

Village considers ATV/UTV ordinance, takes first steps toward completing a new comprehensive plan

Written by Wauneta Breeze

Wednesday, 21 August 2013 17:37 - Last Updated Wednesday, 21 August 2013 17:39

By Sheri Hink-Wagner

The Wauneta Breeze

The Wauneta Village board discussed ATV and UTV usage within city limits at the regular August meeting held Tuesday, Aug. 13.

The discussion arose from a request from the Chase County Sheriff's department. The department sought direction on enforcing violations regarding ATV/UTV use in town and/or updating the village ordinances to allow use of the vehicles.

Board members discussed the pros and cons of allowing ATV/UTV usage in town and determined it would be permissible to allow the vehicles to be used within city limits.

Board members instructed village superintendent Bill Bischoff and village clerk Evelyn Skelton to review ATV/UTV ordinances from other municipalities and bring back a recommendation for the new Wauneta ordinance at the September meeting.

Board members felt having an ordinance that spelled out the requirements of ATVs and UTVs driven in Wauneta would be best.

Discussion at the meeting indicated the ordinance may require an inspection of the vehicles at

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the village office before the vehicles will be able to be driven within city limits.

Income surveys for the Comprehensive Plan

The village took the next steps towards updating Wauneta's Comprehensive Plan at the August meeting.

Miller & Associates of McCook has offered to help the village with the first two steps—an income survey of Wauneta residents and grant writing—at no charge.

The village is able to apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars to write the comprehensive plan, if the village falls within income guidelines outlined in the grant.

To determine if the village meets the income guidelines, where 51 percent of households fall below a certain percentage of the mean household income level, it will be eligible to apply for the CDBG dollars.

In the coming weeks the village will begin to recruit volunteers to hand deliver income surveys around town. Village officials stated the surveys will be delivered and picked up in a manner so that the information provided is kept confidential.

Dog issues

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Board members reviewed the status of dog-related issues and complaints again at the August meeting. Dog issues have become a hot item at village board meetings in the past several months.

“We’re still on top of this dog issue, we’re not going to let off of it,” said Bischoff. “My hope is that people who are in town know they can only have two dogs.”

The village continues to monitor compliance with the ordinance stating there can be no more than two adult dogs per household.

Bischoff explained he has been in contact with households where the village is aware they are out of compliance. He added the village is willing to help residents find new homes for dogs if needed.

“We want to work with people, we offer programs for people that if they can’t get rid of their third dog we will help them,” explained Bischoff.

Nursing home

Board members reviewed the June 2013 financial statements for Sunrise Heights of Wauneta.

The reports showed that the facility ended their first full calendar year, which closed on June 30, 2013, with a \$61,633 profit. This result was better than that hoped for, as the budget had projected a \$35,904 profit.

“For what it’s worth, I feel real comfortable,” said board chairman Lloyd Sinner. “There are so

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many people involved in this thing that want it to go, I feel strongly about it.”

Sinner and the other board members expressed their hopefulness in making the nursing home a successful venture, as well as the possibility of adding additional services in the future.

“I look at, down the road, things that could be built into that place up there, assisted living for one, if we can keep it a goin’ and look ahead,” said Sinner.

In other nursing home business the board also approved two new policies, one concerning employee training and one regarding health and dental insurance.

Board members also approved a proposal from Nebraska Fire Sprinkler for annual inspections of the now completed system.

Wauneta Economic Development Committee

Tony Cribelli provided a report on the activity of the Wauneta Economic Development Committee (WEDC) to his fellow board members.

He explained WEDC has been holding meetings lately to see how the community can address its housing issues.

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Multiple individuals and some businesses have expressed that there is a shortage of rental houses in Wauneta.

WEDC has met with local contractors and business leaders to search for a solution to the housing issue.

Right now, WEDC is looking for community partners to help them raise money to purchase and rehabilitate a home to use as a rental property in Wauneta.

Parking and traffic issues

Main street will soon have a few less parking spots. Board members approved a change to the parking spaces on Tecumseh at the August meeting.

It had been brought to the board's attention that the street gets very narrow when long vehicles are parked in the existing spots.

Currently there are 114 regular parking spots and 10 handicap parking spots on Tecumseh. The current parking space lines are painted at 30 degree angles.

The new parking space lines will be painted at 45 degree angles, which will allow for fewer parking spots, but will allow for more room when long vehicles are parked on the street.

Once the new parking lines are painted there will be 85 regular parking spaces and 10 handicap spaces.

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The village will also have double yellow lines painted down the center of Tecumseh.

Skelton told board members the village had received a request to add a stop sign at the intersection of Vinita Street and Shawnee Avenue. Board members discussed and agreed with the need for a stop sign. They plan to sign a resolution for the sign at the September meeting.

Land purchase for Riverside Cemetery

Board member Tony Cribelli informed the board of farm land surrounding the cemetery for sale.

The land is owned by Wauneta Ethanol and is being sold by Moreland Realty.

Cribelli spoke with Moreland Realty who offered to sell the village two acres of land for \$1,600 per acre plus surveying and closing costs.

Bischoff informed board members the two acres would provide space enough for an additional 600 graves.

Board members felt that by purchasing the land now they would be able to get the buffalo grass and trees established before the plots were needed.

Bischoff said the cemetery would stay the same width, but will expand by two acres to the south.

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The board approved a motion to purchase the land, pending approval by Wauneta Ethanol.

Park walking trail

Bischoff informed the board the walking trail at the Wauneta park is “going to pieces.” He said, “If we don’t do something we’re going to lose the trail.”

Bischoff asked the company in town to armor coat streets to take a look at the trail.

They recommended filling holes and doing crack seal on the trail followed by a coat of parking lot seal.

Bischoff said this treatment should provide an additional 2-3 years use from the trail.

The cost to perform the work on the trail is \$5,000. The board approved the bid.

Wauneta Water Project

Board members approved the final pay application for \$8,887.90 from Pivot Electric for the Wauneta Water Project.

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David Blau of Miller & Associates attended the meeting to answer questions from the board.

Blau explained the village needs to have an outlet, or backup plan, in case the variable frequency drives installed and now operational do not successfully lower the arsenic level in Wauneta's water below legal limits.

He explained that the village's original plan included drilling of test wells. The test wells were funded in the first phase of the water project.

Blau told board members there is just under \$30,000 available in the budget to drill the test well or wells.

The variable frequency drives were intended to slow the draw of water from the village wells, which should in turn lower the arsenic level in the water.

"The problem we hadn't foreseen was the draught. Even though we've reduced our pumping rate, with the draught we're still pumping more water," explained Bischoff.

Village board members approved a motion to seek test well bids.