

Pawnee City Council Discusses Draft Budget

(KTNC) - The Pawnee City, City Council, got its first look at the draft budget for the 2012-13 fiscal year Monday night.

Auditor Julie Bauman presented details of the budget, which calls for reductions in all city departments. Bauman said the city has been able to complete a lot of infrastructure projects over the last few years, and with the city's cash reserves down somewhat, now is a good time for the city to implement a conservative budget.

The budget includes a tax request of just over \$103,000 and a proposed levy of 49.78 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation. Approximately 4-cents of the levy is for the interlocal law enforcement agreement between Pawnee City and Pawnee County.

Concern has been expressed over a proposed 21-percent cut to the Library's budget. Monday night, Linda Bowman of the Library Board and Dorothy Willis of the Library Foundation presented a Library budget that includes a 10.5-percent reduction. Bowman said some community groups have offered to help support the Library budget.

Willis said even with a smaller budget reduction, there might still be an issue with library accreditation. (play audio :48)

Bauman said the budget should be finalized by Thursday. The council will hold a budget hearing at its September 10th meeting, prior to approving the document. City budgets need to be submitted to the State Auditor by September 20th.

The Pawnee City Council held more discussion Monday on the recycling trailer, specifically regarding the cost to transport the trailer to recycling centers to be emptied. Pawnee City High School Student Council Advisor Mary Moser told the council that students are willing to help sort the recyclables, and they believe it's a good thing for the city to have. (play audio :53)

One proposal to help cover the cost of the trailer is to add a small fee of 25 or 50 cents to monthly water bills. The council discussed taking the trailer to the recycling center in Seneca rather than Lincoln, where they take the trailer now.

In other business Monday, the council approved entering into a one-year agreement with the Village of Steinauer to provide kenneling services.

And the council decided to not place a question on the ballot in November regarding the proposed assisted living facility.