

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

There wasn't a lot of earth-shattering action at Monday's Imperial city council meeting.

Mostly routine business was conducted, along with reports from superintendents and a couple of action items.

Reports from Police Chief Larry Browning, Public Works Supt. Pat Davison and Economic Development Director Leslie Carlholm touched on a number of subjects.

Council members will study the possibility of adding some office help to the police department, after Browning visited with them Monday night.

Currently, all of the paperwork, phone answering and waiting on residents coming to the office is done by the chief or the three other police officers. Browning believes some of that work could be handled by some additional office help.

Council members Chad Yaw and Dustin Weiss had visited with Browning earlier on the issue, and spoke in favor of the office help. Browning said he could easily use someone full-time.

"If I was offered another officer or office help, I'd take the office help," Browning said. "It would be a boon to the police department."

Mayor Annie Longan suggested that a job description be written up for review. She also believes the office area should be made more secure if office help is hired.

Browning said he recently ordered a second computer for the office. Previously, all four officers were sharing the same one.

In his report, Davison informed the council that repairs to the airport well, which included replacement of the pump and bowls, are completed. Cost was around \$33,000.

The repairs will allow it to be back in operation once two coliform samples are taken and are clean. The airport well is one of five operating water wells that service city utility customers.

Davison said plans are to eventually plug the old city well inside the utility shop at an estimated cost of \$3,000. A certified well driller must do that work, Davison said.

That well has high levels of atrazine, and has been out of commission for a long time. Until it is plugged, it would only be used in the case of a major fire in town, he said.

Carlholm gave an update on the city attitude survey currently underway in town. The surveys are due back to the city office on Feb. 16. Utility customers who fully complete the survey will realize a \$5 rebate on their February bills.

Housing appears to be the biggest need expressed in the 70-plus surveys that have been turned in so far, Carlholm said.

The council, after waiving second and third readings, approved a minor change in the city's ordinance that established the city's economic development program, and use of funds, including those available through LB 840.

The change eliminated a paragraph in the "purchasing real estate and commercial or industrial sites" section, that required the Nebraska Department of Economic Development review a prospective site before it is purchased by the city. That no longer is required, and the change was requested by DED, Carlholm said.

Other council business

- The council gave its blessing to issuance of a special designated liquor license for alcohol sales at the Frenchman Valley Ducks Unlimited banquet the end of March. The council was approached about the special license last month, but the paperwork was not submitted for review Monday. The council approved it contingent on the proper paperwork being presented and approval from Police Chief Larry Browning. The event will be held in the city gym.

- In a related area, the issue of charging a city fee for special designated liquor licenses was discussed, but no action taken. City Clerk/Administrator Jo Leyland said there is currently no city fee assessed for them, but noted other year-round holders of liquor licenses in Imperial do pay an additional occupation tax besides the state fee.

- A change to the city's personnel manual was made, dealing with holiday pay for part-time employees who work year-round. It was inadvertently left out of the manual when it was approved earlier. Those employees receive one-half the rate of full-time employees.