

Posted Online: Jan. 19, 2011, 9:46 pm

Silvis rents two lots to church for 44 garden plots

[Comment on this story](#)

By Seth Kabala, seth@sethkabala.com

SILVIS -- Amidst the chilly aftermath of a winter storm that left the Quad-Cities seeing gray, the Silvis city council on Tuesday was talking green -- as in gardens.

Dan Thorngren told aldermen about Silvis United Methodist Church's plan to construct 44 garden plots on two lots near the intersection of 5th Street and 2nd Avenue C. One lot is owned by the city, and one privately.

Mr. Thorngren said the private owner agreed to rent the land for \$1, he said. Mayor Bill Fox said he met earlier with church officials and tentatively agreed to use of the city's land for \$1 per year, though the agreement still needs to be drawn up, he said.

Each lot is 40 feet by 110 feet, and the plan is to divide each into 22 equal sections of 10-feet by 12-feet, for a total of 44 garden plots.

"The church has taken on a mission project to provide these garden plots and try to provide more food for the local food banks," Mr. Thorngren said, adding he was unsure where the water supply would come from, and this was one of the reasons the matter was brought before council.

The church has asked the city to maintain a register of all plots and pass out application materials to interested parties (one per individual or family), which it will then forward to the church; help remove sod and till ground; assist with access to a nearby hydrant for watering purposes; and haul compost.

If all goes as planned, Mr. Thorngren said, the plots will be available for planting by April.

Ald. Bob Cervantes, 1st Ward, asked if there would be a charge for water. Mayor Fox said the city couldn't meter the hydrant unless it purchased a monitoring device costing hundreds of dollars, so the water likely would be gratis.

Ald. Cervantes expressed concern that this could lead to other groups making similar requests, resulting in a strain on city's resources.

Ald. Cervantes scheduled a Parks, Buildings, and Grounds committee meeting for 4 p.m. Jan. 7 a to discuss what role, if any, the city will play.

In other business, aldermen:

-- Advanced several measures to be considered Feb. 1. Included are the not-to-exceed-\$650 purchase of 18 flags and 18 poles for the new 1st street lights; an amendment to an existing parking ordinance, prohibiting parking on the Southeast side of 17th Avenue in the Hynd Farm Addition; and a go-ahead with civil service testing to replace a retiring-in-April police dispatch supervisor.

--- Scheduled a Finance Committee meeting for 4:15 p.m. Jan. 26 to discuss a cumulative \$10,000 donation to the Rock Island County Animal Shelter, to be given in \$5,000 installments this year and next, if approved.