By Jan Rahn
Managing Editor

Grant City Council members and the mayor reluctantly accepted the resignation of Tyson McGreer as city superintendent during their regular meeting on Aug. 28.

McGreer, who has served in the position at Grant since February 2008, resigned to accept an offer as city manager in Colby, Kan.

"I really appreciate being given the opportunity to work here," McGreer told Mayor Mike Wyatt and councilmembers Bob Tatum, Tim Pofahl, Kirk York and Wayne Pick. McGreer said leaving Grant was an extremely difficult decision.

"We've enjoyed your service, Tyson, and we hate to see you go," said Wyatt.

"There is a lot of momentum going in town and I hate to walk away from it," said McGreer, "but there are plenty of capable people here to keep it going."

McGreer's last day of work at city hall in Grant will be Friday, Sept. 21, and he begins his new position on Monday, Sept. 24.

His wife, Mandy, who is employed at Adams Bank and Trust, will stay behind temporarily with their young sons Tate and Brody while expecting their third child in December.

City council is actively pursuing applications by advertising in the region to fill McGreer's position as soon as possible.

Council dealt with several other new business agenda items during last week's meeting, including the approval to place a proposition on the ballot for renewing the economic development plan, nuisance abatement resolutions, agreements with West Central Nebraska Development District, water tower maintenance and budget presentation.

Ballot Proposition

In a tie vote broken by Mayor Mike Wyatt, council approved a resolution to place a proposition on the November ballot for renewing the city's economic development plan.

Voting in favor of the resolution to let the voters decide the future of the city's economic development plan with an amended amount were council members Tim Pofahl and Wayne Pick. Nay votes were cast by Bob Tatum and Kirk York.

Nuisance Properties

Karl Elmshaeuser of West Central Nebraska Development District (WCNDD) gave a presentation to council updating them on the nuisance properties.

• Council approved rescinding a nuisance declaration on Washington Avenue at the recommendation of the nuisance officer because the property owner had met requirements in cleaning up the property.

• Also rescinded by council was a nuisance declaration in the 500 block of Logan Avenue. The property has now been cleaned up.

• Council approved resolutions to declare two properties as nuisances.

Property at 2nd and Logan is declared a nuisance for vehicles that need licensing. The property owner was given additional time past the fair to clean up and has not done so.

Property in the 500 block of Hancock Avenue was also given additional time to license or remove a trailer which has not been done and thus was declared a nuisance.

The city will now proceed by allowing property owners 30 days to comply with clean up from the time they receive notice.

The property owner may request in writing a hearing before city council. A "show cause"

hearing will give both the governing body of the city and the property owner a chance to produce evidence.

Within 14 days after the hearing the governing board will vote on whether to rescind or enforce the violation.

• Council approved a motion to abate property at 204 Hancock.

The property was declared a nuisance in June. Letters sent via mail were returned. Notice was posted and published informing property owners of the violation of the nuisance ordinance and allowing ample time to be cleared.

The city will now abate the property by clearing trees, a shed, and boarding up the home.

Siren Project

Council approved a resolution authorizing Mayor Mike Wyatt to sign an agreement with West Central Nebraska Development District to pursue Federal Emergency Management Agency funding to fund a siren project.

WCNDD will provide technical assistance for establishing the Grant siren project through consultation, application preparation, management of timeline and coordination with Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.

In April 2010 council approved a resolution to apply for federal emergency funds as part of the county's hazard mitigation plan to install new sirens within the city limits. WCNDD has now been contracted to write the grant application which could take approximately 30 hours and is due the first part of November.

There is already $5,000 available from the Grant Suburban Fire District toward the cost of the estimated $50,000 project. If funding is granted through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, much of the cost would be paid for. The city could pay 25 percent of the total cost.

A new siren would be placed at the park and the siren atop city hall would probably be moved near to the courthouse.

New sirens would be radio activated, include three tones, more decibels, and have a 15-30 minute battery backup.

In Other Business

• The second reading was heard on an ordinance to vacate/close an alley running along a tract of land owned by Perkins County Health District. Utilities will be moved prior to the expansion project of the hospital.

• Council received a conference call from the city's accountant to give a presentation on his assessment of the 2012-13 budget.

"You're doing a great job out there," said Terry Galloway of Almquist, Maltzahn, Galloway and Luth of Grand Island, who was unable to be present for the meeting.

• Hastings Memorial Library's annual report was presented to council by Library Director Robin Quinn.

• An application for an economic development loan for a new restaurant was approved by council.

• Council approved a water tower maintenance contract with Utility Service Company, Inc. of Georgia to provide service needed to maintain the city's 200,000 gallon water tank.

Care and maintenance will include exterior/interior renovation, repairs, cleaning and annual inspections.