

Nuisance properties

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backyard of which contains several vehicles. He also owns a house on the south side of the city and a large adjacent lot. The lot where the house sits contains a wide assortment of cars, trucks, boats, trailers, campers and building materials.

Councilman Bob Kappes said that Kidrowski needed instruction, that there was no definition of a problem.

Harkema said that the issues were in the letters, noting especially inoperable vehicles.

Referring to a large combination shed and home Kidrowski has been talking about building on the adjacent property for a year, Mayor Kordell Van Heuveln asked if he had heard anything from his building contractor. Kidrowski replied that they had talked the week before and that the builder was busy with storm damage and that he would be on Kidrowski's job as soon as he could, either this month or the first part of next month.

"Would you be moving vehicles from your home as well?" asked councilman Leif Bagent.

"That's correct," said Kidrowski. "I plan on moving out of that house and selling it or renting it out."

"When was the building supposed to have been built?" asked councilor Naomi Baker.

Kidrowski did not answer Baker's question but said that he had had trouble with the title and the previous owner. He then went on to say that he had made improvements to both properties and had been to the VA that day, which was why he was late in getting to the meeting.

Baker said that she had been on the council for five years and, "We've been down this road before."

Kidrowski said that he had never received a copy of the ordinance and he had asked for it.

Baker told him that the applicable parts of the ordinance were in the letter.

"How can I comply?" asked Kidrowski.

Baker then walked from the council table to the gallery and handed Kidrowski a copy of the letter he had been mailed.

Glancing at the letter Kidrowski said, "I have no snow-

mobiles."

Bagent said, "He's got a building coming. As long as he's got a plan..."

Looking at the letter Kidrowski said, "It's not addressed to the governor of South Side Pacific... I would like to see the whole ordinance."

Van Heuveln said, "We can't give an extension for a time frame we don't know."

Of the vehicles Kappes asked Kidrowski, "Can you get 'em all lined up so they look nice?"

Seeming to have some knowledge of Kidrowski's plans for one of the campers Van Heuveln said, "If the camper is not going to be used, isn't going to be fixed ... I'm realistic, if you don't have time to dismantle it, just get rid of it."

Baker then offered a suggestion, "How about if we do this: do a time line, if things improve and not stay the same or go backwards..."

"Call the contractor, get a timeline, an idea," added Van Heuveln.

Baker then made it official by making a motion, which was seconded and carried in short order, that to avoid abatement by the city by the first August council meeting (August 8) the trailer be removed, the vehicles lined up, the tall grass and weeds around the vehicles be removed and that a firm date from the contractor be obtained.

The mayor then asked Kidrowski if the motion sounded fair and reasonable.

Kidrowski said that he planned to move to the south side property by the end of the year.

Baker asked Harkema to send Kidrowski an itemized list of the things the council had talked about being done by August 8.

With no one objecting, or arguing against, during the public hearing it was determined that a public nuisance exists at 406-422 North Third Street (the north side trailer park) and an order of abatement/removal of the public nuisance will be made by the city and a special assessment will be made to the property for the cost of abatement of the nuisance.



Blazing Star in front of the glacial esker at Lake Johnanna Esker. --photo by Angela Miner

Minnesota prairie biome

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They toil in the remoteness of this region with the health of the prairie in mind. The work is not unstrained, far from it. The eradication of encroaching trees and invasive species corrosive to the health of the biome are two of the major points of the job description--labor intensive is the harvesting of seeds each year.

No ecosystem is static, monotonous, and the prairies are no exception.

Prairies evolved through cycles of wildfires, an agent of regeneration rather than destruction, complimented by grazing by herds of Bison. They are fire-dependent ecosystems.

On the land the conservancy owns, livestock owners are enlisted and they bring their herds out to the natural preserve for grazing.

Thousands of native species call the beguiling grasslands of southwest Minnesota home: meadowlarks and bobolinks, a variety of salamander species.

The biome, intricacies endless, has virtually vanished altogether. Though no less than a third of Minnesota was once prairie habitat, before settlement, only about one percent of it remains today, according to Miner.

In short, the profitability of soy beans and corn have devastated mul-

tiform peatlands and mosaic tall grass meadows--with more prairie grassland turned over to crop production each year so that no more than 250,000 acres of the highly mythologized ecosystem remain statewide.

