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Just the Facts

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Aldermen talk possible new position, update on old buildings

Aldermen and Mayor Bill Crusinberry discussed a possible new supervisory position in the city during a committee-of-the-whole meeting Tuesday evening.

A public works director position is being discussed as officials integrate departments as a way to streamline work and cut costs.

Ald. Alex Houmes, parks committee chairman, talked about how park personnel have already merged with the street department, while pool employees are now under the water department. In the wake cemetery Sexton Steve Rhodes' death, Houmes suggested the cemetery department become part of the street department, as well, and suggested hiring someone to oversee the combined force, schedule employees and make equipment purchases, estimated to save money as duplication of equipment would be minimized.

Houmes estimated the position would pay in the area of \$60,000, but Ald. Bill Goodwine, finance committee chairman, said that after adding a minimum of \$10,000 for insurance, plus more for Social Security, pension and other necessary expenses, the actual cost would be closer to \$87,000.

Cost was one of five questions Goodwine had about the proposal. Others were how many people the director

would oversee, will department lead men continue to be paid as they are now, what will the city gain, and isn't it the council's role to provide leadership.

How many employees a director would supervise depends on how many departments merge, Houmes said.

Police, communications and city office staff are excluded from the plan, leaving 12 of the city's 29 full-time employees. "You're creating a whole layer of management for 12 people," Goodwine said.

Crusinberry suggested the water department should be, as well, due to the specific skill set required. Hired someone licensed to run the water department along with the others would increase the salary, he said. Subtracting the department's five employees leaves seven workers, plus seasonal part time help, under a director.

Goodwine also questioned the need to have "three employees report to a lead man who reports to a director who reports to the mayor, with a committee chairman in between. There's a real hierarchy!"

Goodwine expressed doubt that the city would gain anything from the addition. "Do you think we have a good set of employees," he asked. "I think they are."

Houmes agreed that the city has dedicated workers but
See POSITION on other side

School board to have election contest; none yet in city filings

Three people - including an incumbent and a former member - have filed to run for two seats representing the old Hoopeston School District.

Incumbent Chris Small, elected in 2011 and current board vice-president, is seeking re-election in the April 2, 2019 consolidated general election.

Dave McFadden is also running for an in-town seat. Appointed to the board in 2015, replacing Stewart Coffman, he mounted an unsuccessful reelection campaign last year but is trying again.

Newcomer Lee Cox, owner of Cox Memorials, was the first HA candidate to file, at 8 a.m. Monday.

Current school board President Mark Schaumburg did not seek reelection.

In the remaining portion of the district, Rich Eisenmann has filed. He works at First Farmers Bank and Trust as a commercial and ag lender.

No contests have emerged in filing for Hoopeston City Council. Incumbents Chad Yaden, Ward 1; Alex Houmes, Ward 3; and Brandon Hamilton, Ward 4, are all running for reelection.

In Ward 2, Kellie Ferrell has filed to run.

As of Tuesday, incumbent Ryan Anderson had not filed for reelection.



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Briefly

The Gathering

Rossville's monthly get-together for senior citizens will begin at 1 p.m. Thursday, at the Rossville fire station. It is by RCO, and everyone is invited.

At the library

Music & Motion, 3:30-4 p.m. Thursday, for kids of all ages to get their wiggles out.

Tiny Tots story program, 10:30 a.m. Friday. For kids 0-4 and their caregivers.

From the Blotter

No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 3:04 p.m. Tuesday at Henning's Root Beer Stand, 411 S. Dixie Hwy. Police said Larry Livingston, of Hoopeston, was southbound in a 2013 Dodge Avenger. He turned toward the restaurant entrance and was struck aby a 2006 Ford 500, driven by Karen Thrush, of Milford, who was unable to slow to avoid the collision, police said.

Position continued from other side

suggested that they sometimes lack leadership. For example, he said if a crew is scheduled to mow on a Wednesday and it rains on Wednesday, "they sit and do nothing."

