Following a public hearing at the Jan. 2 City Council meeting, three ordinances involving parking of motor vehicles in residential areas, public nuisances and prohibiting marijuana facilities were adopted with unanimous approval.

All three ordinances were printed in their entirety in the Dec. 27 edition of The Holyoke Enterprise after being approved on first reading Dec. 18.

Ordinance No. 10 establishes a new section to regulate the parking of motor vehicles in residential areas within the City of Holyoke.

Ordinance No. 11 establishes, defines, declares and abates public nuisances within the city.

Ordinance No. 12 prohibits the operation of marijuana cultivation facilities, marijuana product manufacturing facilities, marijuana testing facilities or retail marijuana stores within the city. It also provides for a ballot issue in November of 2014, at which time citizens will vote to approve or reject the ordinance.

Cat problem addressed

Lynda Hagemann addressed the council at last week's meeting with her growing concern for the cat problem in her neighborhood in the 200 block of South Baxter Avenue.

She said feral cats are being fed, and they're now getting in her garage. Others from the neighborhood also acknowledged the problem.

Council members concurred that it's an issue they would like to follow up on, and asked attorney Al Wall to look into potential ordinances for consideration.

Two percent electric rate hike approved

Effective Jan. 21, a 2 percent increase in city electric rates will go into effect, as approved last week.

City Clerk Kathy Olofson explained that the increase will first be reflected on the March 1 bills.

The increase is being passed on by the city, who is receiving the same increase from the Nebraska Municipal Power Pool.

The city receives about half of its power from NMPP. A contract with NMPP was put into effect about 10 years ago, allowing for no more than a 2 percent per year increase. That contract ends Sept. 30.

The increase for 2013 applies to all residential, commercial and demand-metered customers.

The rates will increase as follow:

Residential—service charge of $10.60/month will not change; first 1,000 kwh at $0.09940/kwh will increase to $0.10139/kwh and over 1,000 kwh at $0.08091/kwh will increase to

$0.08253/kwh.

Commercial—service charge of $18.75/month will not change; first 1,000 kwh at $0.09940/kwh will increase to $0.10139/kwh and over 1,000 kwh at $0.08091/kwh will increase to $0.08253/kwh.

Demand electric (large-power users)—all kw at $13.18/kw will increase to $13.44/kw and all kwh at $0.05778/kwh to $0.05894/kwh.

Heginbotham Trust gives money for library brickwork

In her report last week, Olofson said she received a check for $102,000 from the Heginbotham Trust to assist in extensive brickwork at the Heginbotham Library.

Olofson said the Trust indicated they would still like the city to go for a grant through the State Historical Society. Their donation can be used as seed money for the grant application. If the grant is received, then the Trust donation can be used for other improvements for the library.

Olofson told the council this is a very nice gift eartagged for the local library.

Reports from city officials

In city official reports, Superintendent Mark Brown noted appreciation for Jeff Deselms and the rest of the city personnel for filling in while he was off.

He reminded officials of the power outage scheduled for Monday, Jan. 28. Tentative time is 1 p.m., but that will be confirmed by the next meeting. The outage is in preparation for the new transformer that will be put in this spring.

Police Chief Doug Bergstrom said the police department has answered 45 calls for service between Dec. 13-26. He also noted he is still looking for a job description for the code enforcement officer position.

Other business

In other business Jan. 2, the Holyoke City Council:

—approved a bid for $842.78 from Phil Wirges to repair the bathroom at the fire shed. The project involves installing a new toilet and removing existing tile and replacing it with new.

—approved a wage increase of three percent or $67.50 per month for officer Larry Drake as a nine-month step increase to start Jan. 1.

—increased janitorial services for Sandy Saylor by $75 per month, making the total $300 for the city office and $75 for the police department.

—approved the travel request for Lennie Fisbeck and Jeremy Thompson to attend the CRWA School in Colorado Springs Feb. 10-14.

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