

# City council continues to discuss sign usage policy

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The city's LED sign on the highway was yet again the point of contention at the city council meeting last week, as council member Paula Keller argued that any and all public events should be allowed on the sign, and other

council members felt the sign policy should be more conservative. City Attorney Mike Day attempted to draft up a policy for the council members on the LED sign that could help steer the committee in determining what was and was not permissible. The policy is being brought

forward after Senator Ralph Ostmeyer, Cheyenne County's elected representative, came to visit St. Francis. When a request was made to put his upcoming town hall meeting on the city's digital sign, it was denied because it was deemed political in nature. Some people have argued that an elected representative, not in the county to campaign or raise money, but here to answer to his constituents, is not a political event. The line does get gray in these areas, which is why the request for a policy was made.

In a sudden change from the original stance, Mr. Day said that he believed that as the policy is written, it would have allowed for Mr. Ostmeyer's visit to be on the sign. This is because he is a public official coming to town. He said if he were coming for re-election or a republican convention, that would be different. The wording of the policy Mr. Day read would not allow for individuals or persons advancing purposes or agendas that are political or religious.

Mrs. Keller suggested to the council that the policy state instead that, "anything that the public is invited to," is allowed on the sign. One other council member, Bruce Swihart, seconded Mrs. Keller's motion. Mr. Swihart said he did this with the understanding that "lots of things could fly" on the sign. The rest of the council members did not vote in favor.

Roger Jensen, city council member who is also on the sign committee, said he thought they may have made the wrong decision with Ostmeyer's deal, and that he has to respect Mr. Day's opinion. He also wanted to make clear that it was donations and Chamber of Commerce that largely paid for the sign, and a small portion of taxpayer dollars. He addressed Mrs. Keller's letter to the editor and said that he thought it misrepresented the truth about

who paid for the sign. Mrs. Keller maintained that taxpayer dollars did contribute to the sign, that it is on city property and maintained by taxpayer dollars. After some discussion, Mr. Jensen said he did not feel comfortable making any decisions without the other sign committee person present, and the discussion was tabled until the full council is present. Carla Lampe was not at the city council meeting.

**Other business**  
Tammi Grice came to the council on behalf of her daughter Allison Grice, who is opening up a business on E. Webster. She will be doing graphic design and photography in the little church building where the old art class was held. Mrs. Grice obtained information on how to designate the building a business and whose signatures she needed.

Doyle Easter has asked members of the council about handicap accessibility to the Keller pond. Council members said they would look into grant money availability, and City Superintendent suggested possibility of building a ramp on the east side.

Two bids were received to paint the pool house before the pool opens. Melvin Confer won the bid.

The St. Francis Alumni Committee was granted a cereal malt beverage license to be able to serve beer during alumni. They will be permitted to take their beverages outside of the basketball gates during the supper, but after dark all beverages are to be contained inside the basketball courts at the park. The council members all agreed that they would continue to allow these events up until they have a problem at one of them.

The city council is looking into putting a sign up on the highway that would say "Home of Jack Weinstein, Medal of Honor recipient." The cost is over \$3,000, so

council members are considering how to pay for the sign.

Mr. Swihart reported that the pool opening date is contingent upon when the pool can be painted. They have not been able to paint yet because of the weather. Ann Burr is going to train the life guards. Forrest Burr is excited to be the manager. Fees are expected to stay about the same.

**Council comments.**  
Mrs. Keller said that she has

had comments about the appearance of the greenhouse.

Mayor Scott Schultz mentioned that there was concerns about property behind a hotel on the highway. City superintendent JR Landenberger said he would address the issue.

**Next meeting**  
The next council meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. Monday at city hall. All meetings are open, and the public is encouraged to attend.



**RUTH MILLIKEN** was watering one of her planters Tuesday morning. Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

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