Officials then talked about having a to-do list posted in each department that can be accomplished on days when regular work is impaired, prompting Ald. Lourdine Florek to quip, "We don't need a director, we need white boards."

Ald. Brandon Hamilton said that in the current budget, 70 percent is earmarked for salaries. "That's outrageous," he said, adding all areas, including part time help, needs to be looked at. "If we're going to overhaul, let's look at the whole kit and caboodle."

Other discussion was held about the condition of the former Ray Williams building, the Essex building and the former Lester Drugs building.

Crusinberry said neighbors of the Williams building believe it was "left in sort of an unfinished condition" with adjacent buildings. He explained that the roof of Williams' building extended to the attorney's building next door and that when the roofing was cut to demolish William's building, it was not secured on the other structure.

Crusinberry said the city received two bids from Acton Construction, one to repair the roof for \$3,950 and the other, to fix pocket holes and other issues in two build-

Wreaths across America ceremony

A Wreaths across America wreath-laying ceremony will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday at Red Top Cemetery. This is the first year the ceremony has been held there. The public is invited to attend.

Christmas cantata

Antioch Church of Christ's Christmas cantata, "Call Him Jesus" will be presented by the choir and Sunday school choir at 10:10 a.m. Sunday. Everyone is invited.

Service for those grieving

A Blue Christmas Service for those who are grieving this holiday season. Sunday, December 16 at 5 p.m. at the Hoopeston United Methodist Church.

Breast cancer support group

Hoopeston Breast Cancer Support Group meets at 6 p.m. the third Thursday of each month at The Pit Stop at Fast Lanes. The next meeting will be December 20. The group offers support to all past and present breast cancer survivors.

ings, for more than \$6,000. Crusinberry added he did not know who requested the bids from Acton, who won the bid to demolish the Williams building.

As for the former Essex building, Acton, who owns the building, reportedly told officials that the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency has frozen further work pending an unspecified issue.

Crusinberry said EPA officials denied issuing a work-stop order and are waiting for a response from a consultant hired by Acton.

According to an agreement between Acton and the city, Acton had 180 days from closing to complete the "NAPA wing" where Hoopeston NAPA plans to move. According to records, the deed to the building was transferred to Acton in December 2017.

Jeff Coss, owner of the former Lester Drugs building, attended Tuesday's meeting. Crusinberry, who had asked to meet with Coss and was denied, said the city attorney had tried to contact Coss' attorney with no success.

"I'm sure he'll be getting back to you," Coss said, then outlining infractions he believes officials committed ,which include entering the building "like a bunch of criminals," taking things from the building without legal documents and improperly classifying the building as dangerous. "If you had hired an engineer to handle it, we wouldn't be here today," he said.

For more information, call Pat Foster, (815) 984-4040 or (309) 208-9828.

Obituaries

BUSHUE - Harold L. Bushue, 86, of Rankin, died Monday, Dec. 10, 2018 at Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana. Visitation will be 4-7 p.m. Friday at Knapp Funeral Home, Rankin. A prayer service will follow at 7 p.m. Funeral Mass will be at 10 a.m. Saturday at St. Anthony Catholic church, Hoopeston. Burial will follow in Rankin Union Cemetery, with military rites by Cissna Park American legion Post \$527. Memorials are suggested to donor's choice.

Weather

Chance of snow today. High 33. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 17. Tomorrow, sunny. High 28, low 17.

Classifieds

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

1 BR, single/double occupancy efficiency apartments available at Princess Apartments, Hoopeston. \$450/mo., \$450 deposit. Clean, secure building. All utilities, refrigerator, stove included, coin laundry available on premises. No pets. Pick up application at Bricks and Ivy Sports, 201 E. Main St.

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Openings available for construction workers. Concrete experience would be helpful. Apply in person at Silver Brothers Construction Co., 105 E. Washington St., Hoopeston.

Part-time CNA, 2nd & 3rd Shift, every other weekend off, please no phone inquiries, apply in person at Autumn Fields Adult Community, 325 E Orange St, Hoopeston IL 60942

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