Area Councilmen Okay New City Hall

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BREAUX BRIDGE — Residents of the "Crawfish Capital of the World" will be missing a familiar sight here soon, since city council members voted last night to build a new city hall, rather than repair the old building.

The 70-year-old structure was almost totally destroyed by fire New Year's Day and council members had been deliberating on whether it was economically feasible to repair the old building or to build a new one.

"I share your feeling of sentiment in repairing the old building," said Councilman Joseph "Joe" Jones. "But, the money we will spend to remodel is too excessive and, after remodeling, we will still have an old building."

Jones said he had reliable verbal information that the state would match "dollar for dollar" in the construction of a new building, and with $200,000 budgeted from the city and the $200,000 insurance settlement, a new building could be built for $700,000.

The council agreed to accept the insurance settlement from General Adjustment Bureau (GAB) who investigated the claim.

This figure, estimated at actual cash value of both building and contents, totalled $210,852.20.

The city's insurance agent, Pat Huval, also told councilmen that three years ago he had covered all city property under a blanket policy and had valued the property at $1,486,070.

But, he said, under state law, a city is required to submit a re-evaluation every three years to the rating bureau.

Huval said he and City Clerk Raymond Guidry had already made the three-year re-evaluation and had estimated all city property to be valued at $2,463,590.

The new policy would have been in effect on Jan. 14, he said.

In other action, the council moved to purchase a comprehensive liability policy from All Risk Management, a service company for the Louisiana Municipal Association (LMA).

The policy will cover up to $1,100,000 per occurrence on claims relating to general liability, gas utilities, police vehicles and regular vehicles at a savings of $5000 from the present policy coverage.

Dave Peabody, a representative for LMA, said there were 23 municipalities now participating in the insurance program, including the area towns of Delcambre, Crowley, Rayne, Mamou and Gueydan.