City postpones decision about changing insurance carriers

By Christian Probasco  
Staff writer

By final vote on July 7, the board voted to charge $10,100 to hook up sewer and water lines in undeveloped areas of town and $13,800 for hookups in underserved areas. The costs include water rights.

Board member Barbara Davis argued for a higher amount, citing a study by Engineer Lynn Wall of Fillmore, which recommended higher costs for hooking up new developments.

"I like the engineering study," said Davies. "I like having a reserve." Board member Dennis Roberts was concerned that higher rates might discourage new residents from moving in.

"We don't need to make a fortune off impact fees," Roberts said. At the heart of the controversy is the cost of building passable roads to new residences and hooking up the town's utilities.

Wall's report was completed three or four years ago, according to Engineer Davis, who believed the engineer had come down some on cost estimates.

Davis wanted to commission a new report. That still may be done, but Davis wanted to set the fees in the meantime.

Water budget is tight this year, and the town is looking for new funding. One possibility discussed during the meeting emerging from a report by Rural Water Association consultant Curtis Ludvigson recommending higher water rates.

"This is a real eye-opener for us," Davis said of the study. "You've got to set the fees the economic point. We couldn't do it with our current rates."

Davis said Ludvigson would provide a copy of the study to the town. Ludvigson supplied another report earlier this year to the Mt. Pleasant city council, which used it to plan and then implement the city's first water rate hike since 1992.

While the council is discussing what to do about water rates, the town is facing the same summer water shortages as most other municipalities in the county. According to Wenden Davis, who oversees maintenance in the city's water system, the pump on the town well is running constantly, providing 120,000 gallons per day, which is "more than we've ever had."

Roberts suggested Wales adopt a "three strikes, you're out" policy for residents违章 watering.

"When you run out of compliance, you get a verbal warning, then a written warning and then your service is cut," he said.

According to the schedule, residents north of Center Street are allowed to water on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays. These south of Center Street are allowed to water Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The schedule does not allow for watering on Sundays or between the hours of 9 a.m. and 6 p.m.

The board did not vote on a penalty for residents violating the schedule. Wales, which has imposed a municipal ordinance on new construction due to a lack of water, contracted for a new well to be in place by the end of this year. That well has yet to come on line, though Engineer Wall said on July 7 that it was far enough along that it is ready to be hooked up to the electrical grid.

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Wales-After months of discussion, the Wales Town Board appears to be ready to draw up a resolution setting impact fees.

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