

City raises Loughridge rental fees

When city parks and facilities re-open to the public, local residents will find the cost of renting Loughridge Park Community Center has increased nearly 20% to help the City of Perry cover the cost of utilities, cleaning and maintaining the recently-remodeled facility.

At its Feb. 25 meeting, the city council voted 4-0 in favor of raising the rental fee by \$32.30 in an effort to encourage those renting the community center to clean up and take better care of the facility.

City staff originally proposed increasing the rental fee by \$17.86 and raising the deposit by \$50, but were met with resistance from Councilwoman Shirlye Hampton.

City Manager Taylor Brown informed the council city staff was nearly finished rehabilitating the community center at Loughridge Park.

"As we are preparing to

away after their event and leave their deposit," McAfee added.

"Our rough draft proposal is to up the fee and increase the deposit, but that does not include trying to set some money aside for some future improvements like chairs and a commercial stove for \$12-14,000 within the next two years," he stated.

"As of right now, with the current fees and deposits, it is just not sustaining itself," McAfee said.

"It is losing about \$126 per month, City Finance Director Penny Staffney said. "And that is not covering anything we just bought."

"Will it really cost \$12,000 for a stove?" Hampton asked.

"For a commercial one, yes," McAfee replied. "That is not your average stove. It will have six or eight burners."

"Do we have to have that?" Hampton asked.

"Yes ma'am. In my

existing rental fee (\$110) by \$17.86 to help the city break even with operating costs (utilities), in addition to raising the deposit from \$50 to \$100.

"We need to break even, but not make money," Councilman Mike Deming said.

"Even with the proposed increase, this is probably the most affordable venue in the area," Brown pointed out.

"I support raising the fees, but I am against a \$100 deposit. I just believe that will hurt a lot of families who could not afford to put up that amount. Raising the fees is fine. I think we have pretty reasonable fees. I can support raising it \$17 or \$18 to rent, but I just think the deposit should remain the same," Hampton said.

"We are having a problem with this because more and more people are walking away with stuff on the walls, tape and stuff and just leaving things. I recently had City Hall full



The City of Perry recently completed a remodeling of Loughridge Park community center located off of Hwy. 98.

insurance before renting," Deming interjected. "We had some people – including doctors – just walk away and tell you to use their deposit instead of cleaning."

"We could offer optional cleaning fee for an extra charge," Ketring said. "At the Elks Club you can pay an extra fee and they will clean it for you."

"I would rather not do that. If I have people walk away from a \$50 deposit now, it will cost even more to pay to have a cleaning service come in and clean up after," McAfee said, adding that currently the city allocates two employee man hours after each event to handle cleaning.

"I would be more inclined to charge someone and take it out of their deposit rather than raising their deposit. I just have to think of my constituents," Hampton said.

"I would like to suggest that when we rent the building, instead of just handing this (rental agreement) over to them, we have someone go over it with them," Hampton said.

"These are currently signed and notarized to show that they have been read," McAfee said.

"Not just give it to them. Read it out loud and make sure they understand what their responsibilities are," Hampton said. "That is my take on this."

"My take on this is that whoever with the city is handing out this information, go over this one-on-one with whoever is getting the key and make sure they sign it to show they understand it," Councilwoman Venita Woodfaulk said. "Then on Monday, whoever is over

the park area goes out there and makes sure all of this is done. They can come back and give them until 2 p.m. Monday to correct anything before giving their deposit back."

"They are currently given a 15-point checklist to make sure that everything is done so they can get their deposit back," McAfee said.

"We can add a spot for them to initial and show that it has been read to them and they understand," Staffney suggested.

"I still think a \$100 deposit will hinder some families," Hampton said.

"What about a \$75 deposit?" McAfee asked.

"I would rather raise the rent and leave the deposit alone. We have some very low income people," Hampton said.

"You are ok with the price, but not the deposit?" Woodfaulk asked. "So, go down on the deposit and we can just add that additional back in on the rental?"

"I am OK with that. I would even agree with an additional \$25 on the rental," Hampton said.

"Can we just make it an even \$150 to rent?" Staffney asked.

"Yes," Hampton said, again requesting to leave the deposit at \$50.

"Keep in mind that with a \$50 deposit we are having issues now. Unless we raise the deposit I don't think that is going to change the problem we are having right now with people not caring if they get their deposit back," McAfee warned.

"I am OK with what Mrs. Shirlye is suggesting -- raising the rental to \$150 plus tax and maintaining the deposit at \$50. Let's see how that goes for the

next year or so and then if we need to re-address it we can. I think that is a fair compromise," Brown suggested.

Woodfaulk and Deming supported the idea for a six-month trial period.

"If someone can make a motion, we can change the rental fee to \$150 plus tax and maintain the damage deposit at \$50," Brown suggested. "If that passes we will make changes to the form and start charging the new fees at the beginning of March."

After hearing a motion and second, Hampton objected to the rental total being \$150 plus tax.

After some additional discussion, Deming withdrew his motion and re-stated it so that the \$150 rental fee would include any applicable taxes.

Following a second by Ketring, the council voted 4-0 in favor of the new fee schedule, which is \$150.00 (\$140.19 plus \$9.81 in taxes), in addition to a \$50 damage deposit required to reserve the building.

