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Thursday, February 18, 2016
 Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication
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Interest prompts city to approve new motel feasibility study

The chance to land a motel for the city prompted city officials to approve an updated motel feasibility study.

At Tuesday's meeting, Hoopeston City Council unanimously approved hiring TR Mandigo & Co., an Elmhurst-based hospitality consulting firm, to conduct the study for \$3,500.

Two other firms submitted proposals at \$7,500 each, said Alderman Randy Carter.

Mandigo conducted a similar study for Hoopeston in 2010, after plans for a motel fell apart after the planned developer was unable to get bank financing.

The initial study was approved at a cost of up to \$6,000 and \$1,000 for expenses. It study showed Hoopeston could support a 40-room motel. At that

time, survey results were requested by the Illinois Hotel/Motel Association and an Ameren construction representative, but no company was willing to build a motel in Hoopeston.

In December 2015, Mayor Bill Crusinberry was contacted by Cobblestone Hotels, asking if the city's feasibility study had been updated.

Cobblestone had previously been contacted about building a motel but at that time, declined.

"In 2010, economic conditions were totally different than they are now," Carter said, making a motion to approve the study. Seconded by Alderman Alex Houmes, the motion passed 7-0, with Alderman Carl Ankenbrand being absent.

See **STUDY** on other side

Douglas Toole named new county health administrator

DANVILLE—Douglas Toole has been named Public Health Administrator of the Vermilion County Health Department following Jenny Trimmell's retirement on April 17, 2016.

"I look forward to working with the Board of Health and our community partners to improve the health and safety of Vermilion County," said Toole.

Toole will serve as administrator following the retirement of Trimmell, who started working for the health department in 1997 as a Health Educator and who served as administrator since March 2014.

Toole spent time with the Vermilion County Health Department's Environmental Health division as a college intern. He started working at the health department full time after graduating in 1991 from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, with a bachelor's degree in



TOOLE

journalism.

He became a licensed environmental health practitioner in December 1996, and acquired additional education through Danville Area Community College prior to being promoted to the position of Director of Environmental Health in June 2010.

Upon Trimmell's retirement announcement, Toole was appointed as administrator by the Board of Health on February 16. His first day in the new position will be April 18.

"Public health agencies are facing challenges these days, and I am grateful to have had Jenny mentor me and prepare me for the tasks ahead," Toole said.

Toole is a longtime resident of Vermilion County, and a graduate of Danville High School. He and his wife, Jennifer, live in Westville with their two children.

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Daily Lunch Menu

Mon.: Tater Tot Casserole

Tues.: Ham & Beans w/cornbread

Wed.: Cheesy Ham & potatoes

Thurs.: Country fried steak, mashed potatoes, gravy, veggie

Fri.: Angus ribeye steak sandwiches & broccoli/ cauli salad

Nightly Specials

Mon.: RANCBURGERS & \$2.50 Aluminum Bottles

Wed.: TACO NIGHT & \$2 Corona & Dos Equis

Thurs.: 50¢ WINGS AND \$5 PITCHERS

Fri.: 16 oz. ANGUS RIBEYE DINNER or CHICKEN BREAST DINNER

Now offering 12 oz. Ribeye and 9 oz. Filet Mignon!

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Fri. Feb. 20: band Champaign Freight

Try your luck with our NEW live video gaming machines!

From the Blotter

A **40-year-old** Hoopeston woman reported at 4:30 a.m. Tuesday that her 2006 Dodge Ram was stolen sometime during the night.

Jimmy J. Strawser, 18, of Hoopeston, was arrested at 9 a.m. Tuesday in the 400 block of East Honeywell, charged with possession of iPads reported stolen in January from Hoopeston Area High School, 615 E. Orange.

Study continued from other side

Also missing from the meeting were Crusinberry and Clerk Gail Lane.

In other business, the council approved updating the city's land use map in a 5-2 vote.

The map shows what land throughout the city is earmarked for, such as residential, commercial or industrial use.

