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Beaver BUZZ

August 1st, 2018
Volume 3 Issue 8

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Water, Sewer, and Trash Rates

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Since the proposed water, sewer, and trash rates were published in last month's newsletter, many residents have voiced their concerns about these increases, and many rumors have spread concerning these rates. Please note these are only PROPOSED rates at this time, and no actions have been taken by council at this time to raise any rates for water, sewer and trash services in Gaylord. Yes current city council members understand that major increases would not be feasible for all our residents, and they have at this time no intentions of drastically raising the rates within Gaylord. Council is currently taking the time and having city employees prepare different types of expenses reports to thoroughly break down exactly where all the spending is occurring within each fund, to give council a better picture of exactly how much certain areas are costing the city each month, year, etc.

In the proposed rates from WSU, the water rate was not recommended to increase by much, and it was proposed to be just \$3.00 more per account for both in town and out of town accounts per month. This \$3.00 is just a 6.6% increase per account. Currently we have an average of 90 water users per month, and this increase would bring in an additional \$270.00 per month or \$3,240.00 per year. So while this increase appears to be substantial for a community of our size, let's compare this to the most recent project we had completed to our water tower. Earlier this year we had the interior and exterior surfaces of our water tower re-coated and painted. This is a necessary project which needs to be done every 10-15 years in order to maintain the life of our water tower. Council opted to issue general obligation bonds that went towards paying for this project. Just to have painting and re-coating of the surfaces of the water this project cost the city \$89,090.00. So in 12 years, this re-coating and painting will need to be done again as regular maintenance to our water tower, and with a small 10% increase in fees that will occur for this expense, this now brings the expected cost of this project to be \$97,999. Ideally we need to save enough revenues from the water fees to pay for this, as it's a regular maintenance task, so \$97,999 divided by 12 years equals \$8,167 per year. So each month we would need to set aside \$8,167 divided by 12 months equals \$680.55. The proposed increase that would potentially bring in an additional \$270.00 of the needed \$680.55 just for this expense is only 40%.

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City Burn Site

City Council would like to remind all residents the only place to place yard waste of trees, limbs, shrubs, brush, and grass clippings is the City Burn Site west of 9th Street. NO ITEMS ARE TO BE PLACED AT THE OLD BALL DIAMOND!!! This spot was only secured for the Community Clean-Up project due to the large amount of trees and limbs this project removed within town.

Also council would like to remind all this City Burn Site is for residents of Gaylord or residents who are currently receiving water and sewer services from the City of Gaylord are to only bring items to this location. If you want to bring items from an outside property you must first ask City Council permission and make these arrangements.

If you have any questions concerning this matter please contact a City Council member or call the City Office at 697-2697.

Flushable Items and our Sewer System

Many wastewater systems continue to experience costly maintenance costs all caused from the usage of flushable but non-dispersible items routinely flushed into the system daily. These items typically include items such as cotton balls, q-tips, condoms, feminine hygiene products, cloth bandages, rags, plastic linens, disposable diapers, and dental floss. The most recent addition to this list includes baby wipes and pop-up sanitizing cloths. These cloths are marketed as flushable, which is true, but when placed in water they are not dispersible. This means when placed in water, they do not break down, but stay in their original form, and these cloths can when entering the system snag on tree roots or hang-up when the pipe bends. Over time that can prevent the flow of sewage and begin to back-up sewage and can get to the point this sewage back-ups into residents homes. The main problem is that they can become lodged in the impellers of sewage pumps and others process equipment causing the pumps to stop suddenly and sewage to back-up. For many smaller sized systems, removing these “rags or cloths” from pump stations and bar screens has become a costly additional maintenance routine procedure. Ed Burt can attest to the additional work and costs these cloths can cause, as he routinely removes them from the components within our lift station. At times these backups and sanitary sewer overflows or (SSOs) cost valuable resources and violate statewide Wastewater Discharge Requirements which in turn can cause for fines and fees to be assessed to your local wastewater system. In turn, if these fines are too costly or occur too often as users of the system, rate increases may need to be established to cover the costs of these fees.