"The damage deposit will be returned within a month after the facility has been inspected and found to be in an acceptable condition. Any damage that exceeds \$50 will be assessed and charged to the renter who (by signing the agreement) agrees to be responsible for all damages. In the event legal action is necessary, the renter will be responsible for all legal fees incurred pertaining to the damage," the rental agreement states.

The \$200 total – which is required to be paid within two weeks prior to the event date -- does not include the use of outside water, which requires an additional \$25 non-refundable fee.



In addition to painting and replacing the flooring in the facility (above), the city has plans to purchase new chairs and a new industrial grade stove (inset).

re-open it to the public, we thought it was a good time to review the criteria, rules and fees we charge to rent the facility," Brown said, adding that City Public Works Department Director Chester McAfee and staff had "tweaked" the rental packet for the council's consideration.

"I ran some numbers from last year's budget," McAfee said. "Currently, it is not able to sustain itself with what all we are doing with it."

"One of the proposals is to up the fees by 15%, which would be a \$17.86 increase, and to also raise the deposit. We are having more people not wanting to clean up and just walk

opinion, when you have a big party, the average four-burner home stove is just not big enough to cook for most events," McAfee said, adding that some parts needed to repair the existing older stove may soon no longer be available.

"Most people prepare the food before the party and bring it cooked. They just need to use the stove to warm the food," Hampton replied.

"A commercial stove is bigger in the stove area also," McAfee stated. "I would hate to put a residential stove in there and it not be big enough. I'd rather go big."

McAfee said staff proposed increasing the

of stuff that was left behind. But, this is your decision," McAfee replied.

"People are treating it more like it is a cleaning fee, and that is not how it has been set up," Brown stated.

Staffney stated the Perry Garden Club charges a \$100 deposit to rent out its facility, adding, "But, they do get it back."

"Almost everyone charges some type of deposit nowadays," Councilman Ward Ketring said.

"I understand that they get their deposit back, but some families can not afford it," Hampton said.

"Some churches are now making you buy mandatory

LEGALS

(continued from page 11)

All that portion of the Northeast ¼ of the Northwest ¼ West of the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad of Section 17 Township 05 Range

08 Containing 3.00 acres MOL Recorded in Taylor County official record 256, page 177.

Name in which assessed Marie L Teal c/o Lechia Garrison Said property being in the County of

Taylor, State of Florida. Unless such certificate shall be redeemed according to law, the property described shall be sold to the highest bidder at the courthouse door on the 13th day of July, 2020 at

11:00 o'clock a.m. Dated this 10th day of June, 2020 Signature: Annie Mae Murphy Clerk of Circuit Court Taylor County, Florida

thereon. The certificate number, year of issuance, description of the property and the names in which the property was assessed are as follows:

Certificate Number: 489 Year of Issuance: 2013 Description of Property: Parcel Number: R04442-100 Lot 5 Block 4 of the J B Thomas Addition less and except the West 117 ½ feet in Section 25 Township 04 Range 07 Containing .28 acres MOL Recorded in Taylor County official record 230, page 168. Name in which assessed Janie Webb Cox Estate Said property being in the County of Taylor, State of Florida.

Unless such certificate shall be redeemed according to law, the property described shall be sold to the highest bidder at the courthouse door on the 13th day of July, 2020 at 11:00 o'clock a.m. Dated this 10th day of June, 2020 Signature: Annie Mae Murphy Clerk of Circuit Court Taylor County, Florida

TDA 20-006 NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that 5T Wealth Partners LP the holder of the following certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The certificate number, year of issuance, description of the property and the names in which the property was assessed are as follows: Certificate Number: 726 Year of Issuance: 2013 Description of Property: Parcel Number: R05493-000 Lot 6 & the South ½ of Lot 5 Block 6 of J H Parker Subdivision located in Section 26 Township 04 Range 07 Containing .39 acres MOL Recorded in Taylor County official record 211, page 414.

TDA 20-005 NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that 5T Wealth Partners LP the holder of the following certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued

Name in which assessed Bernetha Colson Williams Said property being in the County of Taylor, State of Florida.

Unless such certificate shall be redeemed according to law, the property described shall be sold to the highest bidder at the courthouse door on the 13th day of July, 2020 at 11:00 o'clock a.m. Dated this 10th day of June, 2020 Signature: Annie Mae Murphy Clerk of Circuit Court Taylor County, Florida

TDA 20-007 NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR TAX DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that 5T Wealth Partners LP the holder of the following certificate has filed said certificate for a tax deed to be issued thereon. The certificate number, year of issuance, description of the property and the names in which the property was assessed are as follows: Certificate Number: 1035 Year of Issuance: 2013 Description of Property: Parcel Number: R06645-050 The North ½ of the Southeast ¼ of the Southwest ¼ of the Northwest ¼ together with easements. Located in Section 24 Township 07 Range 07 Containing 5.00 acres MOL Recorded in Taylor County official record 438, page 702.

Name in which assessed Ralph, Chad, & Arthur Cochran Said property being in the County of Taylor, State of Florida. Unless such certificate shall be redeemed according to law, the property described shall be sold to the highest bidder at the courthouse door on the 13th day of July, 2020 at 11:00 o'clock a.m. Dated this 10th day of June, 2020 Signature: Annie Mae Murphy Clerk of Circuit Court Taylor County, Florida

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