

## City budget set with lower tax levy

By RAMELL TAYLOR  
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The preliminary 2014 budget that would cut this year's spending by \$42,000 from levy has been increased by \$22,145 during The Oberlin City Council's special meeting last Thursday.

The council approved to add \$21,000 to the budget for building demolition and \$500 dollars for Decatur Tomorrow. Administration assistant Steve Zodrow said after a three percent delinquency on property tax is added, the budget will increase from 79.77

mills to 83.07 mills, which is still lower than the 85.88.

The building demolition fund was added to the budget after Sexton Jeremy Tally asked if the city had a program that provided incentives for tearing down houses that needed to be demolished.

Mayor Rob McFee said the city does not.

The question was asked if the city could put money into the budget for that purpose. Mayor McFee said the council could do so, but it would increase the property tax levy

by 4 mills.

City Administrator Karen Larson said having some houses demolished would help clean up the city.

Although the new budget won't cut 11 percent from the city's property tax, Mayor McFee said expenses are always going up, so for the city to be able to keep under last year's spending is a good thing.

"If we don't spend anymore money foolishly," he said, "we could live with this (budget)."

The council discussed what to do with the

extra taxes collected for the pool project if the city should collect more than the loan payment for that month.

Mayor McFee said that the money should be used to pay off the remaining balance for the new pool.

"When you have extra money," he said, "you use it to pay off the debt so you don't have to pay interest."

The city council also approved to discontinue the half cent that is transferred from the electrical fund so that they can start to build that fund up.

Other changes to the budget, Mrs. Larson said, were changing the name of the Economic Development fund, to Community Development fund to prevent the fund from being mistaking for the Economic Development Center fund.

She also mentioned the idea to renegotiate the franchise taxes with businesses in Oberlin, but no action was taken.

The council agreed to publish the budget and it will be reviewed for approval at a budget hearing on Thursday, August 15.

## Prisoner files lawsuit against county sheriff

By RAMELL TAYLOR  
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A prisoner at the state penitentiary in Lansing has filed a lawsuit in federal court against the Decatur County sheriff, asking for \$900,000 on three counts on the ground that officers opened mail from his lawyer.

Cody Lee Chambers, who was held in the county jail in February, accused Sheriff Ken Badsky of opening mail to him from a licensed attorney.

In the civil rights complaint, Mr. Chambers said an envelope addressed to him from Steven C. Sherwood of Legal Services for Prisoners Inc. had been given to him already opened.

He said he brought the open mail to the attention of Undersheriff Allen Marcum, who told him Sheriff Badsky opened the envelope. Two inmates witnessed the conversation, the suit claims.

Comments on the Kansas Department of Corrections offender search site show Mr. Chambers is serving time for passing a worthless check for more than \$500 but less than \$25,000. He was sentenced in Decatur County for this crime on March 13, 2012 and could possibly be released in about three weeks on Aug. 15.

Mr. Chambers said the mail was opened without his knowledge. Had there been a question about whether the envelope was legal mail, he said, could have been verified by other means.

Mr. Chambers claims his freedom

of speech, freedom of censorship and right to petition the government for a redress of grievances under the First Amendment had been violated.

He said his right to have assistance of counsel was violated under the Sixth Amendment and he was deprived of the rights of due process of law, privileges of immunities and of liberty and property under the 14th Amendment.

Mr. Chambers filed the suit himself, without the help of a lawyer. He requested \$300,000 for each count of amendment violations, demanded that the sheriff establish a standard grievance procedure and asked the jury to decide fault and award damages.

Norton County Sheriff Troy Thompson said his policy is to open all inmate mail except for legal mail sent from an attorney or judge.

"If there is belief that an inmate is planning to escape," he said, "we will check legal mail for contraband."

Sheriff Badsky said the lawsuit will be turned over to the county's insurance carrier, the Kansas Association of Counties Multi-line Pool.

"It's not the first time," he said of the suit. "When you're doing your job long enough, someone will want to sue you."

During the commissioners meeting last Tuesday, the commissioners approved a request for the county to provide legal representation for Sheriff Badsky.

## Council to discuss pool project future

The Oberlin City Council will have a decision to make when it comes to the proposed pool project when it meets Thursday.

With the verified petition the council will have to decide if the city is going to issue general obligation bonds or hold a special election about the Public Building Commission issuing revenue bonds.

