

Sycamore council agrees with higher water and sewer fees

Ald. Bauer says smoking ban should be revisited

By Renee Messacar - Staff Writer

SYCAMORE - Proposed increases in city water and sewer impact fees are “fair,” according to the aldermen who discussed the hikes Monday during the city council meeting.

The proposal to raise the impact fees on new homes will be back at the next council meeting March 6 for public comment and possible final approval.

Under the increases, the water impact fee would go from \$299 to \$352 per new home, while the sewer impact fee would go from \$1,750 to \$2,205.

The water fees would help pay for a new well and elevated water tower on the city's north side.

The city pumps about 1.7 million gallons of water daily. Assuming the city grows at about 4 percent per year, it will need to pump about 2.8 million gallons daily by 2020, City Manager Bill Nicklas said.

The sewer fees will go toward expanding the sewer treatment plant and treating more waste.

“They're fair numbers we could defend,” Alderwoman Cheryl Maness, 1st Ward, said of the proposed increases.

Second Ward Alderman Chuck Stowe said he remembers when the city didn't collect impact fees and instead “subsidized” the amounts. The fees, he said, are “completely justifiable.”

The city began collecting impact fees in February 1994.

Also Monday:

4Alderman Alan Bauer, 1st Ward, asked the council to reconsider whether smoking should be allowed in Sycamore bars and restaurants.

The council decided in July not to take any steps limiting smoking, partly because it could hurt local businesses.

But since DeKalb passed an ordinance last week that prohibits smoking in restaurants and bars, Bauer said he thinks it might be time to talk about it again.

Alderwomen Grace Adee and Barbara Leach, both of the 3rd Ward, said they would like to revisit the topic.

Mayor Ken Mundy said he would like to hear more from the public on the issue before the city reconsiders its decision. At a later date, the council could send the topic to the ordinance committee for further discussion.

4General contractors who often fail to meet certain construction requirements before calling for inspections will now have to pay a \$50 reinspection fee to make up for inspectors' wasted time traveling to construction sites not ready for inspection.

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