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The Imperial Republican

Just like East 5th and East 12th Streets, East 9th Street will also be resurfaced with concrete.

On Monday night, council members voted to create three street improvement districts for those three streets, and now all of them are scheduled for a concrete surface.

In the original planning, East 9th Street was slated for an asphalt overlay.

However, as council members visited with local residents and had at least one patron attend several meetings with concerns, they opted to spend the extra money for concrete.

It was estimated an extra \$300,000 more will be spent on a concrete street versus one overlaid with asphalt. Part of that extra cost will be for some drainage work and possible curbing on the street, as well.

“If we’re going to do it, we’re going to do it right,” said Council President Doug Gaswick.

“And, that’s the concrete option. The question is do we do it now,” he said.

Councilman Chad Yaw said all the people he’s talked to favor the concrete option as the only way to get rid of the severe gaps in the current 9th Street surface.

Engineer Kent Cordes at the last council meeting said he couldn’t guarantee there would be no remaining “bumps” with an asphalt overlay.

Gaswick said, “I know it’s a lot of money, but it has to be done. And, it’s only going to get more expensive.”

By bidding all three streets early next year for concrete instead of one specifying asphalt, Gaswick also said he hopes that will help bring a better bid.

While a vote later in the meeting created the three street improvement districts (SIDs) on those streets, the council does not plan to assess landowners whose property adjoins those streets because the work involves repairs versus new.

The SIDs are required as part of the bonding process.

Cost of rebuilding all three streets is estimated over \$2 million. Much of the cost will be bonded, according to City Clerk/Administrator Jo Leyland, but added some sales tax dollars that go to the street department and highway allocation funds may also be used.

Legal advertisements will run for 30 days notifying the adjoining landowners of the SID creation, allowing time for comments.

Other council business

- All four members of the council and mayor are tentatively planning to be at the Oct. 22 Upper Republican NRD board meeting, with interest in an agenda item on a water transfer involving land recently purchased by the city. Council members learned last month that a transfer of water rights to AK Acres, Inc., from 20 acres of the former Melvin Miller property had been approved by the NRD board. At a Sept. 14 council meeting, City Attorney Phil Pierce was directed to write a letter to the NRD board, requesting a review of that water transfer. Council members and other city officials had intended to keep all of the water rights on the property, according to discussion at the Sept. 14 council meeting, and felt the NRD board had

misinformation before approving the transfer of water. The city closed on the property that includes 77.82 acres in August, planning to use much of it for a light industrial development site and possibly some area for residential.

- A unanimous council vote was recorded, recommending approval of a Class 1 on sale liquor license (beer, wine, distilled spirits) for Jack's Steakhouse and applicant Jack Stinnette. He recently reopened the restaurant at 415 Broadway which has an adjoining lounge. The council's recommendation will be forwarded to the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission, which is charged with issuing liquor licenses. A public hearing was held Monday prior to the vote with no public comment.

- At an estimated savings of nearly \$62,000 over 10 years, the council voted to call in the city's previous storm sewer bonds originally issued for \$980,000 and combine them with the bonded costs of the current water project on Broadway and East 12th St. An ordinance approved the new bond issue of \$1,350,000 that covers the original issue and the new costs related to the current projects. Mark Munford of Ameritas was the meeting to discuss the issue.

- An agreement with West Central Nebraska Development District (WCNDD) for coordinating a nuisance abatement program for the city is expected on the council agenda in November. Community Development Director Leslie Carlholm reported that she and a representative of WCNDD have driven throughout the community, and have broken up the city into quadrants. Should an agreement be reached, the work would start in one quadrant and move to the next. The city's 2009-10 budget includes \$20,000 for nuisance abatement programs.

- Discussion of the former Jim Clane lot on the north end of Broadway was held after the council several weeks ago asked that it be placed on the agenda for consideration of possible sale. There is a neighbor interested in its purchase, and City Clerk/Administrator Leyland said at Monday's meeting there may also be some interest from a developer in building a duplex or fourplex at the site. Carlholm said there is a need for such market rate rental housing in Imperial, and there could be an incentive, such as donating the lot for that project, to get something built, meet that rental housing needs and make it cash-flow for the developer. She noted the lack of market rate rental housing causes difficulty for some businesses here to recruit workers. No action was taken, but the council asked Carlholm to put together a cost analysis relating to use of that lot.