

Commissioners lift county burn ban, discuss issues

By Karen Krien

karen.k@nwkansas.com

On July 8, the commissioners declared a burn ban for Cheyenne County. Little or no rain had fallen in the county and, with the 100-plus temperatures and hot, dry wind, there was concern of unnecessary fires causing pasture and house fires.

However, at the Monday, July 15, meeting, rain, measuring anywhere from .25 to 1.50 inches had fallen in the past few days. They agreed to raise the burn ban.

Sheriff's report

Cody Beeson, sheriff, and Carol Gamblin, deputy, discussed the office workload. Sheriff Beeson said his staff was swamped. Everything, he said, is big cases. The workload has definitely increased for Carol and she is an essential part of the office.

She has to keep up on the laws and make sure the officers are kept up, too. She also files the reports.

The sheriff asked that Mrs. Gamblin be put on the payroll as a full-time employee.

I don't need the health insurance, she said, but if I am going full-time, I feel that I should be entitled to the other benefits.

The commissioners agreed to the sheriff's request to make Mrs. Gamblin full time.

Sheriff Beeson asked for 15 minutes executive session to discuss public safety. No decision was made after coming out of that session. He then asked for 20 minutes more to discuss personnel. When returning to regular session, the sheriff presented a deputy wage agreement for Michael Blehm, starting him at a Class 2 pay scale.

Ernie Ketzner, commissioner, questioned why the sheriff's

deputy spent so much time in Bird City.

Sheriff Beeson said that gas is high and when they go to that area, they think it is important to spend as much time as possible there. Besides, he said, there is a significant rise in crime when officers are not around.

Dale Patton, commissioner, added that, in his opinion, law enforcement presence is a deterrent to crime. The bad guys, he said, always appear to know the schedule and it is important that the law is on hand.

Landfill

Byron Moberly, landfill supervisor, was questioned as to how he accepted e-waste items brought to the landfill. They wanted to know they were weighed with the other items and included in the total bill?

He said that it was up to the person delivering the load. If they want to take out the e-waste first they can. Or, he said, he can weigh the whole load, then take out the e-waste.

Mr. Moberly asked for 10 minutes executive session to discuss a land purchase. Upon coming out, the commissioners made no decision.

Bandshell in Sawhill Park

The remodeling of the band shell in Sawhill Park, St. Francis, was going to cost more than planned and more than the Kansas Historical Society grant. The project is being headed by the city of St. Francis.

Greg Kite, former St. Francis resident and representing the Society, had contacted Terry Miller, clerk, asking that the county consider giving some money to help fund the project. Mr. Kite said the project is around \$35,000 of having the funding.

He had donated money but more was still needed.

J.R. Landenberger, St. Francis city superintendent, was at the meeting. He said the project has been divided into three phases to make the completion more feasible. He also said there was some private money available but, also added that more money will be needed.

These are tough times, said Dale Patton, commissioner. Looking at the budget, he didn't see any extra funding. However, he said, when we start the budget process, we will see if some funds can be allocated.

The band shell, he said, has been a part of the county for a long time. He commended Mr. Kite, adding that it was good to see someone like him who believes in the community.

In other business:

- The commissioners voted to accept ambulance insurance write-offs of \$3,643.

- Helen Dobbs, Cheyenne County Development Corporation director, submitted her proposed budget for next year. She also discussed some of the brochures featuring Cheyenne County, Bird City and St. Francis, which she has been distributing.

- Judge Robert Van Allen was told to buy a new computer.

- A permit to trench across a minimal maintenance road was given to Steve Nolan.

- A contract for construction of the Hnizdil bridge was signed for Reece Construction, Scandia.

Next meeting

The next commissioners' meeting will be held at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, July 31, in the commissioners' room in the courthouse.



Cheyenne LaBarge low fives her dad, coach Chris LaBarge as she crosses home plate.

Herald photo by Karen Krien

Emergency haying and grazing approved



Cheyenne County has been approved for emergency haying and grazing of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage by the Kansas Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Committee, beginning July 16, with a 25-percent payment reduction on acres hayed or grazed.

