



Sales tax proposal tabled by city council

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

The Colby City Council tabled the proposed one percent sales tax for economic development indefinitely at their Tuesday night meeting.

Mayor Warren Hixson, one of the members of the economic liaison committee that sent the recommendation to the council, said the proposal needed to be restructured.

"I think perhaps it was a little premature," Hixson said. He cited concerns from citizens about some of the proposed uses for recreation that "might be better done by groups like the community foundation."

Councilman Bill Keck said, "Everything I've heard, down on the corner of Fourth and Franklin where everyone can get to me, has been negative."

"I think perhaps it (the tax) was a little premature."
Warren Hixson, Colby Mayor

Hixson recommended sending the proposal back to the committee with a recommendation to be more specific in proposals for using the additional money.

According to figures from the liaison committee, the tax would bring in about \$900,000 per year to be used for economic development.

The council also directed City Manager Carolyn Armstrong to put together a proposal to Midwest Aviation and Air Evac Lifeteam, both of Wichita, for keeping an air ambulance at the Colby Airport.

Armstrong told the council that weather con-

ditions made Colby the preferred site. "They can get out of Colby and into Goodland in bad weather," she said, adding the reverse isn't true. In bad weather, the ambulances would not be able to land in Colby, but they could take off. Goodland has an instrument landing system and the planes could both land and take-off at their airport.

Costs would include \$130,000-\$150,000 for a new hangar and facilities for the crew and the hangar would need to be in place by Aug. 15. The council members said they felt this was an opportunity they couldn't afford to let go.

"This is something the public wants," said councilman John Bremenkamp. Hixson agreed, but added the difficulties of getting a building in place in the required time might make it impossible.

"We'll have a hard time just getting the building by that time," said Bremenkamp. The council also agreed to hold a special council meeting to approve any agreements, if necessary.

The council also heard a proposal from Rod Eisenbise about a new office building on Franklin between Second and Third Streets. Eisenbise proposed to put storage buildings in behind the office building and needed the area rezoned. He told the council that he was unaware of the procedure after making informal inquiries to the planning commission, who had told him they probably wouldn't approve "spot-zoning."

Eisenbise said he would make a formal request to the commission before coming back to the council, but he wanted to get a feel for the council's thoughts. "We don't usually spot-zone, or second-guess the planning commission," said Hixson. "I'm not saying it can't be done, but it is difficult."

In other business, the council:

- Approved the mayor's appointment of Loretta Weeks to the Housing Authority Board to fill the unexpired term of Terry Turner, who is moving.

- Approved the Thomas County Fair Parade for July 31 at 5:30 p.m. from Fike Park to Cedar Street, then west to Range Avenue.

- Approved a request from Thomas County Emergency Medical Services for a Nine-Run-Run event on Saturday, Aug. 4, starting at 8 a.m. in Fike Park.

Gov. Moran? He's still thinking

HAYS (AP) — Republican U.S.

Rep. Jerry Moran is giving even odds on a bid for Kansas governor, a decision he says will have to be made swiftly.

"It really is kind of a 50-50 thing," Moran said Tuesday during his latest swing through western Kansas.

"There is no deadline in my mind.

"But I think I have a short amount of time to reach the best decision."

Another Republican, Lt. Gov. Gary Sherrer, plans to announce Friday whether he'll run next year for the Republican nomination.

Others considered as potential Republican candidates: U.S. Rep. Todd Tiahrt, State Treasurer Tim Shallenburger, Kansas House Speaker Kent Glasscock and state GOP Chairman Mark Parkinson. Another Republican candidate, former Junction City Mayor Lloyd Parker, already has declared.

Moran, a third-term representative with some seniority in the House, could run for governor or remain in the House representing the 1st District.

Twice on Tuesday — in Ellis and again in Quinter — Moran was asked if he plans to run.

His answer was essentially the same:



Jerry Moran

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Rep. Jerry Moran on governor's race

He's not sure.

He said he has talked to former U.S. Sen. Bob Dole, but declined to say what advice Dole offered.

A gubernatorial bid would allow Moran to spend more time in the state and with his family, which remains in Hays while he commutes each week to Washington, though Moran says "that is not a reason to run for governor."

"We still need to sit down as a family and have a serious discussion," he said.

"It's something I want to resolve," he said, "but I don't think we need a year-and-a-half-long campaign."

If he runs, Moran said several issues would be at the top of his platform, including education, agriculture, job creation and the environment.

"One of the great things about our state is its natural beauty," he said.



