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Work on new county landfill could start soon

By TISHA COX
Colby Free Press

Thomas County landfill supervisor Larry Jumper gave a report on the landfill and how they will proceed with work on the new pit at this morning's county commission's end-of-month meeting at the courthouse.

He said they will file a request for withdrawal on the old pit soon and as long as the county doesn't change the way it operates its landfill, it can run the new pit under the old permit.

Jumper said the landfill crew will dig the new pit themselves and expects that work to begin within the next 30 to 60 days. They will also be taking bids for dirt removal to cover the old pit.

"It's a pretty major project," he said, adding those bids will probably be accepted as soon as possible.

The commissioners approved replacing four motors on electric sliding doors at the Thomas County jail.

Undersheriff Mike Baughn brought a proposal before the commissioners to replace one motor that had already burnt out and those on the jail's other three doors at a cost of \$8,000, and continue the maintenance agreement with Integrity Steel Works for \$2,500 over the next two years and \$2,600 in the

third year. He also updated the commissioners on maintenance at the jail. Baughn said work to clean up and rebuild the jail's locks and other work on access doors is completed. The cost was \$2,950.

In other business: Jim and Molly Oliver, volunteers with the Thomas County Chapter of the American Red Cross, told the commissioners, "We're just here today to thank you for your support," Oliver said.

He said locally, the Red Cross is holding its own financially and in two more weeks, will have 14 volunteers trained to drive the chapter's emergency response vehicle which is used to respond to national disasters.

Also, commissioner Ron Evans said that anybody interested in seeking election to the commission in the fall should start coming to meetings to learn more about what they do as a governing body. Seats up for election this year are those of Glen Kersenbrock (District 2) and Duane Dawes (District 3).

The commissioners will have their first meeting of February on Monday at 9 a.m. at the courthouse. Agenda items include Gerry Fulwider with a public hearing on a microloan.

The meeting is open to the public.

Board meets Monday

By PATTY DECKER
Free Press Editor

The Colby Board of Education will meet Monday at 7 p.m. in the administration building to again discuss the vo ag and woods departments and how best to bring those programs out to the high school.

In addition to talking about those programs, the board plans to discuss and could take action on the track resurfacing project.

Other items on the agenda include reports from principals, su-

perintendent, and other administration. In the area of new business, the board will take action on its academic calendar for next year; consider approval of republishing the budget; and take action on the house construction project by students.

The board could also go into executive session to discuss resignations, employment recommendations and administrative contract extensions.

For questions or copy of the agenda, call 460-5000.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Members of the Colby High School dance team, front row: Tina Schmid, Angela Bennett, Erica Molstad, Maret Peterson and Kayla Foltz; and back row, Christy Gerstner, Anett Szigeti, Amy

Dickman and Kassie Jacob practiced in the high school auditorium Thursday. Not pictured is Tasha Fromholtz. Their only competition of the year is Feb. 7 in Concordia.

Dance team gets crowds going

By TISHA COX
Colby Free Press

They perform at half-time during football and basketball games and at pep rallies. They get the crowd going but they're not cheerleaders.

They're the members of the Colby High School dance team.

Audry Guy is in her third year coaching the team, which consists of 10 members — Erica Molstad, Maret Peterson, Tina Schmid, Tasha Fromholtz, Angela Bennett, Christy Gerstner, Kayla Foltz, Amy Dickman,

Kassie Jacob and Anett Szigeti.

Guy said the team will be heading for their only competition of the year on Feb. 7 in Concordia.

Last year, the team placed second, the first time a team from the high school has ever been to a competition.

The high school has had a dance team since the 1970s.

Peterson, a junior, is one of two who have been on the team since their freshman year. She said she's been dancing since she was 4-years-old and joined the team when she got the chance.

"I've always really loved it," she said, adding performances are what she enjoys most.

Molstad, also a junior, is the other three-year veteran.

She enjoys what she does but said probably the hardest thing to do is keeping a smile on her face and not letting people know when there's been a mistake.

Sophomore Foltz is in her first year on the team. She's been in dance several years and thought it would be fun to join the high school's team.

Guy said the team practices two

hours a day four days a week and usually have a performance at a game on the open day.

Dance isn't the only activity most of the team participates in. Guy said volleyball, cross country, tennis and track are their other commitments.

They'll also be busy in the next few weeks with a fund raiser. The team will be taking orders for homemade fudge for Valentine's Day; they will also hold tryouts in April. Anyone wanting to place an order for fudge can call 462-6736.

Senate debate expected next week on appeal ruling

By JOHN HANNA
Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA (AP) — Republican leaders expect Senate debate next week on a bill allowing for a quick appeal of a judge's ruling finding fault with the state's school finance system.

The measure, endorsed Thursday by the Senate Judiciary Committee on a unanimous voice vote, would let the state file an appeal to the Kansas Supreme Court even though the Dec. 2 order by Shawnee County District Judge Terry Bullock was preliminary.

Normally, a preliminary court order can be appealed only if the judge agrees, which Bullock declined to do.

Bullock held that Kansas' 1992 school finance law violates the state

constitution by distributing aid to districts unfairly and providing too little money to educate all children suitably. Kansas spends about \$2.6 billion on aid to schools but should spend about \$1 billion more, he ruled.

