

Ostmeyer to head natural resources committee

By Kevin Bottrell
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State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer has been chosen to head the Senate Natural Resources Committee when the legislature comes back into session this month.



Ostmeyer

Ostmeyer, a Grinnell Republican whose district includes Sherman County, said he was pleasantly surprised to hear he'd gotten the job. Natural resources was one of the committee's he had expressed an interest in to the Senate leadership.

Many committee assignments were being shuffled after Senate Majority Leader Derek Schmidt was elected as Kansas Attorney General.

Senate President Stephen Morris had mentioned to Ostmeyer the chairmanship of natural resources was a possibility, as long as Ostmeyer supported Jay Emler of Lindsborg for majority leader. Ostmeyer, however, decided to support Sen. Terry Bruce of Hutchinson for the position. "I liked Jay as chairman of the

Senate Ways and Means Committee," Ostmeyer said. "I felt he was doing good work there."

When Emler won the post of majority leader, Ostmeyer didn't think he had a chance at being picked for the Natural Resource Committee. "I know how the game is played," he said.

However, the leadership decided to give the chairmanship to Ostmeyer, who was vice chairman two years ago.

Ostmeyer said he is pleased and excited to be on the committee. The natural resources committee handles a lot of issues critical to western Kansas, he said, such as wildlife,

and especially water. "I got water issues out here that are more important than anything," he said.

The committee was pretty quiet last year, Ostmeyer said, but sees issues coming up with shutting down wells. Unfortunately, he said, there won't be much money to work with.

The state budget crisis will take up a lot of the Senate's time. Ostmeyer said he hopes to avoid any more large cuts to education.

"Education is a big industry in western Kansas," he said. "We've made so many cuts out here already. Time will tell."

Ostmeyer voted in favor of last year's sales tax increase, something he said put him on the outs with some of the more conservative state senators.

Ostmeyer said when he toured the district, many people asked him to vote in favor of the increase to help schools, which were losing state money and already suffering from drops in enrollment.

"People were in my face," he said. "They wanted to know how long I was going to just say no and what I was going to do for them. I had no answers."

Ostmeyer said he hopes the economy will improve so the legislature

can eventually get rid of the tax increase without harming schools.

Ostmeyer was picked for the redistricting committee, which will look at population numbers and redraw some of the legislative district boundaries. In the 2010 session, he had been chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

He said he will head to Topeka for the swearing-in ceremony on Monday. There will be a lot of new faces after last year's election.

Ostmeyer said he'll have to meet the new people and figure out where they stand.

Hospital budget expects drop in patient days

By Tom Betz
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The Goodland Regional Medical Center board approved the budget as presented at their last meeting of the year with the figures expecting the year to bring the hospital into the black.

The hospital budget estimates gross patient revenue to reach \$19,272,300 up from the \$17,554,572 estimated for last year. The majority of the increase is from outpatient services going from an estimated \$14,527,101 last year to an budget of \$16,082,200.

The increase is based on a continuing increase in outpatient clients growing from 34,317 in 2005 to an estimate 43,092 last year. The outpatient numbers for last year are anticipated to show a 4.4 percent increase over 2009, and the budget anticipates a increase of 2.2 percent for this year up to 44,028.

Deductions from the income are expected to total \$6,851,800 leaving net patient revenue of \$12,420,500. Included in the deductions are contractual allowances for \$6,576,100 and charity care of \$275,700.

Operating expenses for the year are expected to be \$13,061,000, leaving a loss of \$472,900 from operations. With the county property tax income of \$469,600 plus other income and interest of \$20,000 the net income is expected to be a plus \$16,700.

The Goodland Family Health Center budget doesn't end up in the black, and continues a pattern of being in the red. The clinic has an anticipated income of \$1,995,300 with deductions of \$339,200 to make net revenue \$1,656,100. The expenses for the clinic are anticipated to be \$2,063,800 leaving a net income loss of \$407,700. Part of the increase in expenses is

the capital expenditure to remodel a portion of the hospital and install kidney dialysis equipment to add that service this year. The start up is expected to cost about \$180,000 including \$65,000 for the building remodel.

At the meeting Patty Eckhardt, chairman of the finance committee, said the committee members had two meetings with Jim Precht, hospital chief financial officer, and said the meetings had been instructive and at the end of the second meeting the committee agreed to present the budget without any changes.

She said Precht provided the committee members with the budget figures and historical figures to give the members a better understanding of the trends the hospital is seeing in operations.

The board unanimously approved the budget as presented.

Trends continue to show lower inpatient days

By Tom Betz
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The trend of less people spending time in the Goodland Regional Medical Center continues, and the anticipated number for next year is about the same as estimated