The largest misconception of these products comes as they are highly advertised and marketed at “flushable”. This verbiage allows the consumer to feel confident when buying this product that all is safe and these cloths once flushed will do no harm to the system, as why else would they advertise these items as flushable, right? But instead, consumers should be concerned if the items they are planning on flushing are dispersible or when placed into water will the item break apart or break down.

A good example is toilet paper. Once it is wet, it starts to break apart and dissolve into very small pieces. If the items you are flushing will not disperse when placed in water then these items do not belong in the wastewater system and should never be flushed.

So please keep this advice fresh in your mind before you push that flush lever and end up costing our community by flushing items into our system that do not belong. Overtime each of these small items can cost all residents “big bucks” with the increased costs to our system. If you have any questions concerning any of these products please contact the City Office.



Minutes from the July City Council Meeting

City of Gaylord - Minutes of July 11th, 2018 Regular Meeting

The Gaylord City Council met in regular session in the Community Center at 7:00 p.m., July 11th, 2018.

Present Members: Barb Lehmann, Wil Neussendorfer, and Jim Muck.

Absent Members: Wendell Felsburg, Treasurer Crystal Ifland

Presiding: Mayor David Tucker

Present also: City Clerk Aubrey Neussendorfer, Utility Superintendent Ed Burt, Jed Kingsbury, Paul & Lawana Shellito, and Karen Frieling.

Mayor Tucker called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Citizen's Report: Jeb with V & K Trash addressed council concerning the possibility of his company providing trash services within the City of Gaylord. He believes based on our current number of pick-ups charges to the City would be between \$11 - 12 per account, per month. They would keep the weekly pick-up, but the date would more than likely change from Tuesday to Wednesday or Friday. They would also if awarded the contract to have a one or three year contact signed with the City as this would lock in the prices during the length of the contract. Then when it would be time to renew prices would be changed if needed at this time.

Paul, Lawana, and Karen all had concerns on the water and sewer rates. Council addressed their questions and reported the proposed rates that where in the newsletter are not final as these are just proposed rates and council is considering all options before any changes are made. Council is reviewing things and are seeking ways to cut back on expenses, but the cost of operating the water and sewer systems rises each year and thus we need to continue to review and make changes to our rates to make sure we are collecting enough to cover these expenses and to prepare for required updates and improvements in the future so we are not scrambling for funding to make repairs like we just experienced with the Water Tower project.

The minutes of the May 17th Special Meeting was read. Barb made the motion to approve the minutes as read. Wil seconded, motion carried.

The minutes of the June 13th Regular Meeting was read. Barb made the motion to approve the minutes as read. Wil seconded, motion carried.

Mayor Tucker called for the reading of the bills. Barb made a motion, seconded by Jim, to approve payment of bills, including any routine bills outstanding. Motion carried. Bills paid out \$12,221.88.

Mayor Tucker asked for a report of utility arrears: Richard Bose, Darin Godsey with three accounts, Ron Peterson, AMI and True Farms. Account #34 was disconnected.

OLD BUSINESS:

- McDowell is still waiting to receive a signed easement from Mr. Horning.
- Mr. Walsh from Johlin was here on June 19th and while he was not able to find anything wrong during his visit, he later did determine to necessary adjustments to make to allow for the system to operate with a 1-2% error. He will send return labels for the printer and old meter.
- Mr. Penner with Maguire Iron feels that waiting to fix the seeping on the standpipe until are next cleaning on 2021 will be fine unless the leak becomes a major issue.
- Wil made the motion to proceed with the Replacement and Removal of the Fire Hydrants as proposed by Tracy Kingsbury in the bid total just under \$16,000 and he performed all the work. Barb seconded, motion carried.
- With the grant funds the Fire Department received this spring they ordered 8 complete sets of Bunker Gear, 5 sets of wildland gear, all new hoods, one pair of boots for a new members, and roadside rechargeable flares.
- Ed reported the new playground equipment is assembled to the point he will need additional help to finish. Ron Peterson has volunteered his time to help Ed finish this project.
- Aubrey had received notification the Home Depot Grant was not awarded to make improvements to the City Park restrooms.
- Aubrey reported the School House Project and Gaylord Community Foundation Group is now lead by Edith McClain and they continue to meet in Smith Center.
- Council reviewed the proposed Water, Sewer, and Trash rates and discussed various options of how to proceed. Council asked the clerk to prepare more expense reports with a breakdown of trash and sewer to determine what each is costing us currently and bring to next month's meeting.