Jamie Hutton, foreground, and Jay Reid unloaded trucks at the Brewster elevator on Tuesday. Elevator operators look for things to start slowing down as the harvest winds down. Roger Hale, from the har-

vest office in Colby, said the cutting got started slowly, in spite of warm and dry conditions. "This is the first hot, slow harvest I've ever seen," he said today.

JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Kansas City woman dies at 115, perhaps the world's oldest person

KANSAS CITY (AP) — A woman from Kansas City, Kan., believed to be among the oldest people in America — if not the world — has died at age 115, relatives said.

Proving the exact age of Susana Lynn, who died Sunday, has been dif-

ficult.

She might have been older than 115, but also could have been as young as 112.

Records in Texas, where she was born, didn't last as long as she did, but a granddaughter thinks Lynn couldn't

have been much younger than 115. After all, Lynn had a baby in 1900.

But without those documents, it's impossible to pinpoint her true age, said Louis Epstein, a New York centenarian researcher.

Regardless of her exact age, few

could argue with Lynn's longevity.

According to Lynn, her secrets to a long life were simple: No alcohol, no smokes, and she didn't particularly like men, either.

"They're lazy," she said.

A devoted Baptist, Lynn attended

church regularly.

She stayed out of the sun and followed the Ten Commandments, she said during an interview in 1999.

She lived at a care center in recent years, where many of the staff called her Grandma and greeted her with hugs

and kisses.

Caretakers once described her as feisty and strong, yet soft-spoken.

They weren't surprised when she commonly uttered, "Lord, have mercy" or "I don't know why I'm still here."

Briefly

Weather: 108 on Friday?

What's hotter than hot? The Colby area will find out on Friday and Saturday, if the forecast from the National Weather Service in Goodland holds true. Friday's high is expected to range somewhere between 103-108 and on Saturday from 101-106. Lows tonight, Friday night and Saturday night are expected to be in the 70-degree range. Clear skies are expected to prevail throughout the period with winds of 10-20 mph out of the south. Colby's high July 4th was 98 degrees and the overnight low this morning was 66.

The thunderstorms that rolled into Colby around 1 a.m. this morning deposited 0.13 inches of precipitation, bringing the month's total to date to 0.23 inches. The soil temperature at the 4-inch depth is averaging 85 degrees. The records for July 5: 106 in 1911 and 46 in 1931.

(The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

Singles dance planned Friday

The Colby Singles Group has planned a dance on Friday from 8 p.m. to midnight, according to Don Birzer, organizer. Entertainment will be provided by Jim Christiansen and the event is open to single people, alumni and their guests. For information or questions, call Birzer at 462-2127.

EPA to hold meeting here

The Environmental Protection Agency will hold a public meeting beginning at 7 p.m., Monday, July 9, at the Colby Community Building.

The purpose of the meeting, according to Hattie Thomas,

with the EPA office in Kansas City, is to discuss the Ace Services superfund site and amend the record of decision for the contaminated ground water. Those who cannot attend the meeting, but would like to submit written comments can do so by mailing them to: Office of External Programs, 901 N. 5th St., Kansas City, Kan., 66101.

Nine-Run-Run planned in August

Now in its sixth year, the Thomas County Emergency Medical Services is again sponsoring its Nine-Run-Run beginning at 8 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 4 in Colby. Early registration is underway, said Kathy Wright, one of the organizers with openings in all age groups for the 10K and 5K run, 2K fun run and 2K walk.

The cost of the event for early registration is \$10 for walkers and \$13 for runners and after Monday, July 23, the cost will increase to \$12 and \$15 respectively, she said. All proceeds go to benefit the local service.

To register, stop by the facility at 1245 S. Franklin or call any EMS member.

Group needs officers

Colby Secondary Parent Teacher Student Association still need officers for the year 2001-2002. Call 462-7188.

Craft fair expanding

The Colby Girl Scouts are once again organizing the October Craft-a-Ganza craft fair. This year, said Jan Barnum, one of the organizers, the scouts are adding antique dealers to have a wider variety of vendors.

Crafters and antique dealers can call Barnum at 462-6503 for additional information.

Getting ready for the fireworks



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Colby firefighters set up mortars for the annual Kiwanis' fireworks display at the Thomas County Speedway Wednesday morning. A short lull in the show was explained by Bob McLemore, fire chief, this way: "A low-opening rocket set some stubble on fire by the experiment station." Crews standing by quickly extinguished the flames, but firefighters didn't want to continue shooting until they were clear. Pictured, from left to right, are: Greg Swob, Don Phillips, Dwayne Plumisto, Chuck Plumisto, Tim Hansen and Bruce Plumisto.

