

**By Jan Schultz**

**The Imperial Republican**

Dog owners in the city limits who are cited for continual “dog running at large” violations will start paying bigger fines Dec. 1.

The council also passed an ordinance at Monday night’s meeting that removes the option for city residents to apply for an excessive animal permit.

Regarding the fines, the council unanimously approved an ordinance that establishes escalating fines that will eventually increase to a maximum of \$100 after a third loose dog violation is received within a year’s time.

The first violation will cost \$25, the second \$50 and the third, \$100, based on the ordinance’s wording.

Subsequent fines after the third one within a year’s time will remain at the \$100 maximum. If a year passes between violations, the fine for a dog running at large will stay at \$25.

Added to those fines, no matter if it’s a first, second or third offense, will be court costs of \$48.

Passage of another ordinance relating to animals was also passed unanimously Monday.

In current city code, residents had the opportunity to apply for an “excessive animal permit” to keep more than two dogs/one cat or two cats/one dog (three total) at their homes in the city limits.

With passage of the ordinance this week, that application process is no longer available.

City Clerk/Administrator Jo Leyland said at a meeting earlier this month that the excessive animal permit also violated city zoning regulations since more than the allowed number of three animals constitutes a “kennel.” Kennels are not allowed in residential areas.

Council President Chad Yaw conducted the meeting Monday in the absence of Mayor Dwight Coleman.

### **Other council business**

- A half hour closed session was held to discuss negotiations for the purchase of property for a potential new fire hall. Following the closed discussion, Fire Chief Nick Schultz and council members Chad Yaw and Dan Thompson were named to a committee to meet with the CCS board of education facilities committee. At the Oct. 8 school board meeting, their committee of Tom Gaschler, Dirk Haarberg and Willy O’Neil was given authority to negotiate with city representatives, then bring back a recommendation or proposal for a full board vote. The city approached the school board several months ago about their interest in the north end of the Wellington football field for a possible fire hall location.

- Two unsalvageable properties in Imperial at 315 East 5th St. and 130 East 17th St. were again the subject of discussion this week. A letter to the owners of the East 5th property was returned unclaimed, so the council passed a motion giving the building inspector authority to remove the garage there with approval from City Attorney Josh Wendell. The city attorney said he’d like to try to make contact with the owners one last time before the garage comes down. The site has been posted as a nuisance for more than 30 days. Those demolition costs will be

assessed to the owners, and city staff will likely be used take down the garage. Action on the East 17th property, an unsalvageable trailer, was tabled so the city attorney can also try to make contact with those owners.

- A request for a 30-day extension on completion of the street work on East 2nd in the Cornerstone Commercial Park was denied. Public Works Supt. Pat Davison told the council the request was made by Van Kirk Sand & Gravel, general contractor for the project. The decision was made to deny the request after he conferred with engineer Kent Cordes of Miller & Associates. The project there has a substantial completion date of Nov. 15, with a penalty of \$800 per day beyond that. Davison does expect a few days allowance will be given to Van Kirk for weather-related reasons. Davison also informed the council he will begin seeking bids this week on a new city trash truck. He included funds for the truck in the 2013-14 budget.

- -The police department has been busy with safety presentations at the school, reported Sgt. Ryan Wisnieski. He also said two officers have completed training in Spanish, and they will be working with the school on a lock-down drill to be held next month.

- “Shop Imperial” posters are being distributed to local businesses in anticipation of the upcoming holiday shopping season, said Community Development Director Jason Tuller. The city partners with the Chamber of Commerce on the shop at home effort. City officials are also involved in the upcoming career fair at Chase County Schools set for next month.