


weather report



38°
noon
Monday

Today

- Sunset, 5:43 p.m.
- Wednesday**
- Sunrise, 6:13 a.m.
- Sunset, 5:44 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 34 degrees
- Humidity 52 percent
- Sky mostly sunny
- Winds north 13-20 mph
- Barometer 30.21 inches and steady
- Record High today 80° (1921)
- Record Low today -15° (1960)

Last 24 Hours*


High Sunday 60°
Low Sunday 26°
Precipitation .06
This month 0.06
Year to date 0.67
Below normal 0.26 inches

The Topside Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny with a 30 percent chance of rain or snow before 11 p.m., a high near 55, a low around 24 and winds out of the south 10 to 20 mph. Wednesday: Mostly cloudy with scattered snow flurries before 2 p.m., a high near 37, a low around 17 and winds out of the north at 20 to 25 mph.

Extended Forecast

Thursday: Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of rain and snow showers, a high near 41 and a low around 21.
(National Weather Service)
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.
* Readings taken at 7 a.m.



local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$11.25 bushel
Posted county price — \$10.85
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0c
Corn — \$5.27 bushel
Posted county price — \$5.19
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0c
Milo — \$5.02 bushel
Soybeans — \$14.01 bushel
Posted county price — \$14.07
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0c
Millet — \$7 hundredweight
Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$17.90 cwt.
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0c
Confection — \$30/\$20 cwt.
Pinto beans — \$25 (new crop)
(Markets by Scoular Grain, Sun Opta, Frontier Ag and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

inside today



More local news, views from your Goodland Star-News



Cowboys season ends

Cowboys junior Brandon Rome fought for a rebound against the Ulysses Tigers in the first round game of the Class 4A substate. The cowboys defeated Ulysses, but lost to Nickerson, 41-18 on Friday in Russell. See photo, story on Page 10.

Great Bend firm wins road bid

By Tom Betz
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The difference between the two lowest offers was \$446 for paving Country Road 16 between old U.S. 24 and Road 65 (West Eighth Street) when bids were opened Thursday morning at the Sherman County courthouse.

Jerol DeBoer of Penco Engineering of Plainville, the engineer who planned the project for the county, said he would review the bids in detail and call the commissioners Friday morning to discuss anything he found that could affect their choice.

The commissioners opened the three bids on the one-mile project, with Grasser Construction of Stratton being the high bidder at \$636,233. APAC Paving of Salina was

\$577,612, but Venture Construction of Great Bend was \$446 lower at \$577,166.

DeBoer called the commissioners during their meeting Friday morning and said he had reviewed the lowest two bids and Venture did meet the specifications.

DeBoer said he was a bit concerned about a couple of the subcontractors on the seeding part, but was satisfied with the rest.

He said Sporer Land Development of Oakley would be doing most of the dirt and base work, and Venture would do the paving. He said Woofter Construction of Colby would do the concrete paving at the railroad crossing.

DeBoer said Venture plans to be ready to pave Road 65 in early June and then jump to Road 16 about the middle of the month.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure asked DeBoer

when he would be able to let the people on the road know about the construction schedule. Commissioner Mitch Tiede asked when Sporer planned to have the dirt work done.

DeBoer said both projects would start in May, and that Sporer would have to have the dirt work done by the middle of June.

Commissioner Chuck Thomas asked who is doing the dirt work on Road 65. DeBoer said Venture would do all the work on that job.

Rasure asked if the contractors knew they could only close the road during the day. DeBoer said that is right. While the work is going on both roads, he said, there will be days when it will not be ideal driving, but people will be able to get through.

Rasure asked if the construction schedule will let traffic get to the golf course.

“Yes,” DeBoer said. “The people will be able to get to the golf course, and the best way will be from the south.”

DeBoer said he would set up a conference in March or the first of April to talk to property owners who would be affected by both projects.

“I want to do it about a month before the project start,” he said.

The commissioners accepted Venture as the low bidder for the project and told DeBoer to let the firm know.