Bullock gave the state until July 1 to rewrite the law. Some legislators want the Supreme Court to rule before they make major changes, although Gov. Kathleen Sebelius has proposed a three-year, \$304 million package of tax increases for schools. The bill provides for an appeal to be filed with the Supreme Court if a preliminary district court order says a Kansas law violates the state constitution's education article. That language would expire July 1, 2006.

Senate Majority Leader Lana

Oleen, R-Manhattan, said the bill would be debated next week, possibly as early as Tuesday.

"The general thought is that we need to get a final decision from the Supreme Court as soon as possible," said Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman John Vratil, R-Leawood, one of the measure's authors. "All we have now is one judge's opinion."

Sebelius still wants legislators to amend the finance law this year, spokeswoman Nicole Corcoran said Thursday.

"There's a problem that needs to be solved," Corcoran said. "We're working to try to solve it and we encourage them to do the same."

Meanwhile, the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee agreed to sponsor Sebelius' \$304

million education plan and scheduled hearings on it for next week.

Sebelius has proposed to raise taxes on income, sales and personal property over three years and send the expected \$304 million in fresh revenue to public schools for specific purposes.

The tax committee will focus on the proposed tax increases. The Senate Education Committee will then debate the measure's other provisions, including higher funding for bilingual students and a \$100 increase in state aid per pupil.

Sebelius has withdrawn one part of her original plan — a proposal to change the way special education funds are treated, by lumping them into general state aid to school districts. Such a change would immediately raise the figure for state aid

per pupil by \$434. But it drew immediate opposition from districts that said it would cost them millions of dollars in aid.

The governor has asked House Education Chairwoman Katherine Decker, R-Clay Center, to discuss the special education proposal in her committee and in a special committee currently studying school finance.

In other action Thursday:

— Local government officials told a House committee they should be able to discuss and document details about anti-terrorism measures without making them public.

— A Senate committee heard an audit report that found death penalty cases in Kansas are about 70 percent more expensive to carry out than non-death penalty cases.



Snow mentioned

Colby, Oakley, Hoxie area Tonight...Partly cloudy. Lows around 20. Southeast winds 5-10 mph.
Saturday...Partly cloudy to cloudy. 20 percent chance for snow. Highs in the lower 30s. Northeast winds 10-20 mph.
Saturday night...Cloudy. 20 percent chance for snow. Lows around 18. Northeast winds 5-10 mph.
Sunday...Cloudy. 20 percent chance for snow. Highs in the upper 20s. Winds northeast 10 mph.
Sunday night...Mostly cloudy. Slight chance for snow. Low +9.
Monday...Partly cloudy...Highs near 30.

The numbers
Thursday's high, 29
Low this morning, +6
Records for Jan. 30, 69 in 2003 and -14 in 1918
Year ago today, 69 and 23
Month's precipitation, 0.07
Month's snowfall, 1.5 inches
2003 precipitation to date, trace
Soil temperature, 28

The sources:
The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other numbers are from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby. A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119.

Briefly

College board to meet

The Colby Community College board of trustees will hold its regular meeting at 5 p.m. Monday in the board room of the administration building. Items on the agenda include program review, performance agreements, approval of contracts and agreements and negotiations. The meeting is open to the public.

Pheasants Forever banquet Saturday

The Pheasants Forever banquet and auction begins at 5 p.m., Saturday, at the Colby Comfort Inn Convention Center. The dinner will begin at 6 p.m. followed by the auction and drawings. Ticket information is available by calling Tom Redmond, 462-7343 or Gabe Stanley, 462-2063 or 460-9193.

Benefit lunch Sunday

A benefit pasta lunch for Christopher Eteeyan, infant grandson of Larry and Mary Maxwell, born with liver and heart complications, is planned from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sun-

day, in the Sacred Heart Church basement. Admission is free-will donation and everyone is welcome. Call Amanda Wahlmeier, 465-9145 or Terry and Linda Stover, 626-9068 with questions.

Brewster bake sale Saturday

The Brewster Community Church will be having a bake sale on Saturday at the Frontier Equity Co-op in Brewster starting at 8 a.m. The event will continue until the bake goods are gone. The proceeds will be used for many mission projects. For questions, call Janet Pinkelman, (785) 694-2720.

Tax help available

AARP Tax Aide help is now available on Mondays and will continue through April 15 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the meeting room at Pioneer Memorial Library. Starting next Wednesday, help will be available on simple tax forms from 1-3 p.m. at the Senior Progress Center.

For information, call Alvin Volk at 462-2645 or Lela or Don

German at 460-3062.

Rotary soup supper next month

The annual Colby Rotary soup supper will be from 5 to 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 17, during the Colby High School basketball game against Goodland at the Colby Community Building. All proceeds from this event go to benefit various organizations.

Obedience school Tuesday

The Thomas County Trackers 4-H Dog Club will once again be offering obedience training this winter and spring. Although the orientation meeting was held recently, interested persons should still call (785) 460-3816.

Workforce Center has new hours

The Colby Workforce Center (formerly the Job Service Center) is now operating under new hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The center is located at 485 N. Chick.

