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Just the Facts

Monday, August 12, 2024

Hoopeston's only locally-owned news publication!

P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston IL 60942 www.justthefacts.net

Council expected to act on deal for hotel water/sewer, road

Hoopeston City Council will hold a special meeting Tuesday to vote on whether the city will pay for water infrastructure and a road for a planned hotel.

The meeting will include discussion and possible action on a development agreement between the city and the investment group headed by Russ Leigh.

Under the proposed agreement, the development will be sited on 3.52 acres along Rt. 9, west of Hoopeston Marathon. Development is set to include a hotel of not less than 42 rooms, a restaurant, storage facility, strip mall, and a retaining pond, if necessary.

The city's part of the project will be to install water infrastructure on the property and a road connecting the property to Elm St.

The main entrance to the development will be located on Rt. 9.

City officials have earmarked \$50,000 of tax increment financing (TIF) funds and \$200,000 from city ARPA (American Rescue Act of 2021) funds the federal government distributed in response to the COVID pandemic. An additional \$600,000 will come from Vermilion County ARPA funds.

The \$850,000 is enough to cover the water/sewer costs and a large part of the road, said Mayor Jeff Wise. "That's all the City can do though," he said. "We do not have any other funds available."

A clock is ticking on the county's share of the money. If an agreement with the developer cannot be reached, Hoopeston has to return the county money this fall, Wise said. "In my opinion, this is the last best hope for a hotel near the intersection of Rt. 1 and 9. This amazing \$600,000 gift from the County won't happen again," he added.

Hoopeston officials have hoped to draw a motel or hotel to the city since 2003, when then-Mayor Chalmers Flint said getting a motel on Rtes. 1 and 9 was his dream, one that "looks like an uphill battle at this point."

In December 2003, Flint announced a Chicago developer was interested in a project but potential environmental

issues were feared.

In 2005, Mayor Bill DeWitt announced Hoopeston took possession of the Baer's Hotel and Trailer Park, paying \$125,000 for the property. An owner of two motels in Danville was interested in developing a Hoopeston motel and, in October 2005, bid \$1 for 4.458 acres of the Baer property. That developer withdrew his interest in a local motel.

In 2008, talk of a motel was resurrected and an agreement signed with a Monticello man planning to open an independent motel, which also failed to materialize.

In 2010, Mayor Bill Crusinberry told the city no progress would be possible on a motel because banks were not loaning for motel construction and chains were not planning new construction, either. That same year, the city paid \$7,000 for a feasibility study that showed Hoopeston could support a 40-room motel.

Six years later, Crusinberry told the council that Cobblestone Hotels, which had previously declined to consider putting a motel in Hoopeston, contacted Crusinberry, expressing interest.

In 2017, Russ Leigh bought the land where the hotel is planned to be sited, purchasing it from Hoopeston Retirement Village Foundation.

The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. at city hall. It is open to the public. A complete agenda and Zoom link are at cityofhoopeston.com.

From the Blotter

Alexander Wilson, 23, of Hoopeston, was arrested after police were called at 6:33 p.m. Wednesday to the 300 block of North Market for a report of a broken window.

He was taken into custody on preliminary charges of criminal damage to property and intimidation of a witness and was taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville to await arraignment.

Isabella Linares, 19, of Hoopeston, went to the po-
See BLOTTER on other side

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Briefly

At the Library

Library personnel are looking for small (approx. 4") tulip or bell shaped white or frosted glass lampshades for an upcoming craft. Drop them off at the main desk

Obituaries

SCHARLACH - Steven Kent Scharlach, 80, of Carbondale, died at 7:10 p.m. Monday, August 5, 2024, at home. Visitation will be held from 10 a.m. until the 11 a.m. funeral Tuesday at Anderson Funeral Home, Hoopeston. Burial will follow in Oak Hill Cemetery, Watseka, with military rites by Hoopeston American Legion Post 3384. Memorials are suggested to Hoopeston American Legion Honor Guard, 502 E. Penn St., Hoopeston IL 60942. Condolences may be shared at anderson-funeral-home.com.

Weather

Sunny today. High 90. Tonight, mostly clear. Low 71. Tomorrow, mostly sunny. High 85, low 62.

For real time Hoopeston weather, visit justthefacts.net/weather/.

anytime.

A representative of Illinois State Rep. Chris Miller will have mobile office hours at the library from 10 a.m.-noon on August 20. This changed from the original date of August 13.

Anyone who has questions or needs help with issues related to the State of Illinois - such as FOID card applications, state-based services and more - are invited to stop by. No appointment is needed.

Koffee & Konversation

Hoopeston Methodist Church will hold Koffee & Konversation at 8:30 a.m. Tuesdays. Free coffee, sweets and conversation. All are welcome!

Breast cancer support

Hoopeston Breast Cancer Support group meets the third Thursday of each month at The Pit Stop at Fast Lanes Bowling Alley. The next meeting will be August 15. Please spread the word and join us for a meeting to offer support to past and present breast cancer survivors.

For more information, call Pat Foster, (815) 984-4040 or (309) 208-9829.

Blotter continued from other side

lice station at 4:26 p.m. Wednesday. She was arrested on preliminary charges of criminal damage to property and mob action for a prior incident and was released on a notice to appear in Vermilion County Circuit Court.

Shannon W. Baker, 52, of Hoopeston, was arrested after police were called at 3:51 p.m. Thursday to the 800 block of South Market for a report of a battery. She was located, charged and released on a notice to appear in Hoopeston City Court.

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