

Transferring 911 calls will cost \$1,000 per month

By Tom Betz
ntbetz@nwkansas.com
Emergency power and phone service outages interfered with 911 emergency calls earlier this year, and solving that problem could be costly, Sherman County commissioners heard on Friday.

"We have an old-fashioned system," Conger said. "The current monthly cost is \$655, and including the administrative lines, the cost would be more than \$1,600 if we go to the new system."

"So it would cost about \$1,000 more a month to be able to transfer the 911 calls out."

Conger said AT&T would charge \$8,000 for installation on top of the monthly cost.

Conger told the commissioners a lot of the increased cost could come out of the county's 911 fund, which comes from fees collected on each phone line in the county each month.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure asked how much the 911 fund generates. County Clerk Janet Rumpel said the fund has a \$59,000 carry-over and she estimates it will collect \$22,000 this year, adding that there

would be enough to cover the increase.

Conger said the money in the 911 fund is paid by people who have landlines in their home or business. She said with the growing number of cell phones, there may be a day when there is less income to pay for the basic system.

Conger said 911 does receive money from the cell phones despite the fact that nearly half of the emergency calls come in from cell phones.

Commissioner Chuck Thomas asked Conger for her thoughts.

"It is expensive," she said, "and I am like you; I think it is a lot of money. What happens on Sherman County's worst day? We need to look at this in depth."

Commissioner Mitch Tiede asked Conger if she knew what Thomas County was doing. Conger

said she could check.

"The main focus is to switch 911 calls if you have to leave the dispatch center," Rasure said.

Conger said the cell phone calls can be switched now without trouble, but it is the landline 911 calls that cannot be switched.

"If you have to move to the weather station, we would only get the cell phone 911 calls?" Thomas asked.

Conger said that was correct.

The commissioners told Conger to see what other information she can find on the 911 switching, and how other counties are handling it.

Conger reported that Gene Becker of B&B Electric had put in the new electrical breakers in the communications center in the basement of the City Administration Building, and a new weather display computer should be here in about a week.

The weather display will have software that allows the communications center to monitor the weather radar for up-to-date storm details.

Rumpel said she had changed the dispatch budget by \$2,000 because Conger found she had a wireless service agreement that had to be renewed this year.

Conger said she was working on a grant to ask for money to help with the service agreement, which is for software that maps the location of mobile calls. She said the agreement is paid for the rest of the year. She said the grant is to help with the cost of the service agreement for three years, and if successful the county should get about \$10,000. She said the application is due by Friday, but she was not sure when she will hear about it.

The last thing Conger asked the

commissioners about was serving on a regional council to get money through a state program to improve communications among all emergency agencies.

She said John Moses, state interoperable communications coordinator from Topeka, had asked her to serve. She said the group will have representatives from communications, emergency medical services, fire, police, sheriff, emergency management and the association of public safety communications officials to work out a plan to improve rural emergency communications.

Thomas said it seemed OK to him as long as Conger felt she could handle it. Conger said it is a short term program and felt it would mostly be over by next year.

The commissioners agreed to allow Conger to join the group.

County accepts low bid for agriculture building roof repairs

By Tom Betz
ntbetz@nwkansas.com
The agriculture building at the Sherman County fairgrounds will get a new roof, with a Goodland firm winning the bid at a county commissioners' meeting Friday.

The two commissioners compared the bids to be sure they both covered the same items.

Topliff, who was present, said the bid does not include any deck repairs or landfill charges, adding that he would complete the job in 30 days.

Rasure said the specifications included a stipulation that if damage was found under the roof, the cost would be negotiated with the contractor and the county.

Topliff said that was in the bid specifications because you never know what you will find when the old shingles are taken off.

The bid includes repair of 16 support frames inside the building.

Topliff said he plans to fix those after the weight of the shingles has been removed.

Thomas made the motion to go with the low bid, seconded by Tiede. The vote was unanimous with Rasure abstaining.

Rasure noted that the bid from Weathercraft was close to the amount the insurance company paid to the county for hail damage.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Heard from weed control Supervisor Daryl West that he had found a four-wheel all-terrain cycle from Goodland Greenline for \$5,500. West said he priced three places but that Cochran Farm Supply did not

have a vehicle big enough for the job. He said Joe Bauman at Bauman's Northwest Recreation had two models, but they had an air-cooled engine and the one at Goodland Greenline was water cooled for the same price. West said he bought a bumper and another attachment for \$140 to bring the total to \$5,640. West said the vehicle will be used for spraying and for prairie dog baiting.