- Lead & Copper testing will take place in late July. Individual homeowners will need to collect samples and once results are received Ed will need to go and discuss these results with the homeowners.
- Mayor Tucker reminded all council to read through the Council Manuals so they can be approved at next month's meeting.
- Aubrey reported the AC was fixed before Frieling Grain's event in June and has continued to work since. It just needed coolant but it was recommended the unit needs to be replaced in the future.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Ed reported Ad Edge does not feel it's the media in the Arsenic System which needs to be replaced but the four valves need to be re-built. They will send a quote for the cost of having the valves re-built and will report back to council next month. They feel the media should last 10 years or better.
- Barb made the motion to sign up both of the cities credit cards for the rewards program offered. Wil seconded, motion carried.
- Barb reported the Housing Board had met and they have decided to no longer pursue combing the maintenance person at the housing with the utility superintendent at the city.
- A resignation letter was read from council member Gene Casteel.
- Aubrey reported online training courses are offered for the Fire Department from VFIS the company who provides our current insurance policy for the department. Aubrey will let the department know about these courses.
- Aubrey reported she had completed the audit for EMC for April 2017 through March 2018. This audit is based on payroll during this timeframe.
- Council discussed usage of our City Burn Site from items brought from properties that are not within city limits or connected to our water or sewer system. Council agreed when noticed letters need to be sent to these individuals or organizations to remind them to first seek permission from the City Council before taking any items to the City Burn Site. Cedar Lawn Farms wishes to donate to the city for the usage of the city burn site and council left the amount they wish to pay up to the individuals. Ed also reported no dumping signs have been placed at the ball diamond at this is not a permitted site for dumping trees as it was just used as a one-time area during the community wide clean-up and will be burned at the earliest convenience.
- David asked for all side streets, sidewalks up to the sides of the buildings on Main Street be sprayed, weed-eated and mowed to improve the appearance of Main Street especially within the business district. This also needs to be continually maintained during the warmer months.
- Barb made the motion to sign the contract with Mapes & Miller to have them complete the 2018 Budget for the City of Gaylord. Jim seconded, motion carried.

REPORTS:

STREETS: Ed reported he will begin hauling rock now that harvest is over and the scales are available at the elevator. Ed asked if council wished to first place a layer of rock under the millings they will be adding around the Fire Station. Council agreed this would be better to form a more solid foundation before the millings is placed. Council reminded Ed most culverts in town are plugged or partially blocked and need to be cleaned out.

SEWER/TRASH: Ed is having issues with the vacuum pump at the lift station. Pricing information from Smith & Loveless will be compared to NAPA in Smith Center.

WATER: Jim reported he experienced brown water from his home's exterior hydrant.

FIRE: Wil reported the department had been on three runs in the past month. No news on if the snakes have been eradicated yet within the fire house.

HOUSING/COMMUNITY CENTER: Barb reported all 12 units at the housing are now rented.

PARKS: David reported the areas around the Community Center need to be sprayed and the parks need to be sprayed for broadleaves again.

UTILITY SUPERINTENDENT: Ed reported he would be gone for a couple of hours on July 12th. He also had fixed a wiring issue on the backhoe as he initially thought it was the alternator. David asked Ed to order another 200 gallons of diesel for the shared fuel barrel.

TREASRUER: no report

CITY CLERK: no report.

Mayor Tucker stated the next council meeting will be August 8th, 2018 at 7 p.m.

With no further business before the council, a motion was made by Wil and seconded by Jim to adjourn. **Motion carried and meeting so adjourned.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

(City Clerk)

Approved:

(Mayor) (Date)

Disclaimer: These minutes are unofficial and not official until the Gaylord City Council approves them and are signed by the Mayor.

