

Teachers and staff to wait till end of year for raises

By Karen Krien

karen.k@nwkansas.com

Last month, there was talk that teachers and school staff might receive a bonus (salary adjustment) or even a raise across the board. However, at the Thursday meeting of the St. Francis Board of Education, the decision was to wait until toward the end of the school's fiscal year in the summer.

Superintendent Rob Schiltz said until the week of the meeting, he was still considering suggesting that the teachers receive a bonus at Christmas time like had happened last year. However, as he was working on the cash summary report for the end of September, he found that the supplemental general fund had increased 60 percent over last year and food service was almost 73-percent higher and school had only been in session six weeks.

We don't know where the prices of food, electricity, natural gas and fuel is going, said Mr. Schiltz, but it will most likely go up. We have already spent \$50,000 more than last year.

The school is in the middle or above in average base salary figures especially when including the health insurance benefits, Mr. Schiltz said, and our new teachers were willing to start with our base.

As the board and administration discussed the matter of salary adjustments further, it was pointed out that school finance in Kansas was still uncertain. There was also the election coming in November and that might make a difference.

The board agreed to not have any salary increases at this time.

Health insurance

They then turned to the employees' health insurance increases. The

Blue Cross-Blue Shield group plan had increased 5.3 percent this year. The board pays a portion of the insurance for those participating in the group.

The board voted to pay \$30 more per month for a single plan for the total of \$380 per month and \$60 more per month for a total of \$760 on other plans.

Mr. Schiltz said the \$13,320 additional money to cover the insurance will be taken out of the Contingency Reserve Fund.

Legislative post audit

Mr. Schiltz said the St. Francis high school will be one of three schools in the state to have a legislative post audit. He said he had volunteered the school for the audit which is funded by the Kansas Legislature and will not cost the school any money.

"I'm excited about the audit," he said.

A team of experts will come into the school and look at everything from the doors and windows, to food preparation, to the building structure, to lights and heat. Mr. Schiltz pointed out that sometimes, people become used to the way things are and the way they have been done for years and don't see ways that expenditures can be reduced.

The recommendations the team makes will not affect the education of the students, he said. And, we don't have to follow any of the recommendations.

Dr. Mary Beth Miller, board member, wondered why the high school and not the grade school? Mr. Schiltz said that, basically, the grade school building is in pretty good shape.

The boilers at the high school would be completely installed the

following day on Friday. Resourceful Kansas, the company which had been to the school earlier but had not followed through with some of the agreements, will come to the school in the near future and do an energy audit. This, Mr. Schiltz said, is another measure to help reduce expenditures. Again, it will not cost the school any money.

In other business

In other business:

- The board accepted a gift of \$3,155 from the Booster Club which had disbanded. The money is being used to purchase new league banners which will cost around \$5,000.

- The board and administration went over the audit report. The school was written up on several minor matters and Mr. Schiltz said some had already been corrected and others would be worked on. The board will give their final approval of the audit at the November meeting.

- Carl Werner, activity director, was appointed to be an additional signer on the high school activity checking account.

- Hoagie Carmichael, principal, said Jerry White, St. Francis, had asked if the school would be interested in hosting 20 European students and 10 teachers for a two-week period in March. Mr. Schiltz was concerned that this would be a time teachers would be giving Kansas assessments. The board agreed that it would be a good experience for the students. Mr. Carmichael said he would ask Mr. White for more information.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the board will be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 8, in the board room in the high school.

Auditor suggests consolidating accounts with the new software

By Nathan Fiala

nfiala@nwkansas.com

The St. Francis City Council met on Tuesday, Oct. 9, at 7:30 p.m.

The meeting started with old business. City clerk Glorianne Milne said that auditors had suggested the city consolidate some checking accounts now as the new accounting software can calculate interest and where to apply it. Council member Carla Lampe said there could be multiple accounts in a general account, but the city would have to make sure the bank the account was at would pledge more than \$250,000 if needed, and be able to move the money electronically within a day if needed.

Tom Keller visited the council at this time to talk about changes to the Riverwalk. He showed a powerpoint presentation showing current boundaries and proposed new boundaries, and talked about funding already pledged to the project. Mr. Keller had contacted a builder that specialized in putting up fences to get on the contractor's schedule, and found out he could possibly fit it in soon. Mr. Keller asked for preauthorization to buy fencing materials, which was approved. Council members thanked Mr. Keller for the time he has put into getting grants for this project, and for allowing the land itself to be open to the public.

The council moved to old business again, stating the employee picnic had been moved to Oct. 30. The picnic is open to council members, city employees and theater employees.

The city has also been formally made a part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's flood plain program and city superintendent J.R. Landenberger will communicate with the Kansas Department of Agriculture to see how to proceed from here.

A tree trim license for Richie McKenny was approved.

The 125th birthday of the city is coming up this next year and some council members wondered if this could be tied into the Heritage Days as well. Mrs. Lampe said she would contact some other community organizations to see if they wanted to help with the project.

There were four building permits: Gene Dodd for a fence, Robert Stewart for a driveway, Joe Weverka for a fence and Greg Potter for cement work and a fence. All were approved.

For the superintendent report, Mr. Landenberger stated he had attended the annual CCDC meeting, along with a couple of council members. He said he had also revisited the tax issue with the county commissioners about transferring names on the delinquent taxes. Mr. Landenberger also said he had attended the league meeting of Kansas municipalities and attended a program about rural grocery stores that had some good information in it.

Mr. Landenberger said two trees had been removed from Main Street, for visibility and to clear a business entrance. The new trees are different than the original trees planted and are growing slow. This is probably also due to the dry weather this summer.

The floor of the scout hut is also being looked at again.

The sand volleyball pit by the power plant has been completed.

