

## Village trustees seek input on time for 'last call'

Written by Deb Egenberger  
Thursday, 16 December 2010 13:30 -

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### **Board hesitant to allow 2 a.m. bar closing.**

It took five years for the owners of Brady's Hitchin' Post to convince village trustees to allow the bar to stay open past midnight and to sell alcohol on Sundays.

Now Mick Swanson and Patty Callahan would like the option to serve drinks until 2 a.m. every night as allowed by state law.

But village board members aren't sure they want Brady to be the first town in the area to extend the hours of alcohol sales.

"It's just the fact that it's a state law now and we'd like to have that option," Callahan told trustees during the regular monthly board meeting Dec. 8. "It was a big issue when we asked to stay open until 1 a.m. and we haven't had any problems since then."

Four times in the first five years of Callahan and Swanson running the Hitchin' Post, the business partners asked the village to change an age-old ordinance to allow the bar to be open past midnight on week nights and to serve alcohol on Sundays.

The change was finally approved in February 2009 to match state law at the time.

During the last legislative session, state senators amended the Nebraska liquor law allowing local governments to decide if establishments in their jurisdictions could serve drinks until 2 a.m.

That law took effect in July.

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An ordinance was introduced on first reading last week that would extend the on-site alcohol sales until 2 a.m.

The biggest concern for Brady village board members and even Callahan herself is that no other town in this area has approved the later time.

"I personally don't want people driving from Gothenburg or North Platte after 1 a.m. just to catch last call in Brady," Callahan said.

New board member Jack Mann asked Callahan if she honestly thought people would drive to Brady from surrounding towns if the bar was open until 2 a.m.

"I can remember when we closed at midnight. People would go to Gothenburg for another drink," Callahan said.

"Then I think we have to weigh that against any possible assets," Mann replied. "And we have to consider if we don't pass it, how it might affect business."

Board chairman Troy Viter said he doesn't want Brady to be the first town in the area to approve the later closing time.

"I'd much rather see us grant the later closing on a special request basis," he said.

The ordinance allowing the later closing time passed on first reading by a 4-1 vote with Mann abstaining, saying he holds the only other liquor license in town at the Get-N-Go.

The ordinance will be considered twice more in January and February.

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Both Callahan and the trustees said they would like

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