

Medical marijuana ordinance adopted

Written by Chris Lee

Medical marijuana dispensaries and grow operations within Holyoke city limits will be prohibited following the city council's vote to adopt the ordinance at their Tuesday, Oct. 19 meeting.

The vote was on a first reading of the ordinance and will be voted upon again after a public hearing at the Wednesday, Nov. 3 meeting.

Council members adopted an ordinance in October 2009 placing a moratorium on medical marijuana dispensaries until the council could come up with something for regulation.

City Attorney Al Wall reported on a conference he attended recently. The main topic of conversation was related to medical marijuana. He noted a lot of towns are moving forward with ordinances similar to the one Holyoke passed on first reading last Tuesday.

The ordinance states it is unlawful for any person to operate or permit to be operated a medical marijuana center or cultivation operation within the city. All such uses are prohibited in any location within the city, or within any area annexed to the city in the future.

A full version of the ordinance may be found in the Oct. 28 print issue of the Enterprise.

Another item on Tuesday's agenda included the business lease for Veronica's Hair and Nail Salon. There was some discussion as to whether to keep the lease at three years or drop it to one year. Council members also suggested increasing the lease from \$175/month to \$200/month as they felt \$175 was fairly low.

The council voted 4-1 to increase the rent to \$200/month and have the lease signed for one year instead of three. Ray Bailey voted no; Orville Tonsing, Brian Akey, Steve Moore and J.C. Peckham voted yes; and Kevin Scott and David Churchwell were absent.

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Dangerous building to be taken down

Mayor Orville Tonsing addressed the status of demolition on the Baldwin building located on West Denver Street. The council received a letter from the owner prior to the Sept. 21 meeting stating demolition would begin within 30 days. The 30 days were up Oct. 20 and council members were concerned with the progress.

City Supt. Mark Brown said he spoke with the owner prior to the letter being received in September. Brown said he was told Greg Koellner of Koellner Enterprises was hired to take the building down. When contacting Koellner before the 30 days were up, Brown was told by Koellner he had been called and told he was no longer the one in charge of the demolition.

Councilman Akey said the owner told him a group from Wray was contacted to complete the job at a lesser rate. However, the new contractor possibly wouldn't be able to begin until November. The owner was going to be contacted Wednesday, Oct. 20 to clarify progress on the project.

Reports of city officials

Council members heard a report from Police Chief Phil Biersdorfer. He said officers have picked up patrol efforts in school zones and have issued tickets to those traveling too fast. He also said the department has investigated multiple traffic accidents. One included a car colliding with a bicycle.

Council member died Friday

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Council members were saddened by the news that councilman Ray Bailey died Friday, Oct. 22. Services were held Wednesday, Oct. 27 at Phillips County Event Center.

Just three days before his death, Bailey updated the council toward the end of Tuesday's meeting on the CML Policy Meeting he attended recently. He had many good things to report and urged his fellow council members to attend the meeting in the future.

Other business

In other business Oct. 19, council members:

—allowed Supt. Brown to advertise the city will be accepting bids for the half section of farm ground.

—allowed Tonsing to sign the Colorado Discretionary Aviation Grant Application for apron expansion phase II in 2011.

—held a 40-minute executive session for a conference with the city attorney to discuss specific legal questions.

—renewed the volunteer accident medical plan with CIRSA for 2011.

—accepted the 2011 quote and renewal for Boiler and Machinery insurance from CIRSA at \$945.92.

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—approved liquor license renewal for First Dragon Chinese Restaurant.

—approved travel request for Rich Wittman to attend basic meter course in Scottsbluff, Neb. Nov. 3.

—noted the next regular meeting will be held Wednesday, Nov. 3 instead of Tuesday, Nov. 2.

—held a short work session for the 2010-11 budget.