What has preserved this region from prairie degradation and encroachment are the elevations that would make farming impossible, or otherwise dangerous, and, jointly, the work of the Nature Conservancy.

From the overlooks, below, wildflowers like prairie smoke and blazing star anchor the scenery in bunches.



Prescribed burning in an oak savanna. --photo by Angela Miner



Garbage is being dumped in the rural recycling trailer provided by the Swift County Environmental Service, threatening the future of the free program.

Rural recycling trailer at risk of removal if garbage dumping doesn't stop

by Cormac Dodd

Kerkhoven's recycling trailer for rural residents has been steady for years, but the local service could be in jeopardy if people continue stuffing the blue cart parked by the city maintenance building on the southside side of town with non-recyclables.

"The last few times it's been filled with absolute junk. It's a real good thing we are going to take away if things don't improve," said Scott Collins, Swift County Environmental Services Director.

The trend is worsening. Swift County accepts tin cans, soda bottles, newspapers, detergent bottles and much more under current guidelines.

However shirts, wrapping paper and other universal non-recyclables--basic waste by definition--have been strewn throughout the cart.

To clarify, Collins said he is aware of how many in the city value the recycling service and responsibly recycle each week. He said three or

four individuals could be culpable for the wrongdoing and, ultimately, could result in the trailer vanishing from the City of Kerkhoven because of repeated violations.

Surreptitiously disposing of one's own garbage into privately-owned garbage bins is a crime, one that gas stations and other roadside businesses deal with regularly.

Garbage services cost money, and money is sometimes tight. That is one plausible explanation for the illicit off-loading in the remote quarter of town.

Wrongful dumping has occurred in other towns--and granted, some garbage is always liable to find its way into recycling in any municipality, Collins said--but nothing like this in terms of scale.

"Someone's just been emptying their car in there. I don't want to give the ultimatum, but if this doesn't improve, we're going to have to take it to another town," Collins said. "It's got to improve dramatically, and fast."

Supervisor

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placement with the required water and sewer licenses could not be found. Sulier was hired to work with Nelson during Nelson's last months on the job but has not been in the position long enough to earn the licenses. A second man has been hired but he has not yet started working for the city and he is not licensed, either. Since Nelson retired (June 1) the city has been paying an independent contractor \$1880 per month, including mileage

from Morris, to perform the work requiring the licenses. Nelson said that, since he lives in Kerkhoven, the city would not need to pay him mileage and because he retired at 65, Social Security was limiting the amount he could earn. Nelson will be paid \$200 per month, plus \$75 per hour with a minimum of four hours, not to exceed 12 hours.

•Agreed to pay a bill for \$366 sent to Deb Kneisl for repairing a bent stand pipe under

the street in front of her home. Kneisl told the council that her insurance adjuster had said that there was no way the bill was her responsibility. Harkema said that the the property owner was responsible from the water main to the building and typically would also be billed for patching the street after repairs under a street had been made, in this case \$1400. Van Heuveln said that his father had moved many houses into Kerkhoven and had never been charged from the main to the property line. He also said that the policy needed to be written down so that it was clear. Council member Nao-

mi Baker agreed that the city needed to be consistent and moved that the city pay the bill in question. The motion was seconded and carried. The council also decided to move the connection from below the street to the boulevard before the street is patched.

•Accepted Dooley's Petroleum's bid of \$1.84 per gallon for 4375 gallons of liquid petroleum. The request for bids was made earlier than in previous years in response to Dooley's offer of L. P. for \$2.04 per gallon as a part of their pre-pay program. There were no other bidders.



Road ditch clean-up a part of Dublin Victory's June meeting

The Dublin Victory 4-H Club met on June 12th, 2022 at the Murdock Town Hall. First, we all cleaned along the ditches in Murdock then after that we had our meeting. The Roll Call was "What was your favorite thing about Summer." A fun upcoming event is the 4-H Summer Fun. You can do lots of fun activities through Benson Community Education. New Business is the Premium Book for 2022-Be sure to check out the back cover (page 48) of the premium book

for updates and new categories available this year. Have your projects signed up by August 1st. The next meeting will be on August 7th, 2022 where we get to go around to each club member's house to tour their projects for the fair!

Club Reporter,
Vanessa Olson