City Administrator Karen Larson said the city's debt limit is \$2.3 million. If the city were to issue general obligation bonds for \$2.1 million it will be subject to the city's

debt limit.

The council, said Mrs. Larson, can decide to take the issue to a special election which could cost the city \$3,000 to \$5,000 to decide if the Public Building Commission should issue revenue bonds.

The Public Building Commission revenue bonds have a slightly higher interest rate than the general obligation bonds.

The council plans to meet at 6 p.m. in the upstairs room at The Gateway. The meeting is open to the public.

## Petition signatures verified by county clerk

The Oberlin City Council will have to decide what type of election to have for residents to vote on whether or not the bonds will be issued to build a new swimming pool.

Decatur County Clerk Colleen Geihlsler said the petition was turned in to the office at 11:30 a.m. Friday and was verified by 2:30 p.m. Out of 125 names on the petition, she said, 118 names were valid.

The circulators who remained anonymous throughout the entire petition period were Marilyn Black, Karla and Bob Ross, and Eric Swe-

gle. Ms. Geihlsler said many of the supporters of the new pool project have come in and requested a copy of the petition to see who signed it.

Under the Intimidation of Voters Act, intimidating, threatening, coercing any person for the purpose to interfere with the right to vote as he or she may choose is a class A misdemeanor.

one day.

The city continues to pump close to 700,000 gallons of water a day even with watering restrictions in place.

Last week city water users used over 500,000 gallons every day but one and just shy of the 700,000



LAST WEDNESDAY emergency medical workers (below), technical officer for the Kansas Highway Patrol received the call of an accident on U.S. 36 between a car driven by Gleason Dryden (above) and a truck. Jason Draper helped work the scene.

— Herald staff photos by Rammel Taylor

## Driver killed in crash

An 87-year-Oberlin man died Wednesday after his car was struck by a food-delivery truck on Frontier Parkway (U.S. 36) at Wilson Avenue.

Gleason E. Dryden, a World War II veteran, had been a farmer and electrician before he retired.

The Kansas Highway Patrol reported that he was driving a 2004 Toyota Camry, when he attempted to turn west onto U.S. 36 from North Wilson Avenue. He apparently pulled into the path of a Kehe Foods tractor-trailer rig heading west. The truck struck his car on the passenger-side door. Both drivers were wearing seat belts, the patrol said. Decatur County emergency medical technicians arrived at 10:41 a.m. Oberlin Police and fire fighters arrived to help with traffic and the highway patrol came to do the investigation and map the crash.

Jason Draper, technical officer for the Highway Patrol, said the mapping is done with a forensic camera to collect any evidence that may have been missed in the initial report.

Emergency medical technicians performed cardiopulmonary resuscitation on Mr. Dryden before taking him to the Decatur County Hospital. The hospital called an air ambulance to fly him to a hospital in Kearney, Neb., and



an ambulance was sent to bring the flight crew to the hospital.

Mr. Dryden died about 1 p.m. before he could be flown out.

The driver of the truck, Steve William Ternes, 49, of Wichita,

was not injured, officers said, and the truck suffered little damage. The Toyota had serious damage to the passenger side and the front bumper.

Mr. Dryden, an Oberlin resident

for several years, was born Dec. 13, 1925, in Miami County, the son of Ewing and Aino (Henrickson) Dryden. He grew up and attended school in Wellsville. At age 18, he

(See ACCIDENT on Page 6A)

## City continues to pump close to 700,000 gallons of water a day

The city continues to pump close to 700,000 gallons of water a day even with watering restrictions in place.

Last week city water users used over 500,000 gallons every day but one and just shy of the 700,000

one day.

The city pumped:  
• 392,000 gallons on Sunday, July 14.  
• 547,100 gallons on Monday, July 15.  
• 631,500 gallons on Tuesday,

July 16.

• 673,200 gallons last Wednesday.  
• 648,000 gallons on Thursday.  
• 692,400 gallons on Friday.  
• 636,700 gallons on Saturday.  
• 521,400 gallons on Sunday.

With water restrictions in place the city water users are on an odd/even watering system.

Those who live at an odd-numbered address are allowed to water on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Those at even-numbered addresses

can water on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. Outdoor use including lawn watering and car washing can be done from 12:01 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 8 p.m. to midnight on the correct days.

