

At the banquet



AT THE HIGH SCHOOL on Friday, Zach Lahe helped himself to dinner during the FFA banquet. — Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

Council hires woman to serve as code enforcer

The Oberlin City Council approved hiring a Hoxie woman as the city's public code enforcement officer, which means 10 property owners will soon be receiving letters about weeds, junk cars and other issues.

The council hired Jan Ackerman to look at 10 properties on a complaint list, which she did. Included in the council's packet for the meeting on Thursday night were the letters Mrs. Ackerman wrote the property owners and a copy of the ordinance the property violated.

Currently, said City Administrator Austin Gilley, the city doesn't have a public officer appointed. Mrs. Ackerman has inspected the 10 properties she was asked to by the council. The letters are prepared.

At this point, he said, he recommends the council tread lightly. There is a policy set up so if the council interjects on each property it could open a Pandora's box. The council can proceed with the process that's already set up or look at each individual property.

Councilman Bill Riedel said it seems pretty black and white and suggested following the city's already set up procedure.

Mrs. Ackerman said she did speak with the police chief and he will deliver the in town letters, saving the expense. There are seven that will be delivered out of town at \$10 a letter.

If the council does nothing with the letters tonight, said Mr. Gilley, then they will be sent out because that's what the policy says.

While there wasn't a vote taken, the consensus was to proceed with the policy, meaning the letters would be sent out.

It's the way the ordinance is written, said Council Ray Ward. Either way some people are going to be happy and some are going to be upset.

The council did vote to approve Mrs. Ackerman as the public code enforcement officer.

Letters will be sent to:
 • Kenneth Morgan for the property at 113 E. Hall for unsafe or dangerous structures and abandoned property according to the letter.

• Douglas Bucy and Steven Bucy at 214 S. Beaver for health nuisances on the property according to the letter. They will receive a separate letter for the same address for junked, wrecked, dismantled, inoperative or abandoned vehicles.

• Kenton Smith and John Weigel for 711 W. Cedar for health nuisances on the property according to the letter.

• Eva Morton and Linda Kriss for

301 and 308 N. Marks for health nuisances according to the letter.

• Kings Property Management Company LLC for 408 N. Elk for a health nuisance according to the letter.

• Mr. and Mrs. Dwayne Quakenbush for 211 W. Commercial for health nuisances according to the letter. There is a separate letter being sent for junked, wrecked, dismantled, inoperative or abandoned vehicles on the property.

• Mr. and Mrs. John Guy for 807 W. Sappa for health nuisances according to the letter.

• Mr. and Mrs. Edward Russ for 203 E. Hall for unsafe or dangerous structures and abandoned property according to the letter.

• From My Heart LLC for 711 E. Maple for health nuisances according to the letter.

The letters being sent out for health nuisances have eight areas that could be checked off according to the ordinance. Those are:

- filth, excrement, lumber, rocks,

dirt, cans, paper, trash, metal or any other offensive or disagreeable thing or substance thrown or left or deposited upon any street, avenue, alley, sidewalk, park, public or private enclosure or lot whether vacant or occupied.

- dead animals.
- offensive, disagreeable or nauseous odor.
- stagnant ponds or pools of water.

• grass or weeds or other unsightly vegetation not usually cultivated or grown for domestic use or to be marketed for ornamental purposes.

• abandoned iceboxes or refrigerators having lids that are unfastened.

• articles or things that could cause injury, annoyance or inconvenience of the public or neighborhood.

• fence, structure, thing or substance planted on the street, sidewalk, alley or public ground that obstructs the same, except as permitted by city law.

Freeze threat misses area

While there forecasters predicted a freeze over the weekend, experts say the temperature didn't drop far enough to cause any damage.

Dave Floyd, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service office in Goodland, said on Saturday morning the temperature there reached 31 degrees.

It was also 31 degrees in McCook and Oberlin. Into eastern Colorado and Nebraska, cooler numbers were reported. In Wray, said Mr. Floyd, the low was 28 and Benkelman had 30.

Although a freeze was a possibility, he said, clouds moved in at

the right time to keep things a little warmer.

Around the Oberlin area, most people reported no frost Saturday, but a few people said they did have some ice.

The freeze was probably not too much of an issue, said Mr. Floyd.

Kurt Anderson, manager of the Decatur Co-op, said he didn't think it was cold enough long enough to do any damage. It's a little early, he said, to tell what kind of wheat crop the area will have.

Prior to this weekend, when the temperature stayed in the 20s for a couple hours, there might have been

a few frost issues, said Mr. Floyd.

Looking at the forecast for this week, he said, Wednesday night is supposed to get down to 33 degrees, but if the clouds stay, the wheat will probably be OK. After that, said Mr. Floyd, it will start feeling more like late spring to early summer with highs in the 70s and lows in the 40s.

He added that the average frost-free day is already here. It's usually right around this time that it gets safer to plant home gardens and things like that, but that date could swing three weeks either way.

Alliance plans a work day

The Oberlin Business Alliance asks that business owners and employees take time next Wednesday, the week before alumni weekend, to clean up Main Street.

The members talked about organizing a clean up day during their meeting last Wednesday.

Karen Thompson, with The Dresser, asked if there would be organized clean up before alumni weekend, which is also Memorial Day weekend.

She suggested taking a handout to all businesses, asking people to participate in cleaning up and reminding them. Mrs. Thompson said it would be nice to have the city looking good when there are so many people coming to town.

Maybe we could hose off the

sidewalks, said Joe Stanley, owner of Stanley Hardware.

Kurt Vollertsen, owner of Ward Drug Store, suggested that the businesses could coordinate with the city and get the street cleaned off, too. (City crews did sweep the street over the weekend.)

The members discussed a planned alumni burger fry from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday, May 28, at the Last Indian Raid Museum. Mrs. Thompson said it would be nice to have some more help for burger days.

Museum Director Sharleen Wurm said on that day, she thinks there will be a few museum board members to help.

In other business, the members:
 • Heard that a letter by Emily Williams' daughter Sabryn Williams

had been selected as the Mother of the Year winner. Mrs. Williams won a \$50 gift certificate good at alliance member businesses only.

• Made plans to sell root beer floats on Friday, June 4, during the cruise in for the museum's SummerFest Car Show. The alliance will also sponsor a trophy for the show again this year.

• Agreed that the downtown sound system might be used for the promenade on Friday night.

• Heard from Connie Grafel, marketing director of the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., who said she was disappointed with the number of people who showed up for the 125th Anniversary kick-off at the beginning of May.

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