

Falls City Council Approves Code Enforcement Officer Position

(KLZA)-- The Falls City Council Tuesday evening approved a request from the Falls City Police Department to hire a code enforcement officer / police officer. The vote was 7-0 with Council member Jim Wisdom absent.

Prior to June 25th of this year, the Falls City Volunteer Fire Department Fire Drivers were responsible for nuisance complaints. When the number of paid drivers was cut, the nuisance violation investigations went to the Police Department. There are currently eight full-time officers including Police Chief Duane Armbruster and Assistant Chief Jamie Baker.

In his presentation to the Council, Assistant Chief Baker admitted the nuisance investigations have been a problem in Falls City. He suggested it is a safety issue as well as a public health issue keeping those in check that don't keep their property maintained.

In explaining some of the benefits to creating and filling this position, Baker said it would allow just one person to handle the code enforcement, not taking up two or three officers time. Since the person would be certified, this person would cover time off for officers, meaning less need for a part-time officer.

The Assistant Chief said his comparisons in crime rates from the first half of 2013 to 2014 indicate a large increase in the amount of crimes reported in Falls City. Overall, reported crimes were up 65 percent, offenses against family are up 67 percent and drug arrests in Falls City are up 500 percent.

The department currently has two part-time positions they can utilize but Chief Armbruster noted difficulty in finding anyone to fill one position let alone two. He explained filling the proposed position would aid the Falls City Police Department. He said while the main focus would be code enforcement, it would make a huge difference in what the Falls City Police Department will be able to accomplish.

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