

Part of street can be closed for church event

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Friday, 12 July 2013 14:05 -

City council compares similar requests

First Baptist Church officials can close part of a city street for an annual family night.

However Gothenburg City Council members, at their July 2 meeting, did have to weigh whether or not to grant the request of church minister Bill Ivey.

Ivey asked permission to close a portion of Avenue B, between 10th Street and the church's northern property line from 6 to 9:30 p.m. on July 21 to display antique cars.

The car display will be in addition to the free food, prizes, games and more are offered to kids of all ages, he said.

Ivey said he'd received permission to block the street from two residents who would be affected.

Mayor Joyce Hudson said she struggles when organizations want to close streets.

However council president Jeff Kennedy pointed out that other churches have closed streets, noting that the American Lutheran Church closes a portion of Avenue G for vacation bible school.

Council member Tim Strauser noted that the event was open to the community and not a private party as some of the requests to close city streets have been.

Ivey was directed to work with the city on putting up and taking down barricades to close the street.

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Following a public hearing on a Community Development Block Grant application for Affordable Housing Funds, the council took action on documents needed to apply for a \$155,000 grant.

If received, homeowners who qualify can apply for up to \$25,000 in loan funds to rehabilitate low- to moderate-income houses.

West Central Development District would administer the grant program which forgives the loans if homeowners live in the rehabilitated home for five years or more.

On another matter, members listened to a proposal for improvements on the northeast corner of Highway 30 and Lake Avenue known as the “ugly corner.”

A committee of the noon Rotary Club, working to improve the corner, wants to install historical pictures of the community, with captions explaining their significance, on newly painted walls, according to Anne Anderson, Gothenburg Chamber of Commerce director.

“We want to make the downtown vibrant and attractive so people will get out of their vehicles and stay awhile,” Anderson said. “We want to keep them in town.”

Anderson said the committee has also discussed adding lighting to the area, a pergola or additional seating, landscaping and more.

Sharon Meyer, a Rotary Club committee member, said no city maintenance would be needed.

Kennedy questioned whether seating or the pergola would be used.

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Anderson asked the council to match \$5,000 donated for the project by the Chamber tourism committee to help pay for improvements.

Hudson said the council already provided \$3,800 for a banner, a concrete marker and more and could consider an additional \$1,200 during upcoming budget discussions.

In other business, the council:

approved an interlocal agreement with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. The commission will provide \$ \$460,831 for the Lake Helen Water Quality Project.

gave the go-ahead for a second reading of an ordinance that allows contiguous lot agreements. The measure allows construction beyond normal setback allowances if the property owner owns the adjacent lot.

passed a policy statement that files necessary information concerning a section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

okayed a resolution that reaffirms a conservation easement. The easement is on land on which local resident Doug Block sold water rights to the Central Platte Natural Resources District.

granted a request from the Gothenburg Volunteer Fire Department to detonate fireworks on July 4 and also on July 5 if rain cancelled the city's annual fireworks show at Lake Helen.

Fireman Dale Franzen made the request with a copy of a permit issued by the state fire marshal's office. Franzen noted that, in 30 years, he's never had to ask permission from the council for the fire department to shoot firework on the Fourth of July.

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appointed Corey Rossell to the Gothenburg Volunteer Fire Department.

learned that Phase I of application for \$11,400 in downtown rehabilitation planning funds had been approved.

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