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City talks to county on airport

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How to protect the local airport and not step on the city officials' toes was the topic of discussion at Monday's Thomas County Commission meeting.

"I'm here to ask the county to help the city protect the airport," said Colby Airport Manager Mark Ostmeyer. "We've seen encroachments in the past and are currently seeing one now."

Ostmeyer told Commissioners Ken Christiansen, Paul Steele and Byron Sowers the Colby City Council on Feb. 20 signed an ordinance amending zoning regulations for the airport located one mile north of Colby on Highway 25. He said the ordinance further tightens controls on items which can be hazardous to planes within a 3-mile radius of the airport.

Sowers questioned whether the county has already supported the measure, because of the ordinance, "Colby/Thomas County Metropolitan Area Planning Commission" stating the measure dates back to April 15, 1997, followed by revisions on July 18, 2006. Sowers said he wants it clarified if county appointees Al Gerstner, Tylon Mengel and Paul Bailey, acted on behalf of the county when the ordinance was adopted in February.

Airport Board members are Mark Winger, Dave Voss, Jim Oliver, Darryl Henry, Mark Kendrick and Steele. The ordinance was signed by Colby's Mayor, K.G. Bieber. A copy of the ordinance is on file at the city office located at 585 N. Franklin in Colby.

Steele asked Ostmeyer how the ordinance affects the county landfill and whether weekly tree burning at it falls within the 10,000 foot landfill restriction.

"That's temporary and is OK," Ostmeyer said. "The landfill is not within the 10,000 foot restriction. We are mostly concerned with the 10,000 feet, and we'd list to see it at 20,000 feet but that's not what we have."

Ostmeyer said while the landfill attracts birds, a bigger problem the city has been addressing has been a pond located just south of the airport. The pond prompted city officials to look at tightening restrictions around the airport.

The city and Colby residents Tuffy and Linda Taylor have been at odds the past year over the pond which serves as Taylor's heating and cooling system for their house. The pond could put the city in default for future and previous grant agreements with the Federal Aviation Administration if it attracts too many wildlife.

According to a letter from the FFA

dated Nov. 9, 2007, Glenn Helm, program manager said, "the existence of the pond would be considered incompatible with safe airport operations because of its location approximately 1,700 feet from the airport's operation area and only 650 feet from the extended runway centerline." Helm also said it is the city's responsibility to ensure that it can continue to meet its contractual obligations to the federal government.

Christiansen asked Ostmeyer how livestock, deer and crops effected the city's push to protect the airport.

"We are supposed to have a fence around the airport," Ostmeyer said. "I keep pushing (construction of the fence) back because I think we can better use our funds, but the FFA keeps pushing it up."

Sowers said he was concerned Ostmeyer was asking for county support of a city ordinance.

"I want to know where the county stands when the city already has a 3-mile control," Sowers said.

"Beyond the three mile limit the city has no jurisdiction," Ostmeyer said.

"So you want us to support and expand the 3-mile area?" Sowers asked.

"Yes," Ostmeyer said. "We are asking the county to protect the airport outside the 3-miles because it's important to the economy."

Sowers told Ostmeyer the problem the Taylor's pond is not the "county's problem."

Steele took the conversation back to the topic of tree burning, to which Ostmeyer reiterated the smoke from tree burning was not causing a visibility problem at the airport.

Steele said he would like to see the city exempt the county from the 3-mile radius to allow tree burning to continue without issue.

"We want to know that we are outside the 3-miles for current or any future runway," Steele said.

Christiansen asked Ostmeyer to bring back to the commission a clearer understanding of the city ordinance and a photo or drawing of where the perimeters of the ordinance effected.

Steele asked Ostmeyer to talk to city attorney John Gatz and have him draft a resolution for the county similar to the city's ordinance, but making sure the landfill was protected.

Ostmeyer also said the city wants the county's support on protecting the airport's planned expansion to the north. Plans to expand the runway to the north will mean closing County Road V in Morgan Township from Highway 25 east to County Club Drive.

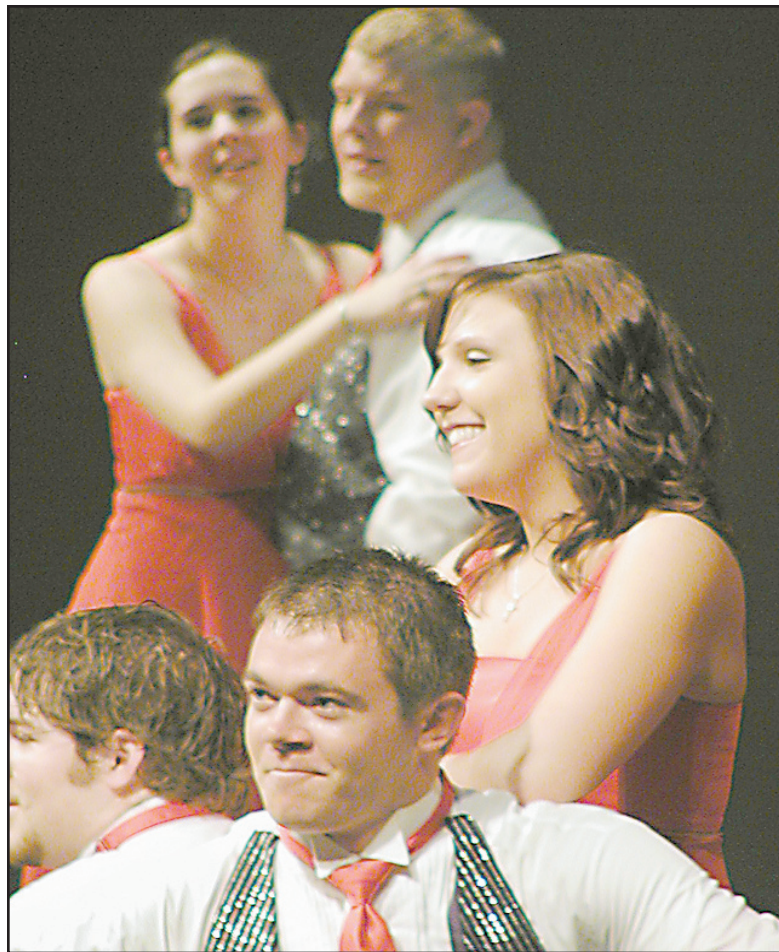
The commissioners did not comment about supporting the project.



