

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

In light of a successful grant application announced last week for a rental housing project in Imperial, council members voted to upgrade the street on which the 10 houses will be built.

On a 3-1 vote Monday, the council accepted an alternate bid that will pave Second Street in the Cornerstone Development Park.

The base bid sought costs for a graveled Second Street from Holland St. to Highway 61, but when the specs were developed, council members added the alternate bid for concrete to consider if the housing project was a go.

Second Street will not be paved the entire distance to Highway 61, however.

The 40-foot wide street with curb and gutter will run from Holland to Orsa St.

Other infrastructure including water and sewer work is part of the project, as well.

Van Kirk Sand & Gravel, Inc., of Sutton had the low bid for both the Second Street base bid and alternate paving bid.

Van Kirk's original bid with the paving option was \$729,874.57. Broken down, they bid \$463,045.25 for the infrastructure/gravel, while the alternate bid for the paving option added \$266,829.32.

Total project cost approved Monday was \$684,574.25. Of that total, \$221,570 was for the change order.

In presenting the project details Monday, Kent Cordes of Miller & Associates noted that some change order negotiations resulted in about a \$45,000 lower overall cost than the original bid with paving.

Much of the bottom-line lower cost was due to a deduction for the gravel and a lower concrete final cost.



The change order vote passed 3-1. John Arterburn dissented, saying he would rather see the money go to paving Third Street.

Arterburn noted that housing developer Matt Thomas had just asked that Second Street be opened, not necessarily paved.

"These houses are going to get built aggregate or not," Arterburn said.

"If we are going to try to push this (area)," Arterburn said the city should develop areas where others might also build.

Voting for the change order to pave were Chad Yaw, J.R. Reeder and Dan Thompson.

Yaw said the paving of Second Street may also attract more interest in the property on the south side of Second Street.

"It comes down to how progressive we want to be with this ground," Yaw said.

Work on the Second Street project is expected to start after the first of July.

Bonds will be sold to fund the project, and LB840 city sales tax money will be used to make the bond payments. A check Monday night showed a balance of \$500,000 in the LB 840 account. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) may also be utilized in funding the cost.

Other council business

- On a request from Sid Harchelroad, the city will raise South Street, which runs to the north of the new Harchelroad body shop being built on East Highway 6. Harchelroad said the surface drops from 14 to 24 inches along that road which meets two exits from his building, where large trucks and other vehicles will exit to the north. As it is now, trucks and cars will scrape the exit driveways as they drive out the building onto South Street. The council voted 4-0 to approve the work, expending a maximum of \$6,000.

- As the Imperial Volunteer Fire Department continues to work on plans for a new fire hall, the council gave the IVFD building committee discretion on which engineer with whom they will work. Fire Chief Nick Schultz met with the council Monday, and said estimated engineering costs from both Jeff Tidyman and Miller & Associates are about equal. The council encouraged Schultz and the committee to visit some of the buildings engineered by both firms, and return to the council for more discussion on their preference for an engineer. The department will likely have some preliminary drawings made for use in presentations to the public before a bond issue vote on the project. Action was tabled, and Schultz will return to the council's May 20 meeting for more discussion.

- Up to 15 metal benches could be placed throughout the city if a project proposed by a McCook firm proceeds. The council approved a Memorandum of Understanding to allow JLB Welding of McCook to contact local business for sponsorships on the benches. Cost to the business would be \$800, allowing them to place a business sign on the bench. The council directed the park board to determine locations and other details.

- Bids for both a bucket truck for the electric department and a mower for the parks department were approved. The bucket truck will be purchased from Altec Industries of St. Joseph, Mo., for \$184,012. Theirs was the only bid received. The city will attempt to sell its current bucket truck on its own. The council accepted the low bid from Ford New Holland at \$13,000 for a new Grasshopper 930D mower, which includes a \$3,500 trade for the old unit. Also bidding was 21st Century Equipment.

- Courtney Odens, Kambree Meeske and Morayah Cupp were at the meeting to present the city's 28th Tree City USA flag. The three fourth graders received the flag April 2 in Lincoln, where they represented the city at the Tree City USA ceremonies. To earn the designation, cities must have an arborist or tree board, have a tree ordinance, spend \$2 per capita for tree maintenance or tree education and celebrate Arbor Day. The city will be holding its annual Arbor Day activities with the fourth grade class this Friday, when Mayor Dwight Coleman will also sign the proclamation.