

Final payment on lagoon approved

By Linda Schneider
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For the first Bird City Council meeting of the year, the members focused on business and issues of 2009 and approving the last payment for the wastewater lagoon. In addition, it is election time for three seats on the council. Deadline for registering is at 12 p.m., Jan. 27, and the election is April 7.

Wastewater lagoon

Chris Miller, Miller and Associates, presented the seventh and final payment to BSB Construction for the work done on the wastewater lagoon.

Mr. Miller brought the members up-to-date on the punch list he had presented at last month's meeting, along with their recommendations and concerns.

He told the members that everything on the list had been covered and with the payment request, he presented the certification of completion to be approved that included a 1-year warranty on all work done.

Councilman Wade Carmichael asked about an area around the rip rap that looked like it had not been seeded. Mr. Miller told him seeding was included in the warranty and if grass did not grow, it would be reseeded in the spring.

In payments, the council approved BSB Construction, Inc. final payment of \$42,617.42; Northwest Kansas Planning Commission \$2,850; and Miller and Associates \$4,920.18. Mr. Miller added Miller and Associates still has approximately \$2,500 in fees coming.

"Along with about \$1,900 in other fees, we have roughly \$4,500 left to pay," said Mayor Troy Burr. "That still puts us about \$16,000 under the budget."

Once the payments had been approved, the council approved the certification of completion with the 1-year warranty effective Dec. 12.

Lagoon equipment

Councilman Loren White asked Mr. Miller if there were funds still

available for the generator the city is required to have in the event of electrical failure. Mr. Miller said there was over \$13,000 for the generator and at least two bids on purchasing one are needed. Councilman White reported that at the next meeting he would have the bids.

There was discussion concerning the tractor/loader/mower recently purchased, and was the funding there. Mr. Miller told the members that funding for purchasing equipment has already been approved and can be requested at any time.

Councilwoman Deb Smith wanted to know if Bird City still needed a certified operator for the lagoon. Mr. Miller said the state requires a certified operator, but the specifications may be lower, he will check on it and get back to the council.

Personnel policy

Again, the council members discussed developing a new personnel policy that would cover annual leave and add personal time to full-time employee benefits.

The consensus of the majority of the members was that personal time was needed and could be used instead of sick leave when an employee needed an hour or two for personal business, such as purchasing car tags.

"This proposal is not set in stone, it is to present an opportunity to discuss the issue," said Mayor Burr.

The members agreed that vacation time policy should stay the same and proceed in developing a personal time policy.

Kari Gilliland, city attorney, suggested to the council to first define "annual leave," then there would be no question as to what was vacation, sick or personal time. She continued that the language of the policy had to be clear to include how the employee would request time off.

Mayor Burr submitted the proposal as a working idea in adding personal time available

to full-time employees. While no action was taken on the proposal, much was discussed.

At the end of the discussion, Mayor Burr told council he would revise the proposal on the recommendations of Mrs. Gilliland and the members and present it again at next month's meeting for review.

Bird City pool

At last month's meeting, the Recreation Commission informed the city council that they would no longer be managing the city swimming pool.

The commission told the council that managing the public pool needed more time and knowledge of pools than they had and asked that Bird City take over the responsibilities.

Phyllis Carson, city treasurer, reported that the budget that had already been approved for 2009 would have to be amended to include the cost of maintaining the pool.

Mrs. Gilliland said the commission had said the designate funding from the school district would go to the city; however, next week the Cheylin Board of Education will be meeting and should address the issue of turning over the funds for the pool, because their 2009 budget has also been approved.

"There may be some conflict in doing that since it would have to include Rawlins County also," said Mrs. Gilliland.

Mayor Burr asked her if the city could maintain the pool out of city funds for 2009 and budget for 2010. Mrs. Carson answered that by saying that it would come out of the city General Funds, but in the process would have to cut back in other areas of funding. No action was taken and Mrs. Gilliland would report to council on any pool information, as it becomes known to her.

Miscellaneous items

Other council actions included:

- Scheduling a goal setting



COUNCILMAN WADE CARMICHAEL and Brad Schneider, city maintenance, looking over tile that will be part of the new look inside City Hall. Times staff photo by Linda Schneider

meeting in January.

- Designating First National Bank, Bird City as the official depository.
- Approval of a record retention policy submitted by Tabetha Ketzner, city clerk.
- Approval of FEMA /Disaster Relief Resolution that allows

for a plan of action in case of a disaster. The plan is funded by FEMA and would be a source of future funding in a disaster.

- Agreed to rent a storage unit that will be shared by Bird City and the fire station.
- Allowing Kevin Berans or Jim Milliken to sit in on council meet-

ings if Mrs. Gilliland was unable due to duties as the county attorney.

• Appointing Brad Schneider, city maintenance, as demolition officer for Bird City.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday, Feb. 2.

Donuts and coffee offered at Cheylin

A Community Coffee will be held at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 14, in the Cheylin School cafeteria. People of the Cheylin School District are welcome to stop by the school and have coffee and doughnuts with superintendent William Porter. He will be discussing the 2008-2009

school year and welcomes comments from the people about concerns in the school.

Those planning to attend the Community Coffee should call Deanna Nelson, 734-2351, no later than 4 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 12, so the school may be prepared.

Free-throw contest to be held Jan. 18

The local Knights of Columbus free-throw contest is being held on Sunday, Jan. 18. The Cheyenne County Council of the Knights welcomes all boys and girl, ages 10 to 14, to participate in the competition, beginning at 2 p.m. in the St. Francis Community High School gym.

Applications may be picked up at the offices of the principals at the Cheylin or St. Francis schools. Applications need to be filled out and signed by both the applicant and by an adult then brought to the competition along with a copy of their birth certificate for verification of age. Age eligibility is determined by the age of the contestant as of Jan. 1. Applications will also be available at the competitions.

All boys and girls 10 to 14 years-old are eligible to participate and will compete in their respective age divisions. Last year more than 151,00 participated in over 3,100 local competitions.

All contestants who participate are recognized with a certifi-



cate for their participation. The winners of each age group will also be given a plaque made by NgraveN operated by Reid Raile.

Winners of the championship competition will progress through local, district and state competitions. International champions are announced by the Knights of Columbus international headquarters based on scores from the state level competitions.

For more information on the free-throw contest or the Knights of Columbus, contact Mike Antholz, Grand Knight of Council 6665 at 785-332-3482.



C.J. ANTHOLZ AND KEVIN ESTRADA perform for Cheylin students during the Christmas concert. Times staff photo by Linda Schneider

Sleep workshop scheduled

Having trouble sleeping? You know you need sleep but don't know how to get it?

People with these troubles should plan to attend the "Knowledge for Life" workshop from noon to 1 p.m. on Tuesday,

Jan. 13, in the Cheyenne County Extension office.

Diann Gerstner, Thomas County Family and Community Service agent, will present ideas on getting the sleep needed for good health.

Those attending are urged to bring their lunch and eat while Ms. Gerstner talks.

To make sure there is enough materials on hand, people are asked to call the Extension office at 332-3171 by Friday, Jan. 9.

Loans available for losses

Emergency loans are being made available by the Farm Service Agency to help qualified producers recover from production and physical losses due to severe storms, tornadoes and flooding, according to Patty Eckhardt, farm loan manager of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency for Sherman, Cheyenne and Wallace counties.

Secretarial Disaster Declaration S2811 for drought, excessive heat, hail and high winds ending Aug. 14 made Sherman County eligible for emergency loans; contiguous counties also eligible include Cheyenne, Logan, Rawlins, Thomas and Wallace counties. Producers in these counties have until July 27, to apply for an emergency loan.

Eligible loan funds may be used to restore or replace essential property and pay production costs associated with the disaster year. Applicants can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses not to exceed \$500,000. The current rate for these low interest loans is 3.75 percent.

Producers must meet eligibility requirements and not be able to obtain credit from a commercial lender. The agency will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability.

Contact the Farm Service Agency office at your local Service Center.