Three areas - Prairie Meadows, Autumn Fields and RJ Corman property behind Casey's on Rt. 9 where Prairie Meadows 2 is to be built - were shown on the map as industrial.

Although the project received council approval last year and ordinances designating the property as residential were passed, changing the map allowed those with questions about the project to voice concerns.

Alderman Bill Goodwine had four questions: Does the project make sense, because there are available houses for sale available in Hoopeston; is it fair to make owners of empty homes in Hoopeston compete with government assisted housing; does it seem like an efficient use of money, considering the cost per home of the total \$8.2 million project; and aren't there more important needs such as a new bathhouse at the pool, infrastructure improvements. "Why we put subsidized housing before those is beyond me."

Nicole Clements, director of community and economic development for Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies in Springfield, answered that Prairie Meadows 2 will pay back the city's investment from TIF funds through property taxes. As for the cost per house, the \$8.2 million includes things such as roads, water/sewer and architecture costs.

Clements said Prairie Meadows 1 had a waiting list of Hoopeston residents, as well as some from Dan-

ville and other communities.

She also stated that the general contractor will try to use local contractors as much as possible. She had previously said that about Prairie Meadows 1 but local contractors did not meet requirements and were not used.

Alderwoman Lourdine Florek asked when construction will start and whether the property for the project had changed hands from RJ Corman Railroad Group.

Clements said the application for the project is expected to be submitted to the state on February 29 and that construction is expected to begin in the fall.

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Briefly

Cancer support group to meet

Hoopeston Breast Cancer Support Group will meet at 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 18 at The Pit Stop at Fast Lanes Bowling Alley. All past and present breast cancer patients are welcome.

For more information, call Pat Foster, (815) 984-4040.

School blood drive

HAHS Student Council will host a blood drive from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday Feb. 27 in the high school gym. To make an appointment, go to bloodcenterimpact.org and use sponsor code 70860 or call Ashley Gondzur at the high school at (217) 283-6661. Each pint that is donated will help get scholarship funds for the high school and can save up to 3 lives!

Weather

Mostly cloudy, breezy today, tonight. High 45, low 41. Tomorrow, mostly sunny, breezy. High 62, low 38.

nuisance complaint, signed by a Hoopeston woman who alleged Williams' dog kept coming on her property.

The incident occurred at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday in the 500 block of Dice.

A **33-year-old** Hoopeston woman reported that sometime in the last three months, someone stole personal documents from her home at Parkview Court.

East Central Community Action Agency, the lead agency for the project, will not take ownership until all funding is raised, Clements said.

Goodwine and Florek voted against the change, while aldermen Carter, Houmes, Chad Yaden, Bill McElhaney and Brandon Hamilton voted in favor.

Last June, the council approved \$300,000 toward the project - then estimated at \$7.6 million - which is expected to create 30 single family homes, some of which will be designated as Section 8 homes.

In unrelated action, the council:

- Approved paying \$250 to Keep Vermilion County Beautiful.
- Heard from Carter that a 1992 truck was sold with a bid of \$850.

Classifieds

HELP WANTED

Social Service agency in Hoopeston, IL has immediate opening for the position of Executive Director. Qualifications include experience in program management including youth and senior programs, supervision of staff, fundraising, grant writing, and an Associate's Degree or more is preferred. Salary is commensurate with experience. Send resume and cover letter to the Hoopeston Multi Agency, c/o Wade Meranda, 206 S. First, Hoopeston, IL 60942 by March 1, 2016.

We are looking for a part time person to add to our team- MUST be able to work weekends, be able to lift 40 lbs, be able to make deliveries, and like cats. Some duties would include; running the register, assisting customers, answering phones, watering plants, making deliveries, cleaning, and laughing at owners jokes. 20-25 hours a week. Please stop in for an application or send your resume to: Treasured Roots Flower Shop and Specialty Gifts 702 W Main St Hoopeston, IL 60942, 217-283-5578