- Talked about the propane being used to heat the weed control building near the transfer station. With the changes at Frontier Ag, the propane supplier is changing, and Deputy Clerk Mary Ann Sneathen asked if the commissioners wanted to look at converting the building to natural gas.

Sneathen said the building had the highest propane cost, and West said the building needs a new heater to keep the temperature above freezing.

The commissioners asked West to look into the change, and asked Curt Way, public works manager, to help West find out the details and costs of a gas line and a new heater.

• Approved an amendment to the personnel policy handbook allowing departments to hire relatives of existing employees, but excluding the immediate family of the department supervisor or elected official. The policy will be distributed to each department and employee.

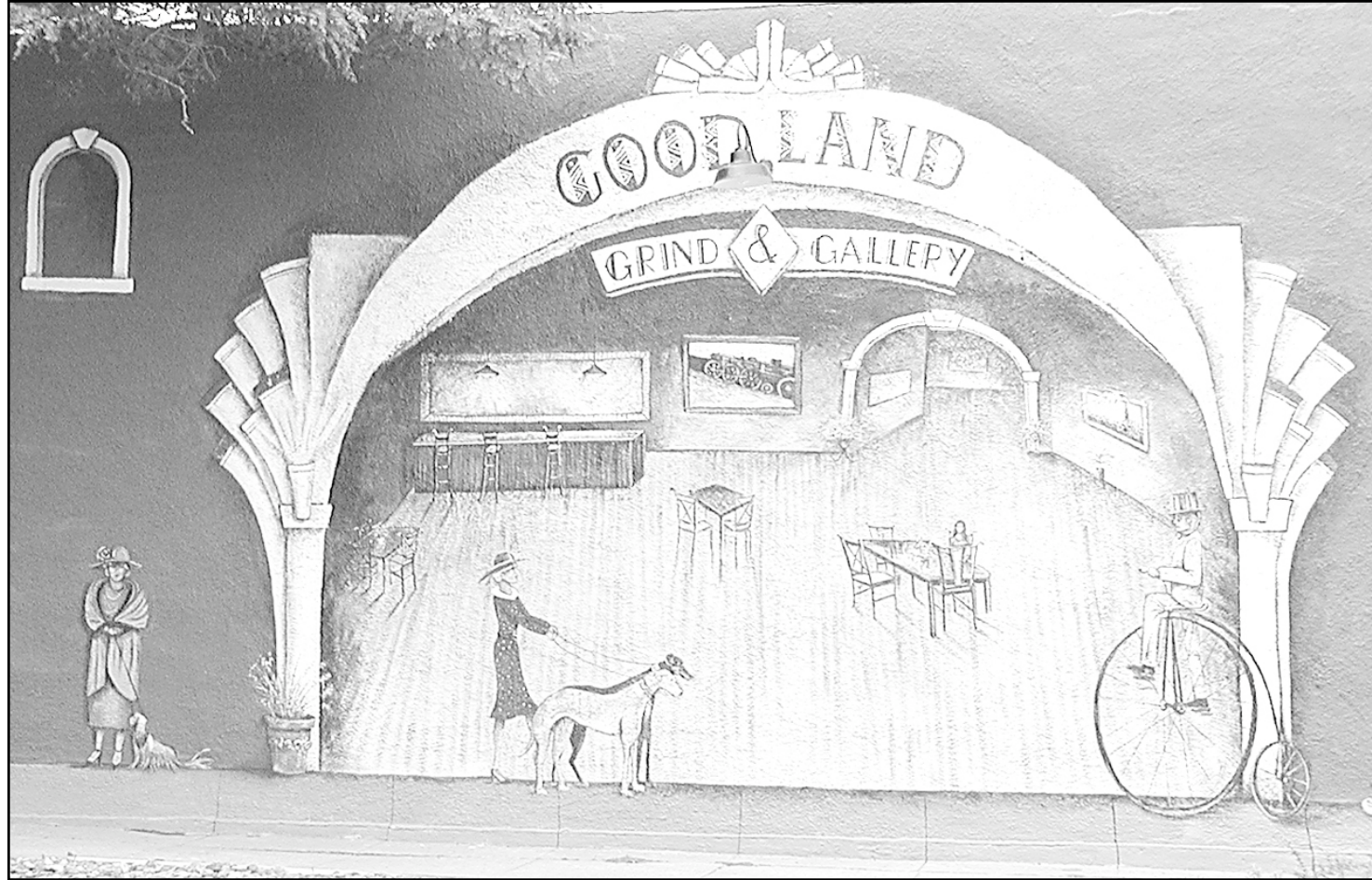
• Heard a report from Crissy Conger, central dispatch supervisor and deputy emergency management director, that Gary Rogers, regional emergency management director, was rewriting the county's emergency plan. She said that the Federal Emergency Management Agency is offering a grant for the work. Conger said Rogers is asking for \$45,000 to do the emergency