JOHN VANNOSTRAND/Colby Free Press

Singing and dancing into Spring

ABOVE: Colby Community College Sunflower Singers Katie Hall, Micah Hibbard and Gentry Rand sing to the audience Tuesday during the school's annual spring vocal concert. The Sunflower Singers sang classics like "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" and a energetic combination of past pop hits. **RIGHT:** Sunflower Singers Holli Linman, Sam Toman, Spencer Reeves, Scott Johnson and Rand add some choreography to the music. After the Sunflower Singers, the college's concert choir took the stage. The choirs are under the direction of Dr. Philip Shuman and was accompanied by Pat Ziegelmeier.



Winona man charged with two sex crimes

By Jan Katz Ackerman

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A Winona man accused of stalking a child in Oakley two years ago has been charged in Logan County District Court with two sex crimes.

James E. Colling was charged

Monday with aggravated indecent liberties for "lewd fondling or touching" a child less than 14 years old, according to court records. He has been charged with aggravated criminal sodomy for having oral sex with her.

If convicted, depending on his criminal history background, Colling faces a prison term of 25

years to life. Kansas law allows for a minimum sentence longer than 25 years if the defendant has a prior sex crime conviction, at which time a judge can determine the length of the minimum sentence.

Colling, in 2006, was charged with stalking a female minor making her fear for her safety.

Logan County Attorney Andrea Wyrick dismissed the charge without prejudice, meaning it could be filed again if needed.

Colling, at the time, was a janitor with the Oakley school system. He resigned from his job he had been at since December 2005. No court date has been set in the case.

Mother, son charged in road rage incident

An incident of road rage ended with an Oakley woman being charged in Thomas County District Court.

"At 2:50 p.m. on April 29, we received a complaint from two women that a vehicle came up by them and made obscene gestures and pointed a

gun at them," Thomas County Sheriff Mike Baughn said. "They got a tag number and the vehicle was located in the Wal-Mart parking lot."

Tammy L. Woodman, 48, has been charged with one count of criminal threat for threatening with the intent to terrorize Barbara J.

Loveless, 27, of Las Vegas, Nev. Loveless and her mother were west-bound on Interstate 70, according to court documents. Woodman and her 27-year-old son, Raymond Bowser, also of Oakley, are alleged to have threatened the two women. If convicted, Woodman could face five

to 17 months in prison and a fine up to \$100,000. She has also been charged for the second time with possession of marijuana, which carries a penalty of 38 to 172 months in prison and a fine up to \$300,000. Bowser has been charged with reckless driving.

Briefly

Mail carriers request food

Colby letter carriers will be collecting non-perishable food items Saturday for delivery to the Genesis Food Bank, which helps area residents in need of assistance. Food donations can be left by a mailbox and carriers will collect the items along their normal routes. "Please place a food donation by your mailbox this Saturday before your mail is delivered," a spokesperson for letter carriers in Colby said. "We will deliver items to Genesis and hope people will help others in our community." Non-perishable items can be canned goods, cereals, peanut butter, etc.

Football meeting set

The Colby High School football team is holding a parents meeting at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 17, in the high school auditorium. For questions, call head coach Chris Gardner, 460-5200.

Assembly planned May 13

Colby High School's All-School Student Awards assembly starts at 2:35 p.m., Tuesday, May 13, in the auditorium. Parents and friends are encouraged to attend. Cameras are welcome. For questions, call 460-5300.

Grass, garbage don't mix

Colby residents are being reminded that solid waste garbage and grass clippings cannot be placed in the same green trash bin. "Grass needs to be separated or it will be left," said Chris Bieker, public utilities director. If residents do not have a grass sticker and need one, they can call 460-4420.

Senior awards May 15

The 2007-08 Colby High School senior awards night begins at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, May 15, in the

school's auditorium. "During the course of the evening," said Kyle Cersovsky, one of the organizers, "academic and scholarship award winners will be recognized for their accomplishments." Everyone is encouraged to attend in honoring this year's graduating class, she said. For questions, call 460-5300.

Summer enrollment set

Enrollment for the Summer Youth Program at the United Methodist Church in Colby is from 4 to 6 p.m., Monday, May 12 and Wednesday and Thursday, May 14-15 at the church, 950 S. Franklin Ave. The program is for children ages 3 and through sixth grade and runs from June 2 through July 2. For questions, call 460-2761.

Worn-out flags wanted

Colby Girl Scout Troop 165 and the Daughters

of the American Revolution are conducting a U.S. flag disposal. A collection box will be located in the lobby of the Pioneer Memorial Library from now through May Tuesday, May, 20. "The scouts are reminding everyone that U.S. flags should be disposed of if they appear to be excessively dirty, repaired to a point where they are no longer rectangular in appearance, or faded in appearance where the colors are not clearly recognized," said Kathy Kersensbrock-Ostmeyer, one of the advisors.

Golf tourney June 13

Citizens Foundation Golf and Bridge Tournament is scheduled for Friday, June 13, at Meadow Lake Golf Course in Colby. "All proceeds from the tournaments are used for the purchase of needed medical equipment and education," said Tama Unger, coordinating the event. To register, call (785) 460-1214.