

City gives property

The Oberlin City Council signed a deed for the old port of entry property over to the new owners of the Oberlin Inn at the corner of U.S. 36 and U.S. 83.

The council, said Mayor Joe Stanley at a meeting Thursday, July 1, had agreed to give that property to the owners when they bought the motel. He said he had the deed in hand, but council needed to approve a motion for the transfer to be done for the sum of \$1.

Councilman Bill Riedel wanted to know if there was a contract saying that the motel owners would still allow trucks to park on the property. Nothing in writing, said Mayor Stanley, but that's what the owners said.

The new owner said he was going to allow parking and access, said Councilman Rob McFee. He just didn't want anyone else building in front of the motel.

Mayor Stanley said he would hate to see parking added to the agreement because it could exclude the company from doing something else with the property. They might find someone who wants to build on the property.

Or if they get lots of business and want to add onto the motel, added Councilman Ray Ward. He said he's fine with a gentleman's agreement.

What is the city going to help with as far as tearing down the old filling station and with asbestos removal? asked Mayor Stanley. The estimates to remove the asbestos are \$3,750 to \$3,850, he said.

Mr. Riedel said he believes the city offered to tear down the building but the costs of removing hazardous material was up to the owner. Mr. Ward said that's how he remembered the agreement, too.

The city is to donate the labor to tear the building down, said Mr. Riedel.

City Attorney Steve Hirsch asked about the site clean-up and leveling after the building is removed. That wasn't discussed, said Mr. Riedel.

When the council was talking with people about building a new motel, said Mayor Stanley, the city was considering doing the site preparation.

Certainly other parties asked for that, said Councilwoman Rhonda May.

The city was going to do a whole lot more for a new motel to come in, said Mayor Stanley. Ms. May said she never remembers agreeing to any of the new construction requests.

"Do we have the equipment to remove the building?" asked Mr. Hirsch.

No, said City Foreman Dan Castle. He suggested hiring contractor Dave Bose to tear the building down.

Mr. Ward said he doesn't have a big problem with paying the \$3,750 if it will cause a big road block. The city is getting by a lot cheaper than what was discussed.

But, said Ms. May, if the owner said they would incur the expense on the asbestos, give the bids to him.

Mayor Stanley said he and Interim Administrator Karen Larson would work on the project.

Senator was to stop here

State Sen. Tim Huelskamp, who is running for the 1st District seat in Congress, was to stop in Oberlin to talk to voters on Tuesday.

The Fowler Republican planned to be at the Frontier Restaurant for about an hour.



WHILE IN MEXICO on a Teens for Christ mission trip, Britta Noren (above) held a baby. Joe Hirsch (below left) and a friend helped wash dishes. — Photos by Doug Mason

Teens work missions

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**

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Several members of the Oberlin Teens for Christ are home from mission trips to Mississippi and Mexico.

Pastor Doug Mason, who leads the Oberlin group, said David Noren and Katie and Matt Glading went to Mississippi in June. They were in the Delta region, one of the poorest parts of the country to do service projects on and around the Cary Christian Center.

While in Mississippi, the teens worked mainly at an elderly woman's house.

It needed a lot of work, said Pastor Mason, so the team helped paint and roof the outside and repair the inside, including dry-wall.

They also worked at the center, which has a secondhand store and a daycare operation.

Pastor Mason, Joe Hirsch and Britta Noren went with the Mexico team to Doctor Arroyo. The group left on Thursday, June 3, traveled for two days to the guest house of Dayspring Ministries in Edinburg, Texas, and then left for Mexico.

"We arrived at the Daysprings Mission compound after driving several hours down bumpy roads and winding mountain trails," said Miss Noren. "I was all excited and totally ready to begin the projects that were planned for us.



However, when we reached the mission, everything seemed to slow down, taking on an entirely different pace: God's pace."

"This ministry was a humbling experience," she said, "because even though the people, because very little, they were honored and pleased that we had come. For an hour or so, we would (through an interpreter) listen to their concerns and prayer requests."

In the afternoon, she added, the team traveled to a relatively nearby village to hold a Bible school at the church. It was great to be with the kids, she said.

"During this time I realized that you don't need to speak the same language in order to show Jesus' love," said Miss Noren.

Pastor Mason said the team included nine teens, a college student and four adults.

"I was very proud of this team of teenagers," he said. "They were really eager to serve and represented us well. It was exciting to see them being willing to let the Holy Spirit shape and mold them."

