

By GISEELLE ARREDONDO

• Leader & Times

Tuesday signified the final reading of Ordinance No. 2176, the levying of tax revenues for budget year 2014 in excess of limitation, and Resolution No. 2176 as presented by Finance Director Chris Ford to the Liberal City Commission.

"This was a tough budget," commissioner Joe Denoyer said, "We've not raised the mill levy since 2006. We've cut everywhere we can cut. We've depleted reserves down to dangerously low levels, all the while maintaining current services. We've also in the last two years reduced staff members by 23 members. I appreciate staff and all the workers doing all they can to make things last longer to not have a wish list, but a need list."

This agenda item was approved with a motion of 4 to 0, with Dean Aragon absent.

Urban boundary lines, a change recommended by KDOT and FHWA in the classification of roads and highways for access to federal funding, presented by Public Works Director Joe Sealey, was approved with a motion of 4 to 0.

Golf course director Darrell Kennedy made a request for a new pull-behind rotary mower in the amount of \$4,500 from Keating Tractor.

Their current mower is older than 20 years and is about 15 foot.

The mower is used for irrigated rough and retention ponds, and an eight foot mower would

make it easier to maneuver, Kennedy noted.

“The past three years it has been really hard to keep it running,” he said. “We have spent \$1,800 on it this year, now it is broke down again. The parts will be about \$1,500 to fix this time.”

Motion for approval of a new mower for the golf course was 4 to 0.

Next, Mid-America Air Museum Director Jim Bert presented two items, one of which was a request for a new copier for the museum.

Bert noted that parts for the copier are no longer available.

“I believe the museum has a copier that is 8-years-old now. We have used it for longer than it can be repaired with replacement parts.”

And he emphasized that this request would be significant over time.

“We will be able to do a number of things, in fact less expensively than we had in the past, especially with printing. Some of the color printing that we are going to be doing in the children’s program and school program that will require some printing will save us a bit and we can take a little bit and then back with tuition into that program. And that hopefully will start perhaps in January,” he said.

The copier would serve the museum’s growing need for quality copies, particularly in the reproduction of higher-quality grant and fundraising documents.

The second request involved an exploration of the traveling exhibit on prehistoric sharks by the

University of Southern Florida National History Museum.

"I went there and they had the sharks there at the time. They had over 14 buses in the parking lot. It was full, so I believe with our own creativity we can do much more. It's going to be a great experience," Bert said.

The exhibit is not in the area just yet, but it will soon be in Amarillo, Texas.

"How do you haul a shark around?" asked Vice Mayor Janet Willimon.

"Carefully," Bert replied.

The exhibit will include a 60-foot Megalodon

"We're not gonna have to construct an aquarium?" Denoyer asked.

"No, we don't have enough water," Bert said, and the room roared with laughter.