

By Jan Rahn

Managing Editor

In the absence of Mayor Mike Wyatt, the Grant City Council moved on the One & Six Year Street Plan, made a board appointment, and acted on a mowing contract bid, among other action items at their regular meeting Tuesday, Jan. 25.

Street Plan

Tom Werblow of TC Engineering presented the One & Six Year Street Plan during a council hearing early on, citing several projects that include new concrete, flooding issues, intersection repairs, seal and armor coating and curb repair.

Council members later unanimously approved a resolution for the One & Six Year Street Plan.

Mowing Contract

A bid by Uehling's Total Turf was accepted by council to grant a \$22,000 park maintenance contract for the City of Grant.

Four other bids for mowing and spraying were submitted for the summer maintenance of Grant City Park and the ball fields.

Economic Development

Bernie Deaver from the Economic Development Committee presented a semi-annual report to the council.

A breakdown of the Economic Development Program gave current information and an overall summary of each business's loan status, along with a conclusion of the application process.

Mayoral Appointment

Council President Tim Pofahl, acting as mayor, appointed Ann Burge to the Economic Development Advisory Board, with unanimous approval by council.

Burge's term on the board expires in 2012.

In Other Action

- Council members unanimously approved an application by Cactus Palace for a temporary liquor license on Feb. 12 during the Perkins County Pheasants Forever banquet.
- By council's approval of an ordinance, the Perkins County Treasurer was authorized to collect special assessment on property at 204 Hancock Avenue.
The property is not taken care of, the city has mowed the property and applied fees and a lien on it which the treasurer will assess through taxes.
"Historically, it's a problem," said City Superintendent Tyson McGreer.
- Further discussion for financing the city's water projects will be put on the next meeting's agenda.
- Perkins County Sheriff Jim Brueggeman presented his report for the month of December, explaining the breakdown of traffic-related and animal calls, along with others that ranged from property damage and welfare check to suspicious circumstance and arrest.
"It was a relatively quiet month for the most part," said Brueggeman.
Sheriff Brueggeman said his biggest concerns for the next budget are increases in fuel costs and the price of patrol vehicles.
"My goal is to hold the line on everything else," he said.

History of Grant's Economic Develop Program

- July 30, 2002: Grant voters approved a new Economic Development Plan by a margin of 145 to 24 during a special election.
 - This voter approval meant that \$128,000 per year would be aimed at bringing growth to Grant. It allowed Grant City Council to implement the Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act which is governed by Nebraska State Statute LB 840. Prior to the election, there was no way the city could use its excess (proprietary) funds to help sponsor economic development.
 - The approval meant the city could use the \$128,000 from property taxes and then replace that money with proprietary funds—the bottom line being there would be no increased property taxes.
 - An ordinance was passed by Grant City Council on Aug. 27, 2002 adopting the Economic Development Program passed by voters in July.
 - The first step in implementing the new ordinance was to establish a citizen advisory committee. That committee was approved by council on Oct. 22, 2002. Members appointed to serve the first term included Ron Kent, Tanya McArtor, Tim Meyer, Darrell Werner and Terry Ziegler. The committee's responsibility was to review and make final approval for all requests for the annual funds of \$128,000. These funds have been available annually under the program since the Grant Economic Development Program was put into place.
 - In June 2003, a proactive stand was taken toward development by advertising for individuals,

corporations or partnerships interested in establishing a new business ranging from manufacturing or sale of goods to services or processing—or developing a tourist attraction in or near Grant.

- In September 2003, it was announced that a new telephone sales center called Turtle Island would be coming to Grant.

- In October 2003, economic development was given a boost by the formation of a one-year program called HomeTown Competitiveness, joining together the towns of Imperial and Grant through efforts of Kevin Poppe of Great Plains Communications in Grant and Rick Rigel, former director of public works in Imperial. The cities and supporting entities put up funding to establish the program with the four cornerstones of leadership, capital, entrepreneurship and youth.

- By mid-November 2003, only 15 months after adoption of the city's ordinance to establish an Economic Development Program, five businesses had received assistance.