

Banks puts parks levy on ballot, discusses police department

Banks City Council agreed, at their August 10 meeting, to place a four-year park levy on the November ballot. The levy would provide funds for the maintenance needs of Greenville Park and Scout Cabin Park. The levy amount will be 75 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value and would generate approximately \$186,000 over four years. If approved, revenue from the levy would not be received until December, 2005.

Annual maintenance costs for Greenville Park are about \$30,000 for mowing, litter removal, landscaping, and irrigation. The levy would provide about \$13,000 per year for park improvements.

Police qualifications discussed

Orlowski told council that the judge of the municipal court in North Plains had questioned the qualifications and certification of Banks Police Department officers. According to Or-

lowski, the judge's concerns were due, in part, to misinformation and that both full time and reserve officers are working to comply with other issues raised by the judge. A final concern will be addressed when the department's remaining officer attends police academy in late September.

Councilor Katie Murdock suggested re-hiring Bruce Bringman in order to meet the city's need for a certified officer. She told council that she would like the mayor and two council members to "enter into discussion [with Bringman] about returning him to the force."

Orlowski responded that re-hiring an officer who had resigned "was a questionable management practice." Councilor Kirk Andrews said that he was "OK with [the city not being able to] provide good coverage until the levy passes," as a natural consequence of the inadequate voter participation needed to pass the levy.

Andrews also said that the

previously approved timeline for hiring a chief, passing the levy and allowing a new chief to rebuild the department should be followed. There was no action on Murdock's request.

Council also discussed the process designed by a sub-committee for hiring a new chief. The committee, chaired by Murdock and including Orlowski and Teri Branstitre, has worked to develop a process that will allow applicants to be evaluated impartially. After reviewing all applications against the advertised requirements, the top four or five candidates will be interviewed by a panel of police professionals from throughout the county, and a panel of community members including representatives of local businesses and school district, and the mayor. The city will host a reception for the top applicants on the same day that interviews are scheduled, to allow councilors an opportunity to meet the candidates. There will also be a visit by at least one member of the hiring committee to each candidate's current work place. The closing date to apply is August 30.

Skate Park Update

Council member Pete Edison agreed to serve as liaison to a committee that is studying the feasibility of building a facility for skateboarders in Banks. Last month, a group of young people asked the council to consider development of a skate park. At that time it was suggested that the Banks Com-

munity Foundation (BCF) may be interested in the project.

Denise Dethlefs, chairman of BCF, explained that the Ford Foundation program is a four-year program, not just a one-time training and that BCF will be working in the program for another three years.

"They love building skate parks or doing anything that benefits kids," Dethlef said.

BCF could help apply for grants to build the facility, she added, explaining that the maximum award for a capitol project of this kind was 40 percent of the total cost. The community would have to provide the remainder through a combination of other grant funds, in-kind and material donations and cash from fundraising.

According to Dethlefs, projects of this sort generally take at least two years to complete. BCF would be available to help the city with community outreach and publicity.

Water Rights workshop

Orlowski and public works superintendent Tim Grossnickle attended a workshop with representatives of the city of North Plains, engineers from both cities and a Certified Water Rights Examiner (CWRE) to discuss water rights. Tom Michalek, CWRE, said that both cities have existing water rights in the permit stage. Both began the process in the early '90s but did not complete it. Michalek recommended that they move toward securing full certification. A water right would

allow each city to pump up to the certified amount. The Water Resources Department has indicated likely approval for transferring a portion of the water rights from North Plains to Banks.


North Plains is in the process of securing water from another source, due to an expected future arrival of a plume of contamination. When that connection is complete, in about six months, it will be more difficult to certify the full amount of their current water right. Banks would be named as a new point of appropriation and area of use to complete the transfer.



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