plan. He was scheduled to attend the meeting, but was delayed by computer problems, Conger said.

• Got an invitation from Helen Dobbs, office manager for the Sherman County Economic Development Council, to attend a Western Kansas Regional Economic Development Association meeting at 9 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 29, at the Howard Johnson's Hotel. Dobbs asked that one of the commissioners welcome the group to Sherman County and Goodland for the meeting. Thomas said he could be there.

• Saw the target area for the city's application for a Community Development Block Grant for \$400,000 to do housing rehabilitation. Dobbs answered questions about the grant, and told commissioner the development office was starting a second round of housing and business improvement grants. The deadline for the applications is Friday, Sept. 21, and Dobbs said the applications are available at the office at 1005 E. 10th.

Mural taking shape on coffee shop



The mural at the Goodland Grind and Gallery is taking shape, with places to sit and people walking their dogs in the 1930s scene. WaKeeney Artist Laurie Albin has been working on the mural as she is able. Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

Emergency training planned next Tuesday at fairgrounds

The Sherman County Citizen Corps and the Emergency Medical Service are sponsoring a free cardiopulmonary resuscitation and automated external defibrillator course next Tuesday.

portable clothing and \$1 to cover the cost of the certification card, she said.

Call McKee at 890-5188 to enroll.

The course, recognizing National Preparedness Month in September, will be from 6 to 10 p.m. next Tuesday in the 4-H building at the fairgrounds.

"This is an excellent opportunity to become certified through the American Heart Association," said Judy McKee, Neighborhood Watch Coordinator. "Help strengthen our community with quick intervention and certified life-saving skills."

The instructors recommend com-

Improvement Grants

The Sherman County Economic Development Office is offering two separate grants for Sherman County residents for exterior improvements to housing or businesses. If you are interested in this program, please stop by the office located at 104 E. 10th and pick up the requirements and an application. The deadline for applications to be turned in is Sept. 21, 2007, at 4:30. For questions, please call (785) 890-3743.

McEwen Auction

3x4
in back

corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

RICHARDSON'S HOMESTEAD REALTY AND AUCTION

NEW LISTING ~ 6425 Rd. 26

Located just 6 miles east of Goodland on Hwy. 24, this beautiful country property offers over 3500 sq. ft. living space with 4 bedrooms on the main level, bath, formal living room, dining room, kitchen with appliances and tons of storage, large 25'x30' family room overlooking back yard, full basement with family room, bath and additional bedrooms. Outside offers large covered patio, attached double garage and circle driveway, all situated on 5 acres. Contact Cynthia Butts at 785-821-1811 to take a look at beautiful home or visit <http://www.cynthiabutts.com>.

926 East 2nd Street

Built in 2003, this beautiful custom built home will take your breath away! If you're looking for a large home with the latest features, this is it! Offering over 2600 sq. ft. on the main level, features include an exquisite family room with fireplace, formal dining room, breakfast nook, a wonderful kitchen with center island, master bedroom with double closets and bath, an additional bedroom, main bath, office, large laundry room and oversized double garage. Basement offers an additional 2000 sq. ft. and includes a large family room, 2 bedrooms, bath, craft room and 2 unfinished rooms currently used for storage. Outside offers a beautiful professionally landscaped yard with a large covered patio, privacy fencing and sprinkler system. Don't miss out on this one of a kind home, contact Cynthia Butts for your showing! Call 785-821-1811 or visit <http://www.cynthiabutts.com>.

785-899-2328 800-974-2426
1023 Main Street ~ Goodland, Ks

Terry Richardson **Donna Moore** **Cynthia Butts**

www.goodlandhomestead.com
E-mails: Terry, Donna or Cynthia@goodlandhomestead.com