

New Strawn Notes

Jan 2010

Winter Edition

Water Rates Increase

Water rate increase necessary
Maybe this isn't the best time of the year for a water rate increase; but, it is necessary.

The city council has known for some time that the water fund has been operating at a net loss and that a water rate increase would be necessary. However, we enlisted help from a Kansas Rural Water Association representative to study the water rates, water fund revenues and expenses, to make sure any proposed water rate increase would be appropriate. In hindsight, past water rate increases were not enough.

The largest water system related expense is the \$48,022.95 semi-annual payments (\$96,045.90 per year) the city pays on a \$1.25 million loan that financed the new water tower and new water distribution lines in the city and Hillview Subdivision. The loan matures in 2022. Spread among the city's 230 water customers, loan payment amounts to \$34.80 per customer, per month. Additionally, operating costs – utilities, chemicals, fuel, insurance, etc. – continue to increase, even though we have taken steps to minimize the costs.

At the Dec. 3 regular city council meeting, the city council passed Ordinance No. 2009-06, which increases water rates, effective with this utility bill.

The council, for the most part, followed a recommendation from the KRWA representative. All water users will be charged a \$30 maintenance fee that does not include any water and the per 1,000 gallon rate will increase \$1 for all users. Also, all retail water users will pay a state water protection fee amounting to 3 cents per 1,000 gallons used. The city paid the fee in the past, but now water customers will be billed directly for the fee.

The city has 230 water customers, 193 are located within the city limits and 37 are located outside the city limits.

All water users will pay a \$30 maintenance fee. Water users within the city limits will pay \$8.75 for each 1,000 gallons used and water users outside the city limits will pay \$13.10 for each 1,000 gallons used.

The city will continue to contribute \$25,000 from its infrastructure fund toward the principal on the water loan. In the past, the city has used general fund property tax dollars to pay some water fund expenses. The intent of the council is to reduce and eventually eliminate general fund transfers to the water fund. In other words, the burden borne by taxpayers in the past will shift to the water users.

Due to the Holiday trash will be picked up Saturday, December 26th and Saturday, January 2nd.

Snow & Ice Removal

Please do not park vehicles in the street during bad weather. Vehicles parked in the street make it difficult to treat the streets effectively.

Do not place trash cans or bags in the street at any time. Trash is to be kept behind the curb.

City Hall Closed

December 24th & 25th and January 1st.

Post Office Closed

December 25th and January 1st

New Strawn City Lake

The New Strawn City Lake will once again be filled with trout. The trout will be delivered late January or middle February. Licenses are available at City Hall, Lakeview Bait and Strawn Lumber. Adult fishing license cost \$10.00 for residents of USD 244 and \$15.00 for those outside of the school district, this included a trout stamp, which is required until May 1st. Anyone over the age of 16 is required to show their state fishing license.

Water Rates

An example I presented to the council was a \$58,000 transfer made from the general fund to the water fund in 2004. Based on the city's current valuation, \$58,000 is equal to 20.7439 mills. For the owner of a \$100,000 house, 20.7439 mills is equal to \$238.55, or \$19.88 per month. The same \$58,000 paid by

Post Office Lobby Hours.
9:30 a.m. to Noon
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Monday-Friday
Saturday 9:30 a.m.-11:30
a.m.

230 water users would have equaled \$21.01 per month.

Bottom line is the city intends to control water fund costs while making the water fund a self-sustaining fund. A surplus needs to be built for future projects as well as anticipated maintenance as the water lines age.

School Building update

In the last newsletter, you were informed about the city's intention to move city hall and the post office to the city-owned school

building. The city council's intention remains the same.

In October, the city council advertised for sealed bids for the current city hall building. Although we had serious inquiries about the building, no bids were submitted at the November meeting. The deadline for bids was extended to the December meeting, and still no bids. The council will decide in January whether or not to list the building with a local real estate agent.

As it stands now, city hall and the post office will not move to the school, until the present building is sold.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
Mark Petterson, Mayor

Snow Removal

When snowfall is three inches or less, the City of New Strawn will limit snow removal to the emergency and school bus routes. When snowfall exceeds three inches and/or ice accumulates, all residential streets (emergency and school bus routes first) will be addressed with either snow removal, salt/sand treatment, or both.

Dog & Cat Tags

In January you must purchase dog and cat tags for 2010. Please bring proof of rabies shots. Tags are \$5.00 for unaltered animals and \$2.00 for animals who have been spayed or neutered. All licenses shall be valid and cover the current calendar year. Such license shall be due and payable on or before the 31st day of January 2010. Licenses purchased after January 31st, 2010 for animals that were tagged in previous years, will double in price for each month's delinquency. Any owner or harboror of an animal that is found to be without a current license may be fined up to five hundred dollars (\$500.00) plus any cost incurred by the city related to enforcing this article. Animal tags may be purchased at city hall Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Coffey County Recycling Curbside Service 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month.

Recently Coffey County Curbside Recycling sent out calendars with curbside pick-up days listed incorrectly. The correct date is the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month for the City of New Strawn. A new calendar will be mailed out soon.

“The total lack of humor renders life impossible”.
Colette

The City of New Strawn will be conducting a sewer project on the golf course.

The project will begin the week of December 14th (weather permitting) and should be complete by the first of the year.

Have you
changed
your phone
number?

Recently the City Clerk has found that many of the phone numbers on file are not correct. These numbers are used to contact you in case of water or sewer emergencies or when street work will be taking place in your area. Please help us by letting us know your correct phone number.

Contact us at
620-364-8283.
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clerk@embarqmail.com
visit us at
www.newstrawn.org

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The
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