

**weather report**

**66°**

noon  
**Thursday**

**Today**

- Sunset, 6:59 p.m.
- Sunrise, 6:28 a.m.
- Sunset, 6:57 p.m.

**Midday Conditions**

- Soil temperature 63 degrees
- Humidity 50 percent
- Sky partly cloudy
- Winds northeast 15-25 mph
- Barometer 30.11 inches and rising
- Record High today 101° (1895)
- Record Low today 31° (1993)

**Last 24 Hours\***

- High Wednesday 85°
- Low Thursday 48°
- Precipitation none
- This month 0.59
- Year to date 12.75
- Below normal 4.17 inches

**The Topside Forecast**

Today: Mostly cloudy with scattered sprinkles before noon, high near 61, low around 48, winds east 5-15 mph, 20 percent chance of rain after midnight.

**Extended Forecast**

Saturday: Partly sunny with a high near 85, low around 54, winds south 10-15 mph. Sunday: Mostly sunny with a high near 90 and low around 57. Monday: Mostly sunny with a high near 91 and low around 55.

(National Weather Service)  
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400.MHz.  
\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

**local markets**

**Noon**

- Wheat — \$7.37 bushel
  - Posted county price — \$7.54
  - Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
  - Corn — \$3.17 bushel
  - Posted county price — \$3.10
  - Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
  - Milo — \$2.88 bushel
  - Soybeans — \$8.25 bushel
  - Posted county price — \$8.03
  - Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
  - Millet — \$7 hundredweight
  - Sunflowers
  - NuSun crop — \$17.90
  - Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
  - Confection — Call
  - Pinto beans — \$25 (new crop)
- (Markets by Scoular, Sigco Sun, Frontier Ag and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

**inside today**

More local news and views from your Goodland Star-News



**Cowgirls win silver**

Kaitlin Fugleberg served well against Walz and Ramsey of Garden City at Goodland's home meet Tuesday, and she and her partner Shonna Webster won the match 6-0 to take the silver medal. See story, photo on Page 10.

## Commissioners split over budget

By Tom Betz

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The Sherman County commissioners split 2-1 Tuesday over a 3.6-mill property tax increase in the county budget for next year.

Commissioners Chuck Thomas and Mitch Tiede said they were comfortable with the 7 percent increase, but Commissioner Kevin Rasure said he wanted to be on record that he was not in favor of any tax increase.

County Clerk Janet Rumpel said she would have to refigure the exact numbers after a change the commissioners made on Tuesday, which lowered the proposed increase from about 4.6 down to 3.6 mills.

Based on the budget draft, the estimated total levy for next year would be about 55.450 mills, up about 3.6 mills or 7 percent over this year.

The average homeowner will see an increase of about \$20.75, based on a home with

an appraised value of \$50,000 and an assessed value of \$5,750. The average business owner will see an increase of about \$45, based on a building with an appraised value of \$50,000 and an assessed value of \$12,500.

A budget hearing will be held in October, and Rumpel said she will have the final draft reviewed by the auditors from VonFeldt, Bauer and VonFeldt of Great Bend before it is published.

Thomas said he did not understand how the general fund could be so high, and said it appeared that budget was showing about \$400,000 more than Rumpel estimated the county would spend.

Rasure said the general fund includes a lot of other funds, including most of the offices in the courthouse and the sheriff.

"I am trying to figure out how we are coming up so short this year," Thomas said, "especially when the valuation went up. It looks

like we lived off the carryover last year and now we are short and have to raise taxes."

Tiede said he had the same question and called Rumpel to get an explanation.

Rumpel said the higher expenses this year in the general fund included paying for the carnival building (more than \$85,000) at the fairgrounds and purchase of the county health building (\$74,000). She said those came out of the capital improvement fund, and without that money, the commissioners could not have made those purchases.

Thomas said he still did not understand how the total was so much higher.

"All I did was take all the budget requests handed in by the departments and added them up," Rumpel said. "That is how they were submitted."

Public Works Manager Curt Way arrived carrying a stack of documents, and Thomas noted that Rasure had raised some questions

about the repair and equipment items in the road and bridge budget.

The commissioners spend about an hour and a half talking to Way about the issues and decided to cut \$70,000 from the state road project fund to lower the total tax increase by a bit more than one mill.

Rasure, who questioned the numbers during a budget discussion on Aug. 31, said he did not see a need to raise the property taxes with about \$500,000 in the budget for equipment and \$160,000 in for repairs.

Way said he had added \$20,000 to the repair budget because of the hard winter, adding that problems with the equipment are showing up now that will have to be fixed. He said one problem is not knowing what kind of winter the county will face this year.

On the question of having \$500,000 for

See BUDGET, Page 8

## Second section of K-27 opens south of town

The south half of the new roadway on K-27 will be open all the way to the Sherman County line this weekend, leaving only about a mile of road just south of I-70 under construction.

The permanent striping and signs were being done Wednesday, said Kristen Brands, public affairs manager for northwest Kansas for the Kansas Department of Transportation.

She said the 4.5-mile section south of the Smoky Hill River bridge was to be ready to open either Thursday or today. The part from the river north to near Goodland opened Aug. 13.

The speed limit on the new section will be back to 65 mph, once you get past the small section of construction and shoo-fly detour on the south edge of town, Brands said.

