

Billing plan nixed

Council committee halts plan to bill insurers for accident reports

By STEVE COLON

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Wauseon city council's safety and code committee decided Tuesday not to participate in a controversial program which would charge insurance companies for crash reports.

Committee chair Karen Krumm noted the negatives outweighed the benefits.

"We've gotten a lot of negative feedback on this issue," she said. "Based on the numbers we were given by (Cost

Recovery Corporation) and the amount of money we will actually receive weighed against the negative public relations, we are not going to go this way right now."

It was also noted that very few insurance companies pay for the reports as billed to them by Cost Recovery Corporation. They are not required by law to pay for the reports even when billed.

"There are so few insurance companies (voluntarily paying for reports) and I really don't want to put us in a position to have people harassing our citizens for insurance companies that don't pay," Krumm said.

The idea was brought to council by police chief Keith

Torbet in an effort to bolster the department's budget. However, Torbet is not upset at the decision.

"As I said from the beginning, I do not care which way you go," he told the committee. "I can fully understand where you are coming from. The city is not in dire financial need. I'd rather provide the service than not provide it (as long as we can afford to)."

Torbet also clarified a common misconception: the police are required by law to file an accident report. He noted that in 75 percent of all accidents they are not mandated to take a report on private property or when the damage is under \$450.