Water, Sewer and Trash Rates continued from page 1

But you are probably thinking with the current rates we are charging for our water services, we should easily have enough funds to save for expenses such as our water tower project, right? Well, the answer is sadly no. It is very expensive to maintain a water system, especially for a smaller community where there is not as many users to help cover these expenses. The State of Kansas has rules and obligations set for water systems to follow, and it does not matter if your community has 50 users or 5,000 users. The last major water rate increase occurred in November of 2014, which included an annual 3% increase, but now with the addition of our bond payments of an average of \$12,000 for the next 15 years, council needs to continually review our rates to make sure all our obligations are covered along with preparing for future improvements so each time a project is needed to be completed we are not scrambling to seek funding.

Sewer & Trash

In reviewing the proposed rates for sewer and trash, they are recommending to separate the two moving forward and also proposing drastic increase within each one. During the July council meeting council has already determined they do not plan to separate out the trash charges from sewer but continue to keep them as one charge as they currently are. One option council is currently looking out is contracting our trash services to an outside company. Council obtained a proposed bid for these services from V & K Trash during the July meeting and will compare this option to what the trash services is currently costing the city. By comparing this information they can then determine what option is not only better for our residents but also good for the city. Historically the revenues collected in the sewer/trash fund have not been set at a high enough rates to cover expenses and have any left to prepare for any future improvements or regular maintenance expenses. For example since 2013 the average collected revenue within the sewer/trash fund has been \$14,192.29. But the average incurred expenses in the sewer/trash fund since 2013 have been \$15,166.39. This translates to a loss of \$634.39 per year. This loss cannot continue as this will add up quickly and then major problems will occur. Employees and council members have heard the talking about “what expenses could the sewer department have that is costing so much money?” Well that is a good question, The major expenses with an average since 2013 have been the repairs and maintenance areas with the city spending around \$4,532.83 per year. Our lagoons were built in the 1980’s and most of the underground infrastructure is much older than this. We also have a lift station which is a major component of our sewer system way past its life expectancy. While we have applied for funding to replace this with a newer used lift station this is only a temporary fix. This is an expensive component which will need to continually be upgraded and replaced. Additional expenses our sewer department has include; payroll and associated taxes, utilities, insurance, chemicals, tools and equipment, lab fees, administration and office, postage, training, and fuel.

Two major projects council is currently aware which need be necessary within the sewer portion will include a new lift station and sludge removal in the lagoons. Both of these are very costly projects and if we do not begin to prepare and plan for these projects things will literally begin to “back-up”. Estimates for a new lift station obtained this past year came in at around \$50,000. So even if our current lift station would be able to last another five years, which is highly unlikely, this would mean we need to save \$10,000 per year or \$833.34 per month just for this project. We currently have 84 sewer accounts and to bring in just enough to cover planning for this expense would be \$833.34 divided by 84 accounts equals \$9.92 per user per month. The second major project in our near future would be to have the sludge removed from our lagoon ponds. By inquiring about this project from other towns and our representative from the Kansas Rural Water Association this typically costs around \$75,000. During our last lagoon inspection they anticipate with the current rate the sludge is building up, for this needs to be done in the next 10-15 years. So like most things this estimated cost of \$75,000 will increase so if we figure in a 10% increase, this brings the new estimated totals to \$82,500. For the next 12 years we need to bring in

\$82,500 divided by 12 months equals \$6,875.00 per year, which figures out to \$6,875.00 divided by 12 months equals \$572.92 per month. With an average of 84 users this would mean each user would need to pay an additional \$572.92 divided by 84 equals \$6.82 each month.