With the contract approved, DeBoer suggested a way to pay ahead on the projects to be sure the next payment target under Internal Revenue Service rules would be reached in

See ROAD, Page 8

Wind, snow bring change on Sunday

After the temperature touched a summery 79 degrees on Saturday, Old Man Winter returned with blowing snow and freezing rain on Sunday.

The high for the day was just 42 degrees at 10 a.m., and light snow started shortly after that.

“A large storm system from southeastern Colorado moved into the area behind a cold front,” said Jeremy Martin of the Goodland weather station. “Goodland was on the northern end of the storm. There was snow west of Colby, but east of Colby got rain with a little snow.”

Goodland got .6 of an inch of snow containing .06 moisture, he said. Four miles east of Vernon, an observer reported inches of snow, and McDonald had 1.9 inches.

Winds up to 49 mph limited visibility. I-70 was closed west of Burlington around 1:30 p.m. after an accident involving three big trucks and two smaller vehicles.

Around 3 p.m., the road was closed east of Limon to Flagler due to whiteout conditions.

The next chance for snow will be Tuesday night, according to the National Weather Service forecast.



Wal-Mart employee, Gary Slusher, braved the blowing snow and gale force winds to gather shopping carts on Sunday Afternoon. The snow caused driving problems with poor visibility and

I-70 was closed for a few hours from Burlington to Limon by an accident and from Limon to Burlington by poor visibility. Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

County revises burn permit to cover burn plans

By Tom Betz
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Federal demands for farmers to burn about 7,000 acres of Conservation Reserve Program farmland have the Sherman County commissioners revising their burn permit resolution to include burn plans.

The resolution said that anyone who wanted to burn trash, trees or fields has to get a permit from the rural fire chief beforehand, and has to call dispatch when they want to start.

With the addition of the conservation reserve land, the commissioners had changed the policy to say that any area larger than one acre must have a burn plan approved by the rural fire chief.

Dennis Mote, county director of the U.S. Farm Service Agency, told commissioners his office or the Natural Resources Conservation Service could provide color aerial maps of the areas to be burned and help the farmers develop a plan.

Friday, the commissioners were reviewing a draft of the resolution, but Steve Duell, a Ruleton farmer, asked them to revise a paragraph to make it clearer.

The draft said the burn plan had to be turned into the fire chief 10 days prior to burning. Duell said it seemed to be a long waiting period, and asked that the time be shortened.

Commissioner Mitch Tiede said he wanted to give the fire chief adequate time to review and approve the plans, but agreed the limit needed to be changed.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure suggested changing the resolution to say once the burn plan is turned in, the fire chief has up to 10 days to approve or deny the permit.

Duell said that would be better, and Tiede agreed to the change.

Before the resolution was approved, Rasure asked how long the burn plans would be good. He said if a burn plan was approved, but the weather keeps the land from being burned, it would be good to have some time limit on the plan.

Commissioner Chuck Thomas said it should be good for the calendar year. Duell agreed that made sense. He asked about adding the term “authorized tenant” to the wording to make it apply to both a landowner and tenant. Rasure said

that would be a good change.

The commissioner approved the resolution, and were to take a copy to the rural fire board for each fire chief and to Mote so the federal offices would know the policy.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Signed grant applications presented by Dorendo Harrell, director of the county health department, for a series of state and federal grants, including immunization, family planning, and a state “formula for babies” program.
- Discussed adding another person to the fire team created at the city-county joint meeting last Monday. Rasure said he felt it would be a good idea to add a member of the Shine On Sherman County Government Alliance. The other commissioners agreed.
- Rasure called Trevor Linton, a financial advisor at First National Bank who is the committee chairman, telling him it was up to the committee to select someone.
- Approved three neighborhood revitalization projects to qualify for tax rebates, including a new build-

ing being built at 17th and Clark by Rod Cooper, owner of Crazy R’s; home remodeling for Cameron Paxton at 722 E. Sixth Street; and a new house for William Gann, of Littleton, Colo. who is building a new home in the northeast corner of the county.

