

weather report

41°

noon
Thursday

Today

• Sunset, 5:39 p.m.

Saturday

• Sunrise, 6:17 a.m.

• Sunset, 5:40 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil temperature 33degrees

• Humidity 39 percent

• Sky sunny

• Winds northwest at 20 mph

• Barometer 29.66 inches

and steady

• Record High today 76° (1974)

• Record Low today -15° (1960)

Last 24 Hours*

High Wednesday 44°

Low Thursday 23°

Precipitation —

This month —

Year to date .98

Above normal .11 of an inch

The Topside Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny, high near

37, low around 16. A 20 percent

chance of snow after 11 p.m.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: Mostly sunny, high

near 38, low near 23. Sunday:

Sunny, high near 53, low near 27.

Monday: Mostly sunny, high near

55, low near 30. Tuesday and

Wednesday: Sunny, high near 58,

low near 29

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$4.62 bushel

Posted county price — \$4.78

Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢

Corn — \$4.11 bushel

Posted county price — \$3.95

Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢

Milo — \$3.84 bushel

Soybeans — \$6.81 bushel

Posted county price — \$6.81

Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢

Millet — \$7 hundredweight

Sunflowers

NuSun crop — \$16.60 cwt.

Pinto beans — \$00 (new crop)

(Markets by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun,

Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century

Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

inside today

More local news and views from your Goodland Star-News



Cowgirls play tonight

Cowgirl Whitney Archer made a basket in substate action on Monday against Russell. The Cowgirls defeated Russell, 65-51. The Cowgirls face Thomas More Prep-Marian tonight at Max Jones Fieldhouse. See story, photo on Page 12.

Rural fire to take over rescue runs

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

City and county officials, fire fighters and citizens jammed the commissioners' room in the Sherman County courthouse Tuesday for a joint meeting between county and city commissioners on the burning issue of the week.

Eventually, both commissions agreed that the county should take over emergency rescue calls and hazardous material spills outside the city, with the county buying \$80,000 in equipment to duplicate what the city already has.

The city commission held a special meeting at the same time as the regular county meeting to give both a chance to review their fire protection mutual aid agreement in the face of the mass resignation of 12 city volunteer firemen effective on Monday.

County officials asked about the qualifications of newly recruited city firemen, and whether they would be trained by Monday to handle rescue calls outside the city.

City Manager Wayne Hill said the city is training 12 new firemen, and that they spent about four hours on Sunday on emergency rescue training. He said the training continues nearly every day, with the new firemen learning about the pumper

County buys extrication gear

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

With the status of the city's newly recruited volunteer firefighters in question, Sherman County commissioners decided to buy more than \$80,000 in emergency rescue equipment Tuesday.

All 12 city volunteer firemen handed in letters of resignation after city Fire Chief Scott Gilmer refused to resign as he returned from a 30-day unpaid suspension for violating the city's alcohol policy in January. The resignations are effective on Monday.

City commissioners present during a joint meeting Tuesday with the county voted to loan the city's hydraulic extrication and hazardous material response equipment to the county rural fire departments until the new city firemen are trained.

Rural Fire Chief Alan David said he thought it would be better for both departments if the county

bought its own equipment because it would include gear to handle new hybrid cars and the vendor was offering free training.

Marvin Duell, chairman of the county rural fire board, said he thought it was a good idea, even though to pay for it the district might have to delay purchase of a new fire truck for the Brewster department by a year.

Commissioner Chuck Thomas asked County Clerk Janet Rumpel how much money was in the rural fire budget. Rumpel said \$210,000 total, but that after taking out money earmarked for other things, about \$130,000.

Duell said the fire board planned to help with purchase of a new ambulance, but David said he was working on a grant for that.

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trucks and watching training videos.

Hill said he had City Attorney Jeff Mason draft a revised mutual aid agreement, and that he wanted to begin some early discussion about combining the two fire departments.

County Commissioner Chuck Thomas said he thought the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the mutual aid agreement. He said he did not think the county was ready

to talk about consolidation.

Mason said he had talked to the state insurance commissioner's office and had a model agreement that could be modified to replace the current pact. County Attorney Bonnie Selby asked what the difference was.

Mason said the new one was more detailed but did not include specific language about emergency rescue calls or hazardous material calls that

are included in the present contract.

"This is more detailed about how things are handled," Mason said. I know is the one the Insurance Services Office prefers. It is an update of what was written 16 years ago."

Bruce Gleason, director of the hospital ambulance service, asked whether the new firemen would be ready to handle the rescue calls on I-70.

"That is my top concern," Gleason said. "Through state law, I have to determine who is going to provide the rescue service. We could do that, but we do not have the equipment or the manpower. I have to tell the state each year who will provide that service. It has always been the city."

"What concerns me over and above is I have worked with these guys (the 12 firemen who have resigned) for over 11 years and I know what they are capable of. I am worried about what the new people can do, and worried about a problem becoming longer than needed and that we might lose a patient."

Mason said the city has started training on rescue techniques.

"I understand the concern," he said, "but I think the people are being trained to handle the situation."

Sheriff Kevin Butts said he worried that the training the new firemen are getting wouldn't be enough to handle rescue calls. He said he would feel better if the county firemen, including some former city firemen trained on the extrication gear, were handling the rescue calls and had their own seat of hydraulic tools.

Lt. Kevin Winston of the Kansas Highway Patrol said he had the same

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A steel worker (above) reached out to steady a coal bunker as a crane from Belger Cartage Service of Denver lowered the 32,000-pound piece of the power plant into the steel collar Wednesday afternoon. The 200-ton crane (right) lifted the coal bunker high into the air to get it into position. A second coal bunker was lifted into place Thursday morning. Photos by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Cranes lift heavy pieces of power plant into place

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

The long necks of heavy cranes started lifting large sections of the power plant into place at the Goodland Energy Center this week.

A 200-ton crane and a smaller one from Belger Cartage Service of Denver have been on the site this week to handle the lifting.

Dean Sedgwick, a mechanical engineer with JMC Engineering overseeing the construction, said the parts being lifted include the coal bunkers, turbine base and turbine stator.

Roger Marsh, project manager for JMC, said these are the heaviest parts in the power plant. He said the turbine base weighed about 30,000 pounds, the turbine stator about 90,000 pounds and the two coal bunkers about 32,000 pounds each.

Marsh said the cranes started working since Monday, and the turbine base

and turbine stator were set into place Tuesday.

Wednesday afternoon, one of the two coal bunkers was lifted and set into its steel collar, and Marsh said the second bunker was in place Thursday morning. He said the bunkers were the final lift planned for the week.

Marsh said the cranes were to handle about 1,000 tons of work in the week, with the big one costing over \$700 a hour.

Marsh said work continues on E-Carus ethanol plant, where the crew is getting ready to place more tanks and enclose the building.

He said an auxiliary steel building will allow workers to assemble parts, and after the plants are up it will be used for storage.

Marsh said winter snows delayed progress, but the projects are moving ahead, and they are looking for some warmer weather to dry out the ground.

