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Council approves Jim DeWitt as city's new police chief

The man who has had the responsibility of watching over the Hoopeston Police Department for most of the last year now has the title to go with it.

In a 5-2 vote, the Hoopeston City Council on Tuesday approved Jim DeWitt as Hoopeston's new police chief. Council members Bill McElhaney and Lourdine Florek voted against the appointment. Alderman Chad Yaden was absent.

While the title is new to him, the job is not. DeWitt took over some leadership duties while former Chief Mark Drollinger battled cancer. One of the administrative issues he handled during that time was the switch from Hoopeston to Vermilion County emergency dispatch and

the resulting change back to local dispatch. He was named

acting chief on July 12, 2017, Drollinger lost his battle on It was Drollinger who brought De-

things Drollinger did as police chief was hire DeWitt.

DeWITT

in April 1999; he

was promoted to sergeant in 2002. DeWitt was assistant police chief in Rossville before he came to Hoopeston. He has also served as Henning police chief and a police officer in Sheldon.

A graduate of Sheldon High School, DeWitt went on to study law enforcement at Kankakee Community College, then the Police Training Institute at the University of Illinois.

DeWitt's hiring was the first to be done under a new ordinance allowing the police chief to be hired by the mayor, with advice and consent of the council.

The ordinance, changed in July, moved hiring a chief away from the Hoopeston Police Commission, who had that authority since the mid-1970s. Prior to then, chiefs had been hired by the mayor.

Mayor Bill Crusinberry said choosing a new chief "has been a long, hard process. It's probably one of the hardest things I've had to do."

Crusinberry said residents "overwhelmingly told me they wanted a chief form the ranks of the police department. What people want is what we're elected to do." See CHIEF on other side Still thinking about that new garage? Call Silver Brothers We can build the garage and Install a concrete floor and approach. David: 217-304-7751 david@silverbrosinc.com 105 E. Washington St., Hoopeston IL Ph: 217-283-7751 Fax: 217-283-5378





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after Julv 6.

> Witt to Hoopeston. One of the first



Pulled Pork Butt, Pork Ribs & Beef Sirloin

From the Blotter

Charles D. Bodies, 36, of Hoopeston was arrested after police were called at 2:55 a.m. Tuesday for a battery complaint in the 300 block of West Penn. He was charged with domestic battery and was taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville to await arraignment.

Rachelle N. Miller, 32, was ticketed for failure to restrain dog by owner after an elderly woman reported the dog running at large and found in her yard in the 300 block of East Maple. The offense occurred at 7:15 a.m. Tuesday.

Court Dispositions

March 1 Jamie Wyatt, Hoopeston, status check April 5. Christopher Staats, Hoopeston, status check April 5. Colton Simon, status check on two cases April 5. Jackie Carswell, Hoopeston, status check April 5.

Chief continued from other side

Crusinberry said DeWitt will continue to work a six days on/three days off schedule to help ease the department's manpower shortage. With Drollinger's death and Officer Jacob Kruse on a lengthy military deployment, the department has been shorthanded for many months.

Having DeWitt continue on the 6/3 rotation will help, as will the hiring of part time officers, which Crusinberry expects to happen soon.

An ordinance allowing part time officers to be hired was approved last July, Crusinberry said. Part time officers will be hired by the chief and will provide "boots on the ground right away," he said.

Part time officers will have no seniority or benefits and may not be hired to replace a full time officer, he added.

Also, sergeant testing will be done in the near future, Crusinberry said. With DeWitt's promotion, the city has only a third shift sergeant, Quentin Morgan.

In his new position, DeWitt will be paid \$65,000, said Ald. Brandon Hamilton, police committee chairman. In other business, the council:

• Heard from Ald. Carl Ankenbrand that he and fire Chief Joel Bird are working on an ordinance that may help the city with dilapidated buildings.

• Heard from water Superintendent Steve Baker that one water pump broke and is being repaired. He also talked about a state mandate that all service lines in the city be identified and marked as the type of line. Lines found to contain lead will have to be replaced. However, Baker A notice to appear in Hoopeston City Court was mailed to Miller.

A section of metal fence was found Tuesday rolling eastbound on Orange at Fifth St. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.

Obituaries

CASPER - James A. Casper, 67, of Cissna Park died Sunday, April 1, 2018 at Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana. Graveside service will be 11 a.m. Tuesday at Trinity Lutheran Cemetery, Cissna Park. Memorials are suggested to Princeton Child Development Institute. Knapp Funeral Home, Cissna Park, is handling arrangements. **SCHRAMM** - Rhonda Schramm 38, of Indianapolis, Ind. diadat 11 a.m. Manday. April 2, 2018 at Communi.

Ind., died at 11 a.m. Monday, April 2, 2018 at Community Hospital East, Indianapolis, Ind. Arrangements are pending at Anderson Funeral Home, Hoopeston.

said lead in the water comes from homes, not the city system, and usually comes from soldering. He encouraged residents to have plumbing work done to make sure only non-lead soldering is used.

• Heard from Hamilton that it is time for the yearly certifying of golf carts, allowing them to drive on city streets. Owners must self-certify that all equipment is functional and sign a statement at city hall before a permit is issued. The permit fee is \$50.

• Approved an \$8,500 bid from Treasured Roots for the city's spring perpetual care work. The cost was broken down to \$4,500 for live plants and \$4,000 for urns with silk plants.

• Heard from Crusinberry about opt-out cards sent to residents from Homefield Energy. Cards have to be returned "only if you don't want to go along with the community-wide rate," he said. Anyone with questions may call city hall, he added.

• Crusinberry also reported that Rich Thompson volunteered for the post on the Lake Vermilion Water Quality Commission and will attend a meeting soon.

Weather

Slight chance of rain/snow, then chance of showers today. High 45. Tonight, chance of showers. Low 31. Tomorrow,. Chance of showers, chance of snow showers late. High 40, low 22.

Classifieds

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The City of Hoopeston is taking applications to fill a FT/PT position in the Administration Department. Candidates should be proficient in Microsoft Office, the ability to work with the public required and experience in AP/ AR a plus. Applicants may apply in person at 301 W. Main Street.

Hubbard Trail Country Club is seeking a part-time cook and bartenders/wait-staff for the 2018 golf season. Call 748-6521 or apply in person.

Small Wonders Preschool is accepting applications for a Preschool Director. The school serves 3– and 4-year-old children in a half-day program, Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m. The Preschool Director serves as lead teacher and is responsible for all lesson plans, scheduling, calendars, newsletters, programs, field trips and scheduling duties for the assistant teacher. Candidates must be preschool director-qualified by DCFS standards. If you are qualified and love kids (!), please send resume by April 20 to First Presbyterian Church, Preschool Director Position, P.O. Box 297, Hoopeston IL 60942. Email or call for further information, (217) 283-7396, church@fpchoopeston.com.

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