

City to continue installation of underground lines

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

Thursday, 10 May 2012 14:35 -

CLEAN CITY CAMPAIGN DISCUSSED

City council members know that much of the community appreciates a chance to get rid of unwanted items but the volume is often overwhelming. That's the message council members received at their May 1 meeting about Clean City Week during community comments. The annual event, which was April 28-May 6, offered residents a chance to take trash, that doesn't fit in regular receptacles, to eight dumpsters at the city shop. However city administrator Bruce Chamer said people pile junk on the ground when the roll-offs fill up, which makes it difficult for workers to get equipment close enough to lift and dump them. Posting a person at the dumpsters on weekends, to keep people from putting items on the ground, as well as changing locations were suggested to help eliminate the problem next year. Chamer said dumping unwanted items in the swimming pool parking lot, that could be easily scooped up, might be a possibility. No decision was made. Council member Gary Fritch said it's good to offer people the opportunity to clean up the town. To rent dumpsters, and take refuse to the landfill, residents are charged 40 cents on trash bills. Last year, Clean City Week cost about \$80,000. This year's cost is not yet available.

City council approves two electrical projects

Members of the city electrical crew are getting ready to roll up their sleeves and bury more power lines underground.

At their May 1 meeting, the Gothenburg City Council approved labor and material for two projects, in the areas of Crescent Drive/23rd Street and Avenue A to Avenue B, from 18th to 20th Street.

In those areas, electrical crew foreman Mike Libich said workers have logistical problems in getting city equipment into easements to repair overhead lines.

This year, the council plans to spend \$52,203 for the first project and \$39,255 for the second one.

If a homeowner agrees to underground conversion, the city will pay up to 75% of the change, with a maximum \$750 contribution, which includes such things as the hiring of an electrician, obtaining permits, trenching for the new line and other things.

The service line, which would be owned by the property owner, is connected to a city-provided meter pedestal.

In an area that's been converted to underground lines, overhead electrical poles and lines will become the property of homeowners who choose not to participate.

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Non-participants will also pay to replace lines and poles if problems occur.

“It’s better to take care of it in nice weather rather than digging holes when the ground’s frozen,” Libich said.

City administrator Bruce Clymer said \$40,000 has been budgeted this year for the projects, noting that up \$120,000 is available in a systems upgrade budget.

Overhead lines were converted to underground last summer between Grand Crescent and Highland Drives.

An open house, for residents affected by the two projects, will be Wednesday, May 16, from 4:30 to 6 p.m. at city hall.

Clymer said city officials hope to get the projects started this summer.

In other business, the council:

passed, on final reading, a measure that revises existing city codes to bring them in line with legislative changes.

approved, on second reading, an ordinance that allows gas engines, at speeds no higher than 5 mph, on Lake Helen and another that changes acreage requirements in agriculturally zoned districts.

granted a request by the Gothenburg Volunteer Fire Department for a special license to serve

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alcohol at their fireman's ball on June 2.

learned portions of a three-block area of Lake Avenue, between the railroad tracks and Fourth Street, will be blocked off to traffic when new water and sewer is installed during a paving project.

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