Mr. Landenberger also stated that a diving board at the swimming pool would need to be replaced before the next season as it has a stress fracture.

For the attorney report, city attorney Michael Day stated that the city is listed as a debtor in the Odell Williams bankruptcy papers concerning the grocery store. Mr. Day said they seem to be represented by a good firm and appear to be well organized.

For the clerk report, Mrs. Milne

said that the first city council meeting in November fell on Veteran's Day. The council decided to move the meeting to Tuesday, Nov. 13.

For council comments, Paula Keller, council member, said the back door of the movie theater had been repaired and light had been replaced. Dale Weeks, council member, had attended an airport heights and hazards meeting. This is the first meeting to create ordinances that will enforce height regulations of new construction within a five mile radius of airport runways. Mr. Weeks will have more information about this in the future.

Council member Roger Jensen had talked with Gordon Ross about fabricating hand rails for Main Street.

Mrs. Lampe mentioned a community builder's meeting in the basement of Bankwest on Monday, Oct. 22.

The council will next meet on Monday, Oct. 22, at 7:30 p.m.

PUBLIC NOTICE NW KS GMD#4 WTAP SIGN-UP OPEN

The Kansas Department of Agriculture is accepting applications for the Water Right Transition Assistance Program (WTAP). The deadline to apply is November 15.

WTAP is a voluntary, incentive-based program designed to help restore aquifers and streams in critical areas by retiring water rights. Six "high priority" areas in the Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 4 (GMD 4) have been designated as eligible target areas by the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Water Resources chief engineer because of significant water level declines. The six areas have been determined to be in need of aquifer recovery and are now closed to further water appropriations.

Applicants who are selected for WTAP grants are compensated by the department's Division of Conservation in exchange for the permanent retirement of water rights on irrigated land.

For more information, contact Steve Frost, water conservation program manager, at (785) 296-8964 or Steve.Frost@kda.ks.gov. WTAP rules and regulations, applications, maps and other details are available on the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Conservation website at <http://www.ksda.gov/doc?cid=1941>.

Information and assistance is also available on the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Water Resources field office in Stockton at (785) 425-6787 or at the Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 4 in Colby at (785) 462-3915.



JACOB RIEDEL makes some adjustments on the seat belt in the race car.

University team looks for help with racing project

St. Francis native, Jacob Riedel, is looking for help for his Formula SAE team at Kansas State University. The Kansas State Formula SAE team is a student organization that is tasked with designing, building, and racing an open-wheel style race car.

The engineering department and the Kansas State University authorize a total budget of \$20,000 for this team to operate within. In comparison, the lowest budget for a top 50 ranked team is \$120,000. Even with a significantly smaller budget, the Kansas State Formula SAE team consistently competes on par with the top teams.

The KSU team is ranked in the top 100 out of over 500 schools in the world, but they are aiming higher. Led by a senior laden team, the team's future is looking brighter than ever.

Over the last three years, Jacob has worked on the suspension, frame, and engines of these cars. He has also gone to the team's competitions in California and Michigan.

Along with regular weekend visits to Salina and Kansas City, Jacob and the rest of the team get plenty of opportunities to show off their car's abilities.

"Getting to race the car in competition is really exhilarating, and makes all the hard work worth it" Jacob said.

Due to his hard work and dedication to the team, he was elected to be the engine team leader this

year.

"I was honored to be selected for this position. I look forward to learning a lot," he said. "But in the end, it's all about teaching the underclassmen so that they can build on my research and continue to grow the team. Just like my upperclassmen did for me."

Every year, all the team members are assigned a dollar amount they have to raise to be eligible to go to competition. By virtue of be-

ing a senior on the team, Jacob is required to raise \$500 to attend his last Formula SAE competition.

"Any amount will help our team," Jacob said. "Your donation is also tax deductible. And if you donate \$100 or more, your name will appear on the car. This is a good advertisement opportunity since we travel and race a lot."

Jacob is the son of Dolores and Mark Jenik, St. Francis, and Steven and Sharon Riedel, Norton.

Book Review

Foreign Influence

By Brad Thor

Navy SEAL turned covert operative Scot Harvath is called to action once again in Brad Thor's hottest political thriller yet.

Buried within the black ops budget of the Department of Defense, a new spy agency has been created. Unfettered by the oversight of self-serving politicians, it reports only to a secret panel of insiders. Its job is to target America's enemies, both foreign and domestic, under a charter of three simple words: Find, Fix, and Finish.

Recruited as a field operative, Scott Harvath has just returned from his first assignment abroad when a bombing in Rome kills a group of American college students. The evidence points to a dangerous colleague from Harvath's past and a plan for further attacks on an unimaginable scale.

Harvath is tasked with leveraging his relationship to lure the man out of hiding and kill him on the spot. But what if he has the wrong man?

Simultaneously, a young woman is struck by a taxi in a hit-and-run in Chicago. With only two intoxicated witnesses and more than five thousand cabs in the city, the Chicago Police have given up on their investigation. But when the family's attorney digs deeper, he will uncover a shocking connection to the bombing in Rome and the perpetrators' plans for America.

As the story rockets to its conclusion, the plots intersect in a race to prevent one of the most audacious and unthinkable acts of terror in the history of mankind.

Upcoming
Christmas
ON US
Is coming —
Watch
for more
information



To participate in an upcoming promotion or for more details contact:

Tim Burr at: 785-332-3162

The Saint Francis Herald
Bird City Times

ATTENTION GROWERS

We offer the following seeds:



Early Season
Discounts
Available

CHS

Call our nearest location

Colby • 785-462-6880 Quinter • 785-754-3318
Burlington • 719-346-5365 Brewster • 785-694-2420
Selden • 785-386-4546

UNITED PLAINS AG • TRIBUNE • 1-800-532-7626