

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

Two motions were made at a special meeting of the city council last week, but in the end, action stalled on purchase of the school's Wellington field for a new IVFD fire hall.

At its Jan. 14 meeting after months of negotiating, the CCS board of education approved a \$130,000 offer to the city for purchase of the entire football field.

At a Jan. 22 special council meeting, also attended by seven firemen, an initial council motion to reject the purchase agreement on the school property failed on a 1-1-1 vote.

Voting yes was Dan Thompson, voting no was Chad Yaw, while John Arterburn abstained. Councilman J.D. Reeder was absent.

Yaw made a second motion to accept the purchase agreement, which died for lack of a second.

So where does last week's votes on the purchase agreement leave the siting for a new fire hall?

Fire Chief Nick Schultz said this week the council has given the IVFD the go-ahead to proceed with developing preliminary plans and cost estimates for a fire hall at the Broadway location.

It appears the uncertainty of additional infrastructure costs including electricity and sewer

extensions is part of the concern about the Wellington site. And, in a straw vote taken at a Jan. 17 special council meeting, the firemen preferred the Broadway location by a 2-1 margin.

Public Works Supt. Pat Davison estimated infrastructure costs to be over \$19,000 at the football field, with added costs to run a service line to the building, on top of the land price.

However, at either location, there will be costs for service lines and transformers, according to the discussion. The costs would be less at the Broadway site.

The Broadway site north of the library is owned by the city so has no purchase price. Due to less available space there, the building will have to be L-shaped vs. a rectangular-shaped one at the football field.

While infrastructure costs at the Broadway site would be less, the building construction costs might be higher because of its "L" shape and proximity to other buildings, according to previous discussion.

Part of the purchase agreement for the Wellington site includes a requirement that a soccer/sports field be situated on the south end of the field, so all of the land costs cannot be factored into the fire hall construction costs there.

Schultz estimated about 60 percent of the land space there would be used for a fire hall.

Study of the pros and cons at both sites has been ongoing.

"No one wants to ram this down the voters' throats, so the council and firemen want to make sure the building serves the needs of generations to come," Schultz said.

“But from a safety standpoint, something needs to be done soon,” he said.

Space is tight at the current fire hall as trucks continue to get bigger and more units are added. The department’s dive rescue trailer and equipment are now housed off-site.

The IVFD is hoping to get a bond issue vote for the hall construction on this year’s May Primary Election ballot.

In related action at the meeting, the agreement between the city and B D Construction was approved on a 3-0 vote.

When it was presented at the Jan. 20 council meeting, there were questions raised about wording in the agreement regarding payment to contractors when work was not properly completed.

City Attorney Josh Wendell had visited with Mark Lewis of the firm in between the meetings to get clarification.

The city has opted to use the construction management process for the building project, which allows the council to see all of the bids from all contractors on the project, but provides fewer guarantees in some areas.

As construction manager, B D Construction’s fee will be 7.5 percent of the total project cost.