

Village continues efforts to enforce dog ordinances, approves water system improvements

Written by Wauneta Breeze

Thursday, 20 June 2013 16:18 - Last Updated Thursday, 20 June 2013 16:20

Dog owners asked to

comply with village ordinances

to avoid legal proceedings

By Sheri Hink-Wagner

The Wauneta Breeze

Wauneta's Village Board extended the deadline to comply with village animal ordinances dealing with dogs to June 24.

The village's ordinance 2008-01 section 4.22 limits the number of dogs permitted in or at the home to two adult dogs.

The board discussed compliance with the dog ordinances at the May meeting. Prior to May's meeting the village sent letters to the three known violators of the ordinance, asking them to

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attend the May meeting.

Only one resident with more than two adult dogs attended May's meeting. She indicated she could come into compliance with the dog ordinances by June 1.

The village board readdressed the issue at their June meeting on Tuesday, June 11. The village attorney, Arlan Wine, reported that letters were sent to the remaining two known to be out of compliance with the ordinance the week prior. He indicated they were given two weeks from the date of the letters to become compliant.

Village board members stated they would verify compliance or lack of compliance after the two week allowance in the letters. If residents are found not in compliance the village will move forward with court and legal proceedings.

The board also discussed ordinance violations in respect to the appearance of property in a residential district. They indicated a letter would be sent to a resident who appears to be storing scrap metal in a residential neighborhood.

The board meeting finished by going into executive session to discuss a possible issue of eminent domain. The board did not reconvene in public session to make any decisions on the issue.

Water system improvements

Village board members approved allocation of roughly \$50,000 to install a 6-inch water main on Cheyenne Street.

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The new water main will provide a second connection to the portion of Wauneta east of the river.

The costs for the project will be paid from reserves in the village's water building fund.

At a later date the village plans to complete a second phase of the project, where the currently 4-inch main along Wichita Street will be replaced with a 6-inch main from the river east.

These plans are part of the village's larger comprehensive water plan, which provides a contingency for supplying the village with water from a new source should they not be successful in lowering arsenic levels below the federal standards.

Comprehensive Plan

Brenda Jensen and April Bell with Miller and Associates were present at the June meeting to discuss the village's comprehensive plan.

Wauneta's comprehensive plan was last completed in 2004 by JEO Consultants. The plan allows the village to outlay its plans for the future and also opens the doors for many community development grants.

Significant funding for completion of a comprehensive plan is available to communities under 50,000 residents, if the community's residents meet Low to Moderate Income (LMI) criteria.

Bell explained that when she searched Wauneta's LMI rate on the Census Bureau's website Wauneta was listed as having a 46.2 percent LMI. In order to be eligible for a Community

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Development Block Grant (CDBG) to help pay for the comprehensive plan the village must have a 51 percent LMI rating.

Therefore, Bell and Jensen recommended the village complete a community income survey to determine if the LMI rate is actually at or over 51 percent.

They explained the surveys are written to be the least invasive way possible, and are kept confidential. She explained the individual surveys are never read by village staff and residents do not have to put their names on the surveys.

The board expressed a desire to complete an updated comprehensive plan, though they did not hire Miller and Associates to do the plan at the June meeting. Instead, they plan to discuss their needs with JEO before continuing down the path to update the plan.

Nursing home budget approved

Board members also approved Sunrise Heights of Wauneta's 2013-2014 budget.

The nursing home's budget year runs from July 1 through June 30.

The budget included an average daily census of 29 residents per day (14 private pay residents, 13 medicaid residents and two skilled care residents).

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Included within the budget was a raise to resident room and care level rates. The rates will raise to an average of \$155/day for medicaid residents, \$181/day for private pay residents and \$350/day for skilled care residents.

The budget also included a raise in administrative fees paid to Rural Health Development (RHD) for administration of the nursing home. The administrative fees will increase 4 percent to \$8,840 per month.

The end of the budget lists a number of "wish list" items on the facility's capital outlay budget. Administrator Lisa Kissinger explained that this list includes facility upgrades and improvements they would like to complete if the nursing home operation is in the black.

Items on the "wish list" include new point of care software for electronic charting, an upgrade required by nursing home governing bodies by early 2014. Kissinger also stated they would like to perform upgrades in the facility's kitchen including a new stove and flooring for the kitchen.

Other items on the list are new mattresses, updating of six windows, finish the fascia wrap to the new sprinkler system, a new dining room table and chairs for the small dining room, new phones, replaced benches for the home's exterior, a new fire alarm dialer, repainting resident rooms, new resident door/name plates and a code alert for the west door.

Superintendent's report

Village superintendent Bill Bischoff informed the board the village has put an underground sprinkler in the upper part of the village park. He also noted the village is working to have more activities for kids.

Bischoff also noted the village plans to armor coat five to six blocks of Arikaree this summer for

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a total cost of approximately \$12,000. Highway allocation funds will be used to fund the project.