

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

As plans for a combined new fire hall and ambulance facility progress, the future structure may also take on some new possibilities.

According to a short report at Monday's city council meeting, the building may include a tornado shelter, as well as an office for County Emergency Manager Paul Kunnemann.

Kunnemann attended the meeting, and informed the council there is FEMA grant money available if the building would include a tornado shelter.

Kunnemann noted FEMA's goal in awarding such grant money is to correct situations or prevent damage from storms and other disasters. Grant funds can also be sought for items like back-up generators.

The "rough" plans so far for the building include eight bays for fire, ambulance and other emergency apparatus, offices, training rooms and restrooms

Early estimates on cost run between \$1 million and \$1.2 million.

Plans are to construct the emergency services building between 7th and 8th Sts., on the west side of Broadway, where the former grade school building stood. That building was torn down this fall.

JEO Consulting has been working with the county on development of its hazardous mitigation plan, which has included discussion of this building.

The next meeting on that effort will be held in Imperial on Tuesday, Jan. 20, Kunnemann noted.

Other council business

- Errors and omissions and employer liability coverage in a \$1 million policy was taken out with U.S. Specialty to cover council members if brought into litigation relating to the city's three senior services facilities—the Manor, Heights and Parkview. State statutes generally protect such board members from being sued individually, but may not cover them if the person bringing the suit lives outside Nebraska, said Agent Clayton Luther. The coverage will cost \$2,500 per year and has a \$5,000 deductible. In Luther's recent review of coverage at those facilities, he said that specific coverage was lacking.

- Re-elected council members Doug Gaswick and Sue Moore signed their oaths of office. Both were re-elected in November. Gaswick was then re-elected council president, who runs meetings or handles other city business if the mayor is out-of-town.

- Public Works Director Pat Davison reported the city experienced unusually high electrical usage last Wednesday, Dec. 3, when it neared the summer peak. The city hit its summer peak in July at 7371 kw, but the Dec. 3 peaks reached 7362 kw. For the month of November, the city sold 3.5 million kw of electricity. The late corn harvest and need to run dryers has a lot to do with this late-year usage, Davison said.

- Upgrades of the water well at the airport will be made, Davison reported, and the city will eventually abandon the well by the city shop. He's been meeting with engineers on that work.

- Formal adoption of an ordinance that prohibits addition of fluoride into city water was approved. That came after voters in November overwhelmingly favored not adding the chemical.
- A request from some city employees to be given the Friday after Christmas as a paid holiday resulted in no action by the council. The employees will have Christmas Day as a paid holiday. Council members said employees can take a vacation day or take the day off Dec. 26 without pay if they choose. All city operations will be closed on Dec. 26. City employees receive a total of nine paid holidays during the year.