

Churches ask city to lower electric rates

By Doug Stephens
The Goodland Daily News
Representatives of four Goodland churches asked city commissioners at a utility workshop Tuesday for their electric rates to be classified as residential rather than at the higher commercial level.
The Lutheran, Catholic, Methodist and First Christian pastors went to the meeting.
“We ask our city to show charity to our churches and reclassify us,” said Brent Wood, finance chairman of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church.

Wood said the 18 churches in Goodland are an important part of our town. Not only do they provide spiritual leadership, he said, they host events by 4-H, Girl Scouts, the Rotary Club, and other community events.
“You should be encouraging things you want in the community, not discouraging,” said Wood.

Commissioner Curtis Hurd wanted to know how the city would make up the cost.
“It’s a Catch-22. If we give someone a break,” Hurd said, “someone else will have to pay for it.”

Wood said it would not affect the city’s bottom line that much.

“With the city having a budget in the millions,” he said, “it won’t make much difference. It’s not that big a deal.”

“I’d be willing to consider it,” said Hurd, “if I had some idea as to where we could put the charges.”

City Manager Ron Pickman said some citizens might be upset at having to make up costs for the churches. He said the decision to support a church is a personal choice.

“Somebody might say ‘I am not a member of your church,’” Pickman said.

“The churches here today represent two-thirds of the town’s residents,” Wood said. “It won’t be a wrong decision. You will get the approval of the community by making this decision.”

“I’m not saying this is a good financial decision, but it is a decision which will benefit our community.”

Pickman said the commissioners will discuss the issue, but he didn’t think there was much chance it would pass, or even go up for a vote.

“It’s just not viable,” Pickman said. “There are going to be people in this town who won’t want to pay for any church besides their own, and some who won’t want to support any churches at all.”

Hospital to get system to handle medications

The hospital pharmacy will soon have a system for dispensing drugs that will increase staff productivity, reduce human error and keep the drugs more secure.

The board of the Goodland Regional Medical Center approved purchasing a new system of storing and dispensing drugs for the pharmacy at their meeting Monday.

The pharmacy is currently using the Pyxis system for storing drugs, Hospital Chief Financial Officer Andy Laue said, and keeps medicine in the dosages usually prescribed.

With the dispensing and billing system, Laue said, there will be a big machine with lots of doors and drawers where the drugs will be stored.

The pharmacist will enter the name of the nurse picking up the drugs and the patient they are for into a computer, Laue said, then the drawer or door will open for the drug the pharmacist needs.

The computer will keep track of what’s taken out, he said, and who has been there to pick it up.

When medicine is removed from

Pyxis, a charge will be recorded to the patient.

The machines will cost the hospital \$39,600, Laue said, but will save the hospital an estimated \$33,014 a year in labor and reduction of billing mistakes.

And there will be other savings that cannot be measured.

“Safety and security of the medications cannot be quantified,” Hospital Administrator Jay Jolly said.

Productivity of the staff is another savings that is tough to measure.

With the Pyxis system, Jolly said, the pharmacist will likely be the only person who will need to go into the pharmacy.

Keeping the nurses out of the pharmacy, Resource Development Director Dale Schields said, will make them more productive.

Laue said he feels the system will be money well spent.

“A lot of things I am not in favor of spending money on,” he said.

“This I am. I don’t know how much we could be losing through billing.”

School board charged for closed meeting

PLAGERISM, from Page 1

out taking a public vote.

In the second executive session, the petition states, Superintendent Michael Rooney suggested he direct the teacher to grade the biology project in a way which would not affect the accused students so harshly.

The petition said all members but one agreed with the superintendent’s suggestion. It quotes board member James Swanson as telling Rooney, “This ought not to rest on your head. Blame the board for this one; you know, that (way) you don’t have to take the hits for this one.”

The next day, Rooney told Pelton to change the worth of the project from 50 percent of the course grade to 30 percent. She also was told to give students credit for any portion of the project that was not plagiarized, changes which

allowed many of the students to pass the course.

Swanson said Thursday he was disappointed that Tomasic, who held a news conference to announce the filing of the petition, had not told the board members before filing charges.

Board members will be served with a copy of the petition within a day or so, the district attorney said, and they will have at least 20 days to respond. If they contest the accusations, Tomasic said he would ask for a hearing.

Witnesses would be called, and a judge would decide whether the law had been violated, Tomasic said.

The board members are cited both as public officials and individuals. Clothier said he would represent them in their official capacities, but that some of them may hire private attorneys to defend them as individuals.

Most area schools closed

WEATHER, from Page 1

have been very productive.

“Anyway, it’s a Friday. If it had been the middle of the week, there probably would have been school.”

The boys basketball team left for the sub-state tournament in Pratt on Thursday night, Selby said, to beat the storm.

“We expected this to be pretty bad,” he said. “I think most of the schools in Western Kansas are closed.”

The U.S. Department of Agriculture closed its offices today, but city and county offices stayed open, and mail was delivered as usual.

The storm was caused by a mixture of an upper-level low-pressure system moving in from Colorado and an Arctic cold front, Lammers said, adding that it is almost the same conditions which caused the last storm.

“Hopefully, we’ll get a little more precip this time,” he said. “We sure need it.”

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