



Bird City Times

Thursday, December 11, 2008
Volume 83, Number 50
Bird City, Kansas 67731

8 Pages

65 Cents



IT IS ALMOST TRADITIONAL, It's not officially Christmas time until Dennis Wright and his dad, Don Wright, put up the decorations in downtown Bird City. It was usually grey and cold for putting up the ornaments, Dennis said, that he typically has his sunglasses on.

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider

Insurance approved by Board



By Linda Schneider
dublinls@hotmail.com

For the last meeting of the year, the Cheylin Board of Education approved two important insurance items. In addition, the high school boy's basketball rules and the Student Handbook were approved with all changes in place. Laurie Leonard, Recreation Commission, updated the board members on the recent meeting with the city council.

School property/liability insurance

Darvin Strutt and Loren Jacobs, representing EMC Insurance, presented to the board the renewal insurance contract for the school's property, liability and vehicle insurance.

Mr. Strutt went over the items that would be insured for the 2008-2009 school year. He pointed out several areas of concern in the school's present coverage and said the board may or may not choose to make changes.

One of the recommendations was to lower the deductible of \$10,000 to \$2,500. This would increase the annual premium \$1,925. He added that the board might choose to keep the deductible; however, it would be large out-of-pocket money if a large amount of damage should happen to any one of the main three school buildings; elementary, high school and McDonald gymnasium.

Another issue was the insurance policy, as it was presently, would pay out for the buildings at present cash value. Mr. Strutt strongly urged the board to consider having replacement insurance, especially for older buildings such as the school buildings. He went on to say that when damage to older buildings is done, their present cash value does not cover rebuilding.

"I think we were built in 1921, our cash value for these buildings are next to nothing, if that," said Dave Frisbie, president.

Mr. Strutt said that the older the building gets, the more depreciation would be taken in to account when a claim is filed. He told the board the way his insurance company likes to go is with the replacement cost insurance.

He told the board that the policy is insuring the sports bleachers twice that it was already included in the premium and could be dropped. Some good news was that the annual premium was down from \$29,000 last year to \$26,673 this year and with dropping the extra insurance on the bleachers, adding the \$1,925 to lower the deductible would still keep the premium lower than last year. The board approve the insurance with the change of dropping the extra bleacher policy and changing the deductible to \$2,500.

Employee insurance

After several meetings of discussing whether approve the three-year contract with the Non State Group Plan of the Kansas State Employee's Health Benefits Plan or seek out other health insurance options, the board signed the renewal contract, with the option to cancel in one or two years. The policy is effective January.

Further discussion among the members indicated there would be a meeting with the teachers and staff

on other insurance options in the near future.

Recreation Commission

Mrs. Leonard reported on her visit to the December city council meeting regarding the Commission's decision not to renew the public pool contract.

Mrs. Leonard reiterated the conversation with the city council saying the Commission's choice was unanimous among the members. In addition, based on the fact they did not have much knowledge on pools and maintenance, and it would free up their time for other sports events.

She added that the Commission would still sponsor swim programs and hire swim team managers/coaches, and expand on a senior citizens swim program.

Mrs. Leonard concluded by telling the board the 67 percent of the funding coming from the school mill levy, would go to the city just this year for the pool, since budgeting had been done for both the Recreation Commission and Bird City for the year. She would keep the board posted.

Student items

The board approved the Student Handbook with changes made. Superintendent Bill Porter will be notifying parents by mail of the changes.

The high school boy's basketball rules for 2008-2009 were approved.

The board formally commended Tia Sager for selection to the West Kansas Liberty League all league volleyball team.

Also, the board formally commended Jacob White, first team-return specialist, Jayden Cahoj, second team-defensive line, Jay Hewitt, honorable mention-kicker, and Max Hengen honorable mention-center to the West Kansas Liberty League all league football team.

Preschool

The board accepted the resignation from Darci Kehlbeck as preschool teacher; her last day will be Dec. 18. The reason stated was that she wanted to spend more time with her family.

Executive session was called, upon reconvening, the board accepting Anita Pochop's resignation from the school board.

The board then approved Bridget Pochop to teach preschool at \$15 per hour. Mrs. Pochop will begin teaching when school reconvenes in January.

Superintendent report

Superintendent Porter reports included:

- The district's rental house was rented and suggested payment be used to make repairs on the house.

- Job descriptions are ready for the board to look over, make changes, and bring to the January meeting for approval.

- The Senior Citizen's Dinner was ready to go, and took reservation for the members who have not done so yet.

- W Design Associates did not properly advertise for bids on the McDonald concession stand. Board rescinded motion made at the special meeting Dec. 3 and will direct W Design to re-open the bidding process.

Next meeting

The next school board meeting will be held at 1 p.m. on Jan. 12.

Still collecting manger sets after 50 years

By Linda Schneider
dublinls@hotmail.com

She started collecting Nativity sets while still living at home with her parents, Charles and Cora Orten. Now over 50 years later, Agnes Burk is still collecting them.

When Mrs. Burk married her husband, Elmer Burk, now deceased, she brought her then growing collection of Nativities. In addition to her own collection, Mr. Burk collected clocks; so at least one Nativity set has a clock built right in.

As time went on and her family grew, it became a hobby with her daughters Nancy Williamson and Cheryl Smith, who started their own collections of Nativity sets. Even her sons Robert, Elmer Jr., and Dennis would be on the lookout for the unusual and unique Christmas sets.

Mrs. Burk owns approximately 140 Nativity sets, some of them as unique as her Eskimo set made in Alaska, and her oldest set, which is over 50 years old, has cardboard for the stable. But, it doesn't stop there. Some of the sets could fit into a person's palm and some are too large for inside her home, so she sets them in front of her home on the lawn. Moreover, Phyllis Wingfield of McDonald made many of the sets.

"She has the materials and together we have made a few of my sets," said Mrs. Burk.

Starting with the first Sunday of Advent, Mrs. Burk will put out the sets in her living room and dining area. She does not put all of them out, about 100 sets, and every year arranges them differently.

For every Nativity, she has a story and she enjoys sharing each story with friends and for friends of friends, she happily invites them to hear the story of the Nativity.



AGNES BURK IS STANDING by just a few of her many Nativity sets she has collected over 50 years.

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider

Lighting Contest

Dec. 16

Santa Day

Dec. 20