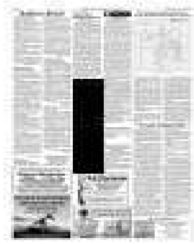

Council Approves Preliminary Budget

By Mary Kilen

Stanley City Council met in special session on Monday, Aug. 3.

In their first order of business, the council approved the request from the Stanley Commercial Club to shut down 1st Ave. SE between Main Street and 1st St. SE for Crazy Days on Friday, Aug. 7.

Administrative Assistant Joan Hollekim presented the council with the preliminary budget for 2027. She reviewed the items that were changing from last year, including increased interest with the investment in CDs. Expenditure changes include adding funds for an outside judge if needed for municipal court, a 7% overall increase in health insurance and a 2.5% increase in salaries.

The council also discussed the goal to reduce overtime in all departments, lowering the library mill levy as their reserve funds are getting higher, moving the funds from legacy earnings into CIP3 for street costs, and using walking trail funds for the proposed expansion of the walking path. The city has no major street projects planned for next year.

They also reviewed the various funds including the water operating fund. As that fund is operating at a deficit, the council may need to consider raising water rates. The same is true of the garbage operating fund.

Looking at the proposed levy, Hollekim noted that property valuations went up in the city. A city is allowed to raise their levy by 3% plus new growth.

With the city having a goal to stay flat in tax collections if possible, the council moved to approve setting the mill levy at 49.02 mills. This would bring in the same amount of tax dollars as last year while dropping the number of mills from 50.75 last year. The levy includes the airport, library, cemetery and general fund mills. With the change in valuations, it should mean about a $1 increase per $100,000 of a house's valuation.

The council set their public hearing on the budget for their September 8 regular meeting at 6:30 p.m.