"Due to multiple years of drought and concerns for long term negative impacts to the sustainability of grass, all 2013 emergency activity shall be limited to specific acreage that was NOT utilized for emergency or managed Conservation Reserve Program haying or grazing in 2011 and 2012," said Alicia Davisson, county executive director.

Program acres planted to practice CP25 'Rare and Declining Habitat' has not been released for either emergency haying or grazing. The Kansas Farm Service Agency State Committee does not have authority to release CP25 acreage, but they have requested release from the Deputy Administrator of Farm Programs in Washington, D.C.

Before emergency haying or grazing begins:

- All participants on the Conservation Reserve Program contract must sign the "Terms and Conditions for Emergency Haying and Grazing of Conservation Reserve Program Acreage" at the local Farm Service Agency office.

- Obtain a modified conservation plan (CPO) from the local Natural Resources Conservation Service office.

- Before grazing is approved obtain a 'forage management plan' from Natural Resources Conservation Service office.

Emergency haying is restricted to 50 percent of each field or contiguous field. Haying must be completed by Aug. 15, with hay bales removed from the acreage by Sept. 15.

Emergency grazing requests end the earlier of: 1) Sept. 30, or 2) when the minimum average height of the grass reaches 5 inches.

Program participants who do not own or lease livestock, may rent or lease the emergency haying or grazing privilege to an eligible livestock producer. Anyone leasing Conservation Reserve Program haying and grazing rights must sign a statement at the Farm Service Agency office before haying and grazing occurs. A copy of the Farm Service Agency approval will be given to the program contract holder and to the person leasing the rights. Whether it's the Conservation Reserve Program participant, or someone leasing the haying rights, any hay harvested from these acres cannot be sold, but must be used only by the livestock producer harvesting it.

Low income energy assistance available

Kansans with low income will have a little extra help paying their utility bills this summer, thanks to the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP).

"The summer heat can take a dangerous toll on our most vulnerable populations," Secretary Phyllis Gilmore said. "This extra assistance will help keep Kansans safe from extreme heat."

The program provides an annual benefit to help qualifying households pay winter heating bills. People with disabilities, older adults and families with children are the primary groups assisted. In the winter of 2013, nearly 48,000 households received an average benefit of \$386.

This year, funding is available to provide an additional benefit to those households for energy

costs. This is not a new application period. Households that applied and received a benefit during the regular application period will automatically be issued a supplemental benefit of approximately \$103, bringing the average benefit for the year to almost \$490. The supplemental funds are in the process of being dispersed.

Funding for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program is provided by the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community Service through the Federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

For more information on the assistance program, call 1-800-432-0043 or 1-800-432-0043 toll free.

Welcome!

Dr. Mauricio Anaya

Cardiologist

HaysMed's DeBakey Heart Institute
Welcomes the Newest Member of the Cardiac Team



Mauricio Anaya, MD, cardiologist, obtained his medical degree as a physician and surgeon from Universidad Mayor de San Simón, Cochabamba, Bolivia.

He completed his residency in internal medicine at Jacobi Medical Center-Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Bronx, New York and a Fellowship in Cardiovascular Medicine at Kettering Medical Center/VA Medical Center in Dayton, Ohio. He has also served as Rural Service-Provincial Physician at the Hospital of Tarata, Cochabamba, Bolivia. Dr. Anaya is certified in General Internal Medicine with the American Board of Internal Medicine. He has published in national and international publications and is participating in on-going cardiac research programs. Dr. Anaya will begin seeing patients in August.

For more information about cardiac services at the DeBakey Heart Institute at HaysMed, call 888-625-4699 or ask your primary care physician.



Dr. Christine Fisher
Interventional Cardiologist



Dr. Jeffery Curtis
Interventional Cardiologist



Dr. Richard Markiewicz
Interventional Cardiologist



Dr. Elizabeth Ashworth
Cardiothoracic & Vascular Surgeon



HAYSMED

HaysMed is an Accredited
Chest Pain Center With PCI



2nd Floor Bickle Family Tower
2220 Canterbury Drive - Hays
Toll Free 888-625-4699
haysmed.com