center, 423 N. Dixie Hwy., Hoopeston IL 60942.

Birthday Club registration extended

Registration for Hoopeston Jaycees' 2016 Birthday Club has been extended until Friday, Jan. 8, due to holiday time constraints. Registration packets and information are available at www.hoopestonjaycees.org.

Coming up at the library

Lego Club

Hoopeston Public Library will hold its monthly LEGO CLUB for kids in grades K-6, from 3:30-4:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 7.

An Afternoon at Downton

Fans of the British TV series "Downton Abbey" are invited to get into the spirit of the show with "An Afternoon at Downton" at 1:30 p.m., Monday, Jan.

11, at Hoopeston Public Library.

Adult participants will enjoy full tea service in the British style, an easy vintage craft, trivia and other fun from the period. Attendees are welcome to wear their favorite Downton-era hats or other clothing items, if desired.

The program is free, but because of space limitations, reservations are requested, and can be made by calling the library at 217-283-6711 no later than Thursday, Jan. 7.

Final youth basketball signups coming

Hoopeston Area Youth Basketball Academy will hold a final sign up event on Saturday, Jan. 9, from noon to 2 p.m. at Hoopeston City Hall, 301 W.

Bank continued from other side

Duncan called the land bank idea "a unique tool" to deal with blighted properties. The land bank could make money on some properties that are rehabilitated, that could then be used to develop others.

Marron said he would send a copy of the intergovernmental agreement with Danville to Hoopeston officials. The agreement includes an outline of the project's current projected scope and other details.

In unrelated business, the council heard from Dawn Morris, whose home in the 300 block of McCracken was again flooded during holiday rains.

After relating efforts to get drains cleaned and water flowing, Morris asked if the city has plans to help residents whose homes have been damaged by repeated flooding.

Mayor Bill Crusinberry said the city has no mechanism for such relief but that in previous floods, residents received help from USDA grants.

Resident Chad Thomas said Hoopeston received 53.83" of rain last year, up from the average of 39.42".

An engineering company hired to develop a plan for flooding on the city's north side is working on a proposal, Crusinberry said.

Weather

Mostly cloudy, then chance of rain today. High 41. Tonight, rain. Low 36. Tomorrow, rain. High 46, low 37.

Main.. This is for boys and girls from kindergarten-fourth grade. Family discounts apply.

Please contact Kathy Harding at 217-497-6686 for more information.

Birthday open house

An open house will be held for Jack Silver's 80th birthday from 2-4 p.m. January 16 at First Baptist Church gym, 323 E. Seminary, Hoopeston. Cake and punch will be served. Friends and acquaintances are welcome to help him celebrate!

From the Blotter

No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 4:20 p.m. Tuesday on Orange at the railroad tracks.

Police said Jessica Arms, of Hoopeston, in a 2013 Chevrolet truck, slowed at the crossing when her foot slipped off the brake, causing her to hit a 2013 Chevrolet sedan, driven by John Lukas, also of Hoopeston. Lukas had also slowed for the crossing.

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