Brands asked drivers to be careful driving in the construction zone, nothing the death of a Department of Transportation worker and a construction worker in an accident south of Lawrence on Tuesday.

She said the speed limit has been reduced to 50 mph on the shoo-fly detour connecting the old and new roads south of town.

Brands said some seeding and other work on the old section of K-27 will continue into the fall. Crews are milling up the old road, and Brands said the millings are being sold to a private contractor.

Base work is continuing on the in-town part of K-27, said Construction Engineer Michael Terry from the Area 2 office in Atwood. He said the paving should be done by October.

That is the final part of the \$14.5 million project that began last year. The new roadway has 12-foot driving lanes with three-foot paved shoulders and three-foot turf shoulders. The old section of K-27 has no shoulders.

The work leaves the section of K-27 through Wallace County as the only part of the road between St. Francis and the Oklahoma line not rebuilt to modern standards. Highway officials, after meeting with local officials in Western Kansas, agreed the Wallace County section would be the priority project for this area when money becomes available.



Crews from Brown and Brown of Salina ripped out the old section of K-27 south of town on Wednesday as the project to build a new roadway to the east winds up with the opening of the road from south of the Smoky Hill River to the Sherman County line.  
Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

## Development council replaces director

By Tom Betz

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The Sherman County Economic Development Council hired a new director last Tuesday, and this week got the blessing of the Sherman County commissioners.

Don Newell, council chairman, said it was a unanimous decision to hire Jeremiah Jennings, 28, a former college hockey player originally from Canada, with one council member absent from the meeting held at S&T Communication on Tuesday, Sept. 4.

The meeting was announced as a special meeting to interview a candidate for the director's job, however, the announcement said no action was anticipated after holding a closed session for the interview. From minutes and a call from Newell on Thursday, the council had taken voted to hire Jennings and to give office manager Helen Dobbs a 50-cents-an-hour raise after being on the job for a year.

Newell said after some negotiating, Jennings had agreed on a salary of \$45,000 a year, and he is to start work on Oct. 1.

Newell said Jennings has Goodland connections — he is engaged



Jennings

### County gives blessing to council action

Sherman County commissioners blessed the hiring of a new economic development director on Tuesday.

Council Chairman Don Newell handed the commissioners a copy of Jeremiah Jennings' cover letter and resume and asked for their approval.

Newell said Jennings has a business background. He is getting married to a woman from Goodland, and the couple wants to come back to town.

Newell said the salary is higher than what Tiffani McMinn was getting, but said he felt it was worth the money. McMinn has been on leave in Texas, helping her mother recover from surgery and doing some work long distance.

"Tiffani did a fantastic job," Newell said, "but we cannot solve her situation."

"It is set up for your board to make the decisions," Commissioner Kevin Rasure said. "All we are here

See director's reaction on Page 2.

to do is to give our blessing."

"If he has local ties, that may make it better and that he would stay here longer," said Commissioner Mitch Tiede.

"I told him I would be getting the blessing from the county and from the city," Newell said, "and would let him know."

Commissioner Chuck Thomas told Newell to have Jennings come to a meeting after he gets to town.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Approved giving \$1,000 for the Fall Festival committee.
- Approved a salary increase for Kayla Weber, secretary at the sheriff's office, from \$11.25 to \$11.75 because she is changing jobs.

to a Goodland High graduate — and that should help him in the job. He said the young man wants to take more of a business approach to economic development.

In a phone interview Wednesday evening, the new director said he is happy to be coming to Goodland. He said he fell in love with the town when he and his fiancée, Coleen Koehler, came to the high school reunion last year.

"We both want to come back," he said. "Goodland has a great atmosphere and I loved the people and think it is a great place to start a fam-

ily."

Jennings grew up in Calgary, Alberta, moving to Colorado with his father and sister for high school. He said his father came to Colorado because the oil company he worked for was selling its U.S. division.

Jennings graduated from Horizon High School in Brighton in 1996, and went to Colorado State University, where he received a bachelor's degree in journalism and photography.

"I played hockey for the university," Jennings said, "and I was an assistant coach for one year after graduating."

Hockey comes natural to Jennings, who said he started as a child in Canada.

"I started staking on my birthday when I was 2," he said, "and started playing hockey when I was 3 or 4."

Jennings said he worked for Best Buy, an electronics chain store, while in college and for about eight months after graduation.

He was recruited into the financial industry and worked for Town and Country Financial in Fort Collins, Colo., and then for Waterfield Financial and Investment.

He said the company was sold in

2005, and he decided to play professional hockey in 2006 for a team in Arizona.

"I met my fiancée," he said, "and decided to go back to school and stay with her for her last year. It gave me a chance to work on my masters."

"Best Buy wanted me to come and take over their business consulting side to help businesses take advantage of technology and the Internet."

"I did that for about a year and then helped open a new store at I-70 and Tower Road."

Jennings said at the time of the grand opening, he had already interviewed for the economic development position, and the council had called him back for a second interview last Tuesday.

"Don called me on Wednesday," he said, "and we talked about it and got the contract worked out."

Jennings said he may be in Goodland the last week of September, and plans to be around for the Flatlander Fall Festival.

Asked about what he first liked about Goodland, Jennings said it was the people.

"Every person I have met is very diverse," he said. "I was intrigued about the variety of walks of life. I enjoyed getting to know people, and see how a smaller community revolves around the residents. It is an interesting cycle to me."

"I really want to focus on making

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