

By Jan Rahn

Managing Editor

Residents in attendance for the city council's vote on annexation of their land were breathing easier following defeat of the proposal last week.

Due to lack of a second by a council member in the first motion, followed by the absence of three other motions by council to pass ordinances annexing land surrounding the existing boundaries of the City of Grant, the proposal failed during a special meeting of the council on Tuesday, Dec. 22.

The four areas surrounding the city proposed for annexation included an area west of town that involved the Mastre subdivision with additional acreage, an area to the north that included the Styskal subdivision and several acres on either side of Highway 61 north of 10th Street, an area in the southwest that included several acres south of Highway 23 toward the west, and an area east and southeast of Grant that included acreage straight east of the corporate limits of town along with acreage on both the north and south sides of Highway 23 going east.

With 15 patrons in attendance, unfinished business was opened with action on the first ordinance on annexation.

Council member Darrell Pierce made a motion to pass area-1 annexation on the west side of town following the third reading, however, the motion died due to lack of a second by remaining council members Tim Pofahl, Dennis Hansen and Wayne Pick.

None of the council members moved on the other three ordinances to annex the north, southwest or east/southeast areas.

In preparation of passage of the proposed annexation, other ordinances had been placed on the agenda, such as animals running at large and discharge of firearms.

Mayor Mike Wyatt, who was in favor of the annexation, said it was a process of discovery. It's the only way an issue gets explored; it never gets full attention otherwise, he said.

When annexation was being pushed to a vote, the council was informed of all of the pros and cons and arrived at their conclusion, although not the one he was hoping for.

Wyatt said the city is in a good financial position without a lot of debt. He wants to keep it that way. He said the failed annexation takes away an option to increase funds.

With Grant's current population base, state aid is a concern, he said, because state aid is determined by population.

Although the financials are in good shape now, Wyatt said he is looking at the financial picture down the road.

He said without annexation the council will have to look at other ways to increase funds, such as property tax or increased fees for services such as water, trash and sewer—or to save money, decrease the services themselves.

Should something major break, the cost of the project is beyond what the city is prepared for.

"We can't save money fast enough to cover it," said Wyatt. "I'm speaking not only as mayor, but

as a citizen—how do we catch up?”

In Other Business

- Council approved an enforcement authority ordinance in a 4-0 vote. The ordinance clarifies who has authority for health, safety and nuisance issues for a one mile radius of the City of Grant. • In case of annexation approval, an amended ordinance prohibiting animals from running at large was approved 4-0 by the council.

- Council passed an ordinance amending the procedure for obtaining a permit due to a typing error in the code book.

- Council waived the third reading and took no action on amending an ordinance pertaining to discharge of firearms which was placed on the agenda in case the annexation proposal passed.

- Council voted to proceed with improvements to the airport taxi-way by having Mayor Wyatt sign the documents to go forward.

- The first reading was held on an ordinance protecting drilling and operation of wells and other facilities already in existence.

Airport Hangar Fees

At their first meeting in December, council approved a resolution approving changes in airport hangar rates for the City of Grant.

Effective Dec. 8, hangar rates for various aircraft per month and per year are as follows:

Trailer \$100/month, \$900/year; single engine \$125/month, \$1200/year; twin prop \$175/month, \$1800/year; turbine \$375/month, \$4200/year.

Mayoral Appointments

The council unanimously approved the following mayoral appointments during the Dec. 8 meeting:

Tyson McGreer-city superintendent, Gary Beckler-code enforcement officer, Phil Pierce-city attorney, Tom Werblow-city engineer/street superintendent, Don Softley-civil defense director, Jessie Faber-city clerk/treasurer, Dr. Clifford Colglazier-city physician, Jim Brueggeman-board of health, Larry Harden, Ole Sihm, Gaylord Lacy, Robert Bounds-airport advisory board; Lloyd Logsdon, John Long, Steve Bottom-board of adjustment; Rosie Barry-cemetery board; Bernie Deaver-economic development committee; Larry Peterson-library board; Nichole Toner-parks and recreation advisory committee; Cathy Harden-planning commission; Rick Salsman, Glenn Taubenheim-board of public works; Jon Forney, Tom Epling-tree advisory board.