By Russ Pankonin
The Imperial Republican

Imperial city council members moved East 5th and East 9th Streets to the top of the priority list for this year's 1- & 6-year road plan.

A hearing on the plan was held during the council's regular meeting Monday night.

Engineer Kent Cordes with Miller & Associates of Kearney presented the plan to the council based on needs and street conditions.

Cordes identified East 5th Street as one of the streets in need of some type of repair or replacement.

Before making a specific recommendation on how to proceed, Cordes recommended doing some soil boring under East 5th to determine the condition of the base under the street.

The original plan presented delayed improvements on East 9th Street in front of the school. However, council members directed Cordes to include it in the one-year plan as well.

In addition, soil boring will be conducted on that street.

Cordes said the soil testing will serve as one factor in deciding which options to examine.

If the base is sufficient, Cordes said it would be possible to mill off some of the existing asphalt on both streets and do an asphalt overlay.

This would be the least expensive option.

But with the cracks in 9th Street, he said the city could expect cracks to redevelop in the future with an overlay.

Another option would be to totally mill out the existing asphalt and use that for a new base for an asphalt street.

Council member Doug Gaswick said he considers 9th Street near the school to be one of the worst streets in Imperial.

In addition, the street will see more traffic in the future with the pool and football complex being located on that same street.

When asked about the cost difference between asphalt paving versus concrete, Cordes said a big factor is whether there is a hot mix plant in the area for road projects.

In that case, asphalt paving is generally less expensive. But to his knowledge, he was unaware of any road projects in this area planned this summer.

If asphalt has to be trucked in from any great distance, the cost of concrete becomes more competitive with asphalt.

Concrete usually costs more initially, he noted, but typically lasts 50 years or more.

The council has about $1 million slated for street improvements in this year's budget.

Cordes will report back to the council after soil boring and testing is completed. If the go-ahead is given, bids could be let in April.

New bucket truck purchased

Council members approved the purchase of a four-wheel drive Altec bucket truck on a Ford F-550 chasis for the electrical department. Cost for the rig was $81,738.

The council opted not to trade the current bucket truck and left the option open to either sell the truck through a bid process or keep it as a backup if a sufficient bid is not made.

The council reviewed two bids for demolishing the old swimming pool, removing the concrete, filling in the hole and bring in topsoil for future landscaping.

The council wants to seek more information on the specifics of the two bids before making a decision.

In other action, the council:

•Closed out the CDBG loan to Allo Communications. The loan helped Allo in creating 13 new jobs.

•Looked into an insurance policy to provide some type of liability coverage if the city is responsible for sewage backup into a home.

•Received the semi-annual report of the Citizen's Committee for LB 840 sales tax funds. The Dec. 31, 2008 balance in the fund stands at more than $260,000.

•Reviewed the personnel policy manual, making some slight revisions.

•Approved Mayor Annie Longan's appointments to the various city committees.

•Learned that the casing on an existing well near the airport has been cleaned and reopened, allowing the city to use it as a backup water source.