He said they are now getting ready for two Teens for Christ camps, open to anyone from sixth through 12th grades.

The first camp starts Monday and the second Monday, July 26, at Camp Joh, near Alma, Neb.

It's not too late to sign up at www.tfconnection.org, Pastor Mason said.

City receives phone calls about branches

The interim city administrator told the council that the office had received lots of calls about tree and branch removal after a recent storm.

Karen Larson said at the meeting Thursday, July 1, that the crew has been doing a great job. The linemen were out in the storm trying to get power back on. There were lots of branches on wires that had needed to be taken care of.

There were quite a few people effected by the electricity being out, said Foreman Dan Castle.

Although there were lots of calls about the city coming out and picking up those branches, she said, there was an electrical problem and a major water break about the same time, so the branches that were down were kind of put on the back burner.

The community has really jumped in and is working together though, said Mrs. Larson, to help each other out in getting things cleaned up.

The city office does have a list of people who didn't have branches picked up and the crew will work on it.

The council received an updated spreadsheet from the code enforcement officer about lawns that she sent the owners letters to mow and clean up.

The members talked about what happens if the homeowner doesn't mow. What has happened in the past is that the city mows, said Mrs. Larson, and the owner gets a bill. About 60 percent of the property owners pay the the city. The city charges \$100 an hour to mow. If it's not paid, she said, the charge is added to the owner's property tax bill.

Maybe it needs to include a fine, said Councilwoman Rhonda May. Then it would cost \$100 an hour and a \$50 fine.

Most of the people who aren't taking care of their lawns don't live here, said Mr. Castle, so they don't care. That's why they are looking at the fines.

There isn't a single city in the state that doesn't have these same issues, said City Attorney Steve Hirsch. They are handling it the same way.

This is a good topic to bring up in January, said Mayor Stanley, not half way through the mowing season. That way, if the rules change, it's at the beginning of the season.

Or he rules just need to be enforced, said Councilman Bill Riedel.

In other business, the council:

- Briefly talked about the airport environmental assessment, which is done. The report shows no significant impact, said Mrs. Larson.

- Set the first budget meeting for 7 p.m. Thursday. Mayor Stanley mentioned keeping Thursday evenings in July open for the council to work on the budget for next year.

- Discussed moving the first meeting in August from Thursday, Aug. 5, to Thursday Aug. 12, which has been done in the past because of the county fair. There was no vote, but it was decided by consensus to move the meeting.

- Heard that Mrs. Larson is working on a letter to get the self-pump fuel system at the airport covered by grant money. She said she has several reasons why the city needs the system and the money, but asked for suggestions.

- Talked briefly about the search for a new administrator. Mayor Stanley said he will contact the League of Kansas Municipalities to get started.

- Agreed to pay Larry Fought \$30 more to mow around the lights at the airport. He is contracted to do the job. He was receiving \$50 each time and will now get \$80.

- Held a 20-minute closed session to discuss nonelected personnel with the mayor, council, interim administrator and attorney. After the session, the council voted to pay Treasurer Jan Elliott \$1 more an hour starting at the beginning of June until the end of September to input information for the new billing program. The motion also allows her to work overtime.

- Approved finding a compensation specialist to come out and help the city study the way it pays employees. Mr. Hirsch suggested starting with the municipal league.

Class sections set at grade school

With the number of students enrolled for next year at Oberlin Elementary School, there will only be one section in three of the grades.

Superintendent and Principal Duane Dorshorst said at a school board meeting June 14 that there will be one section of all-day kindergarten. There shouldn't be more than 24 kids, he said, with some possibly not attending all day. Of the surveys sent out, he said, only one parent wanted half-day kindergarten.

He added that the teacher would rather have two half days. He said they are trying to switch around the time for art and music in that class.

There will only be one section of first grade, two of second, third and fourth, one homeroom of fifth and two of sixth.

In the fifth and sixth grades, the teachers will each do certain subjects for each grade again this

year as they have in the past. For instance, Sandy Ketterl will teach social studies and health, Carol Dixon will teach math and science and Belinda Jones will teach reading and English.

Teacher Carol Wasson will move into the Title I spot, which is designed to provide students with extra help in reading and math.

Wife to campaign here for husband

Congressman Jerry Moran's wife plans to stop at the Golden Age Center today.

She will be here at 4 p.m. to visit with Decatur County women on the east side of the center.

Her husband, who serves the Big First District in Congress, is a Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate.



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