2010-11 CITY BUDGET APPROVED

No one from the public spoke at a Sept. 14 Gothenburg City Council meeting where members adopted a $15,443,835 budget for 2010-11, approved a tax asking of $468,301 and set a levy of .30922 that remained the same as last year. Members also approved a 1% increase in spending authority which is $18,370.

	2010-11	2009-10	Difference
Valuation	$151,443,835	$143,664,700	5.4%
Budget	$14,946,125	$15,632,069	-5.0%
Tax asking	$468,301	$444,246	5.4%
Levy	.30922	.30922	0.0%

City council okays permit for windmill at Hilltop Estates Care Center.

Whether or not to allow a local hotel owner to place banners on city street light poles will be revisited in October.

At their Sept. 14 meeting, Comfort Suites co-owner Terry Jessen asked Gothenburg City Council members if the city would allow for the installation of welcome banners on three of the poles on Platte River Drive and asked if he could hang a hotel banner on the fourth pole closest to his hotel.

“If you don’t, would you allow the businesses on the drive to install them?” Jessen asked.

The business owner suggested that the banners welcome visitors to town and perhaps feature the Pony Express logo.

Council member Jim Aden asked how other business owners in the area felt about the banners, Jessen said he’d not contacted all of them but would.

City attorney Mike Bacon said business improvement districts in some cities are allowed to erect banners and do other improvements through a self-imposed tax.

“With a reasonable set of regulations, you could tamp down conflict,” Bacon said.

Jeff Whiting, another council member, said Cozad has such an improvement district that has

hung banners.

City administrator Bruce Clymer noted that the Gothenburg Chamber of Commerce once hung banners on rods that constantly broke in the wind.

“Let’s see how the wind blows and come back,” Bacon said. “I think we could come up with an approved set of regulations that promote the community.”

Jessen said he would talk with the other business owners to see who might be interested in buying, installing and maintaining the banners.

Following two public hearings, the council adjourned and reconvened to approve special use permits for Gothenburg Memorial Hospital to build a physician’s clinic onto the hospital and for Craig Bartruff to erect a decorative windmill at Hilltop Estates Care Center at 2520 Ave. M.

GMH administrator John Johnson said the clinic is needed to ease cramped conditions at Gothenburg Family Practice—a clinic already attached to the hospital—and to recruit younger doctors.

A special permit was needed because the hospital is in a residential district. Construction is expected to begin in March of 2011.

During discussion about the proposed windmill, council members wanted to know who would maintain the windmill

A special permit is required because the windmill’s 40-foot height exceeds city zoning regulations.

Scott Bahe, Hilltop administrator, said the facility would maintain the windmill that will be placed in the northeast corner of the lot for residents to enjoy.

“It’s from Craig’s family farm and plays into the heritage of the people there (at Hilltop),” he said.

Bahe said neighbors to the care facility are aware of the plan.

When asked what would happen if the windmill is allowed to deteriorate, Bacon said

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