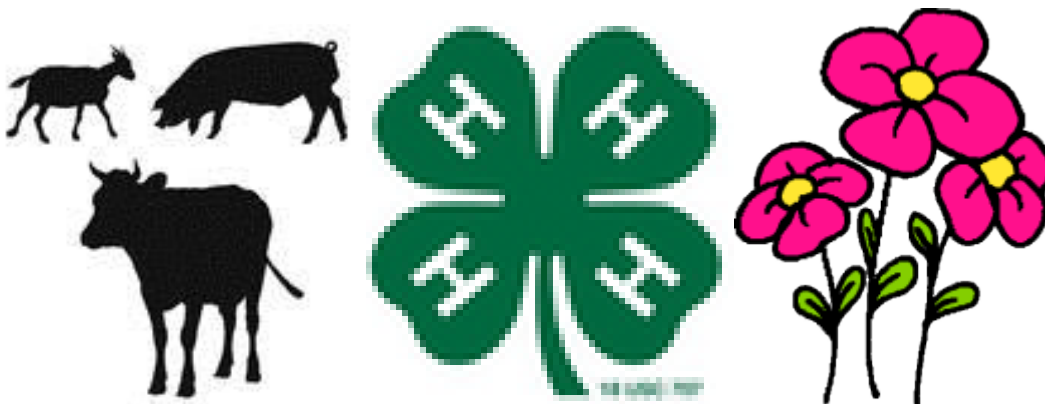
So for just these two necessary projects within the sewer department, our current rate will need to increase by \$9.92 for the lift station and \$6.82 for the sludge removal in the lagoons for a total of \$16.74 which is almost 100% of the current rate of \$16.84 for in town users, and this is not even considering the regular expenses or including anything for the trash services. This also do not account for the number of our users to decrease either. The issue with an aging population is once residents move away, or move into nursing homes, or pass away if no new residents move in and resume these currently active accounts this now means less users to pay for the same if not more expenses. Ultimately it will mean rates will have to increase just to cover basic expenses.

Members of council are not taking these discussions concerning potential rate increases lightly and are considering any and every option but at the end of the day we have to make sure our expenses are covered and preparations are made for future expenses and outside funding options for regular maintenance items are very hard to come by as these reoccurring maintenance expenses are something any water and sewer system should be collecting from its users in order to properly maintain its system. Members of council also are very aware many of our residents are living on fixed incomes or low-incomes and any major increases would not be financially feasible. Also if any increases are going to take place they will need to be spread of a few years to gradually increase to allow for users to adjust budgets accordingly.

Council welcomes any suggestions on how to cut back expenses or to obtain other means of funding for these projects. Or if you have any questions concerning this please contact any City Council Member or the City Office.

Congratulations!!!

To all our local youth who participated and placed in many events at the Smith County Fair in July!! Kids and parents if you would like to share your individual placings from your entries at the fair please let the City Office know by sending an email to cityofgaylord@gmail.com and we will publish this information in the September newsletter.





gARDENing
for the Greater Good

"Gardening for the Greater Good"

is a program developed by the Smith County Centered on Healthy Living Coalition to increase education and consumption of locally produced healthy foods.

We are encouraging local gardeners to drop off excess fruits or vegetables during the growing season to one of the sites below:

Smith Center: Smith County Health Department

Gaylord: Fleta's

Anyone is welcome to drop off, pick up or exchange produce at any site. The site will be monitored to ensure freshness as well as increase distribution to venues such as our county food pantries.

Questions? Contact Nora Rhoades,
Centered on Healthy Living Coalition

785-282-4955

City Council

The Gaylord City Council meets every second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 P.M. in the Gaylord Community Center. The public is *always* invited and can attend the entire meeting, except during Executive Session. If you wish to discuss a particular concern, please let our City Clerk, Abby Neussendorfer; know by the first Friday of the month, so she can add your name to the monthly meeting agenda. We WELCOME the public, and wish we had more citizens attend our meetings. The City Council does their best to address the issues of our citizens, and tries to provide our citizens with a healthy, safe environment with the funds available. Please join in and help our decisions. Please do your part to maintain the quality of our community.

Contact Information

Please make sure to keep your contact information current with the City Office, as when events occur such as Boil Advisories you can be informed as soon as possible. By which ever means you prefer to be contacted: phone, text message, e-mail or via Facebook, please keep this information current with the City Office.

Gaylord Library

Stop in and see the latest additions. We also have a great traveling book selection. Gaylord Library Hours are 9am to 11am on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

City of Gaylord

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WATER BILL IS ENCLOSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER!

Return Service Requested