City to Discuss Reinstating a Cooperative Extension Agent

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

It’s a double feature in terms of municipal government meetings tonight. The city council will hold a regular meeting starting at 7:30 p.m. and the borough assembly will hold a work session at the same time.

Starting with the city’s agenda, council members will take a look at their 2015 budget goals, and consider bringing a fulltime cooperative extension agent to Kodiak from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Kodiak had an agent from 1980 until1999, but members from the local Farm Bureau and Soil and Water Conservation District are hoping to bring one back.

Joe Dinnocenzo is the local manager of the Soil and Water Conservation District and spoke during the January 23 council meeting about the need for someone to help Kodiak growers year round.

“A cooperative extension agent is a lot like a marine advisory agent. It’s a person that can funnel how to information about agriculture and gardening and agribusiness to people in Kodiak. Right now there’s a real need for, there’s a lot of people trying to get started in horticulture and high tunnels and there’s a lot of people interested in gardening that weren’t a few years ago. Most of these people are new to agriculture and to gardening and need a lot of help. A person funneling university accumulated knowledge to folks in Kodiak would be a big benefit to the community and help promote agriculture in Kodiak.”

Dinnocenzo said an agent would also help the local 4-H program and Kodiak State Fair.

The borough assembly adopted a resolution to reinstate an extension agent during its January 16 meeting. If the council chooses to adopt its own resolution tonight it will be forwarded to the state. Any decisions will also need the approval of the University of Alaska Board of Regents.

Switching over to the borough’s work session tonight, the assembly will continue its strategic planning during discussions. The goal is to hear the plan for borough governance and revisit other strategic planning topics like economic development, animal control and fire protection services. It will also hear updates from the solid waste advisory board, planning and zoning commission and parks and recreation committee.

The assembly will also discuss non-profit funding, including the application process that non-profits will need to go through in order to receive borough funds.

The city's regular meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. in the borough chambers. The assembly will meet at the same time, downstairs in the borough conference room.