

Holyoke City Council plans to update utility tap fees

Written by Kyle Arnoldy

Holyoke City Council members tackled a short agenda at the Tuesday, Feb. 18 meeting, reviewing utility tap fees and addressing possible donation opportunities.

Standard residential utility fees have not been adjusted since 2008, and in that time, City Superintendent Mark Brown noted that the cost of copper and steel increased the most. Council members agreed to move forward with new rates, and a resolution will be voted on at the Tuesday, March 4 meeting.

Adjusting the price based on the increased costs resulted in a proposed standard residential water tap fee of \$1,741.78, up from \$1,278.74. Water line charges per frontage foot of a lot would increase from \$13.44 to \$19.93. For irregular shaped lots, 14.2 cents will be charged by the square foot for the entire lot, up from 9.6 cents.

Sewer tap fees are set to rise to \$77.49 from \$45.45. Sewer line charges per frontage foot of a lot will be \$14.07, up from \$13.17. For irregular shaped lots, a cost of 10 cents per square foot will be assessed, up from 9.4 cents.

Electric tap fees will rise from \$617.15 to \$712.02 and electric line charge per frontage foot of a lot will increase 18 cents to \$10.56. The charge for irregular shaped lots will rise from 7.4 cents per square foot to 7.5 cents.

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Donations approved

Council members approved two monetary donations Tuesday night.

Through a vote, a donation of \$100 to the Partners in Education program was approved. Mayor

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Orville Tonsing and council members Brian Akey, Kevin Scott, Steve Moore, David Churchwell and J.C. Peckham voted in favor of the donation while Scott Murray was the lone vote in opposition.

In a unanimous vote, members also approved a \$175 sponsorship fee for the 2014 Emerald Awards. Peckham was appointed to the selection committee for the Emerald Awards.

Officials report

Brown noted that there have been no power outages since the Feb. 4 meeting and that street crews have remained busy with snow removal.

Holyoke Police Chief Doug Bergstrom reported that between Jan. 30-Feb. 12, the department generated 70 calls for service, made two arrests, wrote three citations, completed four reports and issued seven warnings.

Other business

In other business Feb. 18, the council:

—approved a special events permit for Manos Unidas for March 8 at the Phillips County Event Center from 7 p.m.-midnight.

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—approved a travel request for Kathy Olofson to attend the CEBT renewal conference in Sterling Friday, Feb. 21.

—agreed to send all city employees with CDL licenses to an alcohol misuse and controlled substances use information, training and referral program.

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