

Council okays purchase of police vehicle

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Friday, 11 February 2011 14:43 -

Pros, cons of car rotation discussed.

Following discussion about the city's police vehicle-rotation program, the Gothenburg City Council accepted a bid to buy a new cruiser.

At their Feb. 1 meeting, members agreed to pay Pony Express Chevrolet \$22,790 for a 2011 Chevy Impala.

An extra \$5,210, for law enforcement equipment and its installation, will boost the price to about \$28,000.

Before deciding to accept the bid, council members discussed whether or to keep police vehicles in a three-year rotation program or change to a four-year program which is less expensive.

Because of the high miles generated due to street patrol, police chief Randy Olson said he sees problems with engines and transmissions when police cars are not traded every three years at about 85,000 miles.

Olson explained that 80,000 miles is not a lot for passenger cars or pickups but police vehicles are shot once they reach 90,000 miles. He added that officers need good, reliable transportation to do their job.

A breakdown of costs shows a \$4,667 difference per year in car purchase. Rotating cars in a three-year rotation is \$18,667 compared to \$14,000 when it's done every four years.

Mileage every four years would rotate vehicles at about 110,000 miles.

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When asked about the purchase price of vehicles through a state program, Olson said it's close to the same as buying cars locally.

In the case of the Impala, he said the Pony Express bid was about \$300 higher but a state-vehicle purchase included a \$400 destination fee to bring the car from Lincoln to Gothenburg.

Mayor Joyce Hudson said she thought the three-year plan was working well.

Council member Jeff Whiting said he thought there were pros and cons to both rotation programs but said there are also budget considerations

"Maybe next year, we should look at going on a different rotation," Whiting said.

Jeff Kennedy, council president, also wondered if a four-year rotation program was better but worried about transmission and engine problems with higher mileage on cars.

Kennedy added that asking if that was a problem in other communities might be helpful.

In other business, the council:

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