- Had a report from Duell, who also is president of the county Fair Board, that the steel has arrived for a new fence section on the south part of the Sherman County Fairgrounds. Duell said the county will get a bill from Miller Construction.
- He said a few members of the board will begin taking the old wooden fence down.
- Duell reported the new carnival ride, a Graviton, has arrived. It spins people and keeps them in place with centrifugal force.
- Decided to stay with the “even pay” plan on the demand electric meter at the courthouse for another year.

The commissioners had a letter from the city about the meter, and called Shauna Johnson, who handles the city utility billing, to ask about the options.

She told them the cost last year was \$3,542 for the whole year. She said the county had come out about \$168 short last year, but had been about \$36 ahead the year before.

She said the county could choose to keep the even pay and be billed about \$309 each month or could pay the demand charge based on meter readings each month. She said the demand charge has been done this way for about two years.

The commissioners said they would make a decision and return the form to the city.

Tiede said he liked the even pay plan. Thomas said he thought the county could try the even pay for another year.

Rasure said if the commissioners don’t respond by signing the form, the city will begin charging it by the month. Rasure said he thought it sort of a toss-up, but that the even pay did take the spikes out of the budget.

The consensus was to stay with the even pay and to sign the form.

The next commission meeting will be 8 a.m. next Tuesday in the commission room on the main floor of the Sherman County courthouse, 813 Broadway Ave.

City steps away from pigeon capturing contract

By Tom Betz
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Shoppers and downtown business owners have complained about pigeons, but Monday the city decided not to hire a firm to capture the birds, leaving it up to business and building owners.

The City Commission had talked, at a meeting on Feb. 12, about controlling the pigeons in the downtown area through a live-cage capture program. They asked City Manager Wayne Hill to work up a contract with Larry Harper, a licensed animal trapper.

Hill said they couldn’t work anything out. He said the sticking point was a city requirement for the contractor to have a \$1 million liability policy.

“Larry has the license and everything else is in place,” Hill said. “If we hire him at \$20 a day, he is going to have to have \$1 million

liability insurance, and that would cost him about \$1,000. The math would not make it economical for Larry.”

Hill said he had talked to Charlene Cole of Cole Realty, one of the business people complaining about the pigeons.

“I wondered if it is up to the city to do this or leave it up to the business and building owners to spread the cost,” Hill said, “and then Larry would not have to have the liability insurance for the city.”

“Cole said she was going to talk to the business owners to see if they could spread that money out. Hopefully they can do that.”

Commissioner Annette Fairbanks asked why Harper would have to have such a large liability policy. City Clerk Mary Volk said that was the recommendation of the city insurance person, Jack Eklund. She said Eklund recommended that level because that is the size of

the city’s liability policy.

“He said if the city allows a lower level of liability for a contractor, the city could end up paying the difference up to the \$1 million level if there were an injury and lawsuit,” she said.

Mayor Rick Billinger asked Harper if he had talked to the business owners. Harper said he had talked to a few before the contract discussion began with the city.

Commissioner Josh Dechant said he had suggested a program that feeds a sort of birth control agent to the pigeons to keep them from breeding. He said that is expensive and more of a long-term option.

Harper said after a capture program to bring the numbers down, the business owners might look at the birth control idea.

In other business, the commission:

- Approved an annual resolution designating the four banks — Western State, Bank-

west, First National Bank and People’s State Bank — as depositories for city funds.

Billinger asked if the city traded banks, but Volk said the city bids the banking out every three years.

- Approved reappointment of Dean Graber and Eugene Becker to the zoning appeals board for three-year terms.
- Approved reappointment of Shirley Hayden, Shirley Gray and Randy Toploff to the cemetery board for three-year terms.
- Heard a report from Hill that he was rejecting all the bids for a copier for the police department and would seek new bids for a smaller copier. Hill said he had told the two local bidders about the change, and would bring new bids back at a future meeting.

Billinger said he was glad to see the bids were from local vendors.