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from 1A



July 16, 2016



PHOTOS BY CHANTELE MEYER & JACK DAVIS/SUJSLAW NEWS

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Council from 1A

Ruede added, "The dedication of this couple to make sure our citizens are treated fairly and in compliance with state, federal and local laws, rules and regulations has helped to

make Dunes City 'A Nice Place to Live.'" Judy Martin accepted the recognition plaque on behalf of both her and her husband, who was unable to attend.

In other business, the council voted to approve Resolution Series 2016, No. 10, to refer to

the voters a proposed 3 percent city tax on the retail sales of recreational marijuana sold within the city limits.

The resolution will be placed on the Nov. 8 General Election ballot.

The council also announced that the second annual Dunes

City Community Expo will be held Saturday, Aug. 20, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at City Hall.

In addition to experts and demonstrations, State Sen. Arnie Roblan and State Rep. Caddy McKeown plan to attend. Refreshments and food will be served.

City from 1A

into modular units while the maintenance building was constructed. A permanent office structure would be completed in Phase II as funds allowed.

According to the staff report, Scott/Edwards Architecture (S/EA) outlined the potential cost savings of combining Phase I and Phase II based on economies of scale. The architect and city staff realized they could save \$800,000 by combining the two phases, with another \$100,000 saved from the use of modular buildings and inflation.

City Manager Erin Reynolds

needed the council to approve changes to S/EA's contract.

"I ask for affirmation that you want us to move in this direction of an expanded Phase I that includes the administration building," Reynolds said.

The council voted to approve the architectural services contract update.

Mayor Joe Henry said, "We started out with a \$6.5 million building, and I think that (Public Works Director) Mike Miller, staff, Erin and everybody have done a great job of keeping it to a \$3.5 million building. You saved millions."

S/EA's new Phase I will include continued research into the site and city codes; the

design of schematics, including site plan, floor plans, exterior elevations, interior and exterior renderings, building systems and draft specifications; and the creation of construction documents for bidding, permitting and construction. S/EA will also assist with the permitting and bidding processes.

The revised agreement with S/EA includes architectural services for both buildings and totals approximately \$302,000.

The city's budget for the Public Works Operations Facility includes a total project cost of \$3.5 million. The project cost \$175,000 in fiscal year 2015-16, and \$3.325 million is budgeted for 2016-17.

Messmer said, "Our plan is to work through design and engineering in August and begin working with the Planning Department in the process. ... Our goal is to be moved in by June 30 of next year."

Once the office building is complete, Florence's Public Works and Planning and Building Departments will move in.

"We will have the best of what we need in the city," Reynolds said of the new facility.

At this point, there is no timeline for the clearing of the current Public Works facility, 989 Spruce St., though the city plans eventually to revert the property into a city park.

School from 1A

In May, district voters narrowly defeated a \$36.9 million bond measure to build a new high school to replace the current 46-year-old campus.

"The biggest immediate challenge is getting the message out again and getting the community informed about the high school bond," Grzeskowiak said. "We really got rushed into the process this last spring. We got lucky and got into the draw (for \$4 million in state grant money) and we basically compressed what is normally a 12- to 18-month process into about 12 weeks."

According to Grzeskowiak, the shortened bond process didn't give the district a chance to thoroughly inform the community of all the reasons why new construction made more sense than extensive remodeling, or worse, just doing nothing. He said the administration has been internally talking about the need for a new, code compliant

building for almost five years.

"I'm not out to scare anybody with 'if we have an earthquake everything is going to fall down,'" Grzeskowiak said. "You can't predict an earthquake, but if we make modifications to the building we fall into current code compliance and then we do have to make everything compliant. We could end up spending an exorbitant amount of money and still not address space, safety or technology needs.

"People kept talking about earthquakes," he continued. "It is about code compliance. Once you open a wall, its not just earthquake code, its Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, it's about asbestos removal. The high school was built in the late '60s and opened in the early '70s, so there is asbestos in the building. It is all currently sealed, but as soon as you start digging into a wall and working with conduits, then all of a sudden you have an issue."

Grzeskowiak said he plans to have a revised bond time-

line to present to the school board during the July 27 meeting.

His other priority is improving attendance and increasing the high school's graduation rate.

"Kids that are typically struggling to graduate are kids that are missing a lot of school, and they have been missing a lot of school since kindergarten, first-grade and second-grade," Grzeskowiak said.

He said students who miss 10 to 12 days a year have a 20 percent less chance of graduating. They also miss a total of 1.5 years of school by the time they are seniors.

"One-time events like family reunions don't hurt kids," Grzeskowiak said. "But if every other Friday a kid just takes off because they can, that impacts the student's chances of graduating."

"If you have done 10.5 years of school while everyone else has done 12, having trouble graduating shouldn't be a surprise to anybody," he added.

Grzeskowiak wants parents to be informed of the state guidelines for keeping students home for illness.

"If you have had a fever in the last 24 hours, if you have had diarrhea in the past 24 hours or if you have vomited within the past 24 hours, don't come to school. Otherwise, come to school. That's the message we want to get out," Grzeskowiak said.

The school has several after-school resources available for students and parents who are in need of tutoring or extra homework time.

"Twilight, on all levels, has a strong homework component with certified teachers," Grzeskowiak said. "The Boys and Girls Club has done a tremendous job this year with their onsite tutoring. Being at the middle school, I've had a lot of kids talk about how much help they get going to the Boys and Girls Club Teen Center."

Grzeskowiak said several church groups also offer after-school programs with tutoring.

"Specifically I think the Boys and Girls Club has done a very good job. They have really turned things around this year with their teen program. Their numbers are up and the middle school kids are excited about going."

Grzeskowiak credits the school staff and administrative team with turning around the decline in graduation rates.

"They are going above and beyond the call, trying to get kids re-engaged with school," he said.

With his extensive background in the district, Grzeskowiak may be better suited than anyone to lead the district through the challenges of the coming years.

"In three to five years, I'm hoping that we are having this conversation in the commons of the new high school talking about the positive changes that have happened with the expanded opportunities for kids and the positive turnaround in graduation rates," he said.

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