

Residents protest water rate increase

By Norma Martinez

normamartinez@wildblue.net
Mayor Troy Burr opened the Bird City City Council meeting on Nov. 7, by asking everyone to stand and say the Pledge Allegiance.

Seven local residents were present to protest the recent increases in water rates. They were: Charlie and Jan Damm, Coleen Catic, Darlene Burr, Bobbie Poorman, Wanda Dowdy and Val Coleman. Bobbie Poorman was unhappy that she had an 85-percent increase in her water and 40 percent on the sewer. She stated that on a fixed income this was going to be hard to pay, and that she could not use the 5,000 gallons of water charged for unless she deliberately wasted it. If her yard wasn't in a location where everyone sees it, she would just let it go and not water it. This was the general consensus of the others that were present.

Wanda Dowdy commented that when she and her husband moved here it was because they could live in Bird City on less money than needed in the city. Now that Marvin is not here she has had to live on \$3,000 less income. This large raise in water rates would make it very difficult for her to pay. She added that at the public meeting they talked about a \$10 raise, not \$25.

Val Coleman had voiced her opposition in a letter to the council. In the past they all agreed they had tried to conserve on the water, but now having to pay for more than they use there was no need to conserve.

Troy Burr said that at the present condition of the 100-year-old water system they had to take a big step to get them where they need to be in order to get a grant. The former rates were not covering the cost of production. No plans have been made for replacing them at this time, but no one would be happy at all with no water, if the system gave out. He then said this discussion has been going on for 15 minutes, and if no one else had anything different to say, they would go on with the meeting.

Building Permit

Dave Burns was asking for a permit to build a 20- by 14- by 7-foot wood garage with a metal roof to match the house. His request was approved.

Wellness Center

Brad Schneider, city superintendent, reported he had put in the water line and barrel for the Wellness Center. Discussion was held on Rob Klepper's request at the October meeting asking for a 5-year exemption for paying the water bill. Shannon Ambrosier thought it should be reviewed an-

nually, and Frank Serrano would like to see a cap on spending.

Wade Carmichael, councilman, pointed out the goal for the Wellness Center was being ready for operation by spring. The decision was to table this until the December meeting since Hal Sager was checking into some information on it, and was unable to attend this meeting.

Bid for old tank

Kris Doyle had submitted a bid for the old tank that was not being used. After a brief discussion on whether they were sure they would not find a need to use it in the future they decided to hold on to it and reject the bid.

October motion to purchase new meters

Last month council members agreed to purchase seven new meters to remove the ones in the new housing unit and replace them with new ones. The new ones were going to cost \$98 each instead of the \$78 as quoted by Mr. Schneider. This brought up the question as to whether they really needed to be replaced. It was mentioned that these meters were capable of reading as all the others if they had the software updated. Mr. Schneider said there would be no cost in doing this. The decision was made to cancel the order and leave the old ones in.

Sheriff report

Sheriff Craig Van Allen was present but had no written report. He reported that he had not received any complaints and everything seems to be okay. He did report that 25 pounds of unused or expired prescriptions were collected in October.

City trash pickup

Discussion was made on a suggestion that city trash pickup should be made mandatory. Frank Serrano said they could not force people to buy a trash service, but there was an ordinance against leaving trash in someone else's dumpster, and they should be reported.

Equipment

Shannon Ambrosier, councilman, talked with the city superintendent in St. Francis about their coming to Bird City and helping out with water leaks in trade for, or pay for their services. This could possibly save the city some money. He said he would speak to the city council and see if they would agree with this.

Streets

Hal Sager, councilman, was not present to give his report on the streets, but Mr. Schneider reported they had been using a lot of the salvaged asphalt from the asphalt spill to repair streets. He said they were ready for the snow except the motor was out on the salt spreader, but this could be done by hand.

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FILLING BOXES for Operation Christmas Child were Cassie Rucker, Haleigh Rucker, Ivan Kemp.



TEENS FOR CHRIST sorts canned food donated for Thanksgiving boxes to give to those in need for the Holiday.

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez

Blood Drive Dec. 8

When you donate blood, you give the perfect gift — another hug, another laugh, another smile, another chance — to someone in need of blood.

The Saint Francis Community Blood Drive is scheduled on Thursday, Dec. 8 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Luthern Church Fellowship Hall, 202 N College. To make an appointment, call 1-800 red cross (1-800-733-2767) or visit redcrossblood.org

"It's the season of giving and there's one gift that won't cost a penny, but means the world to a patient in need," said Terri Dunaway, chief executive officer of American Red Cross Blood Services — Central Plains Region. "By donating blood, you can give someone an opportunity to spend another holiday with their loved ones."

You can help the Red Cross ensure a stable blood supply for all patients who need blood products.

Special giveaway

Everyone who presents to donate blood at the St. Francis Community Blood Drive can enter to win a new Apple iPad donated by Eagle Communications. In addition, all presenting donors will receive a specially designed American Red Cross T-shirt.

How to donate whole blood

Call 1-800 red cross (1-800-733-2767) or visit www.redcrossblood.org for more information or to make an appointment. Walk-ins are also welcome. All blood types are needed to ensure the Red Cross maintains an adequate blood supply. A blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Donors must be in general good health, weigh at least 110 pounds and be at least 17 years old (16 in Kansas with completed parental consent form). New height and weight restrictions apply to donors 18 and younger.



SEVEN BRIDES FOR SEVEN BROTHERS —Ed Frisbie, Noah Jones, Walker Janicke and Ty Carmichael are members of the cast which performed on Nov. 11 The play was under the direction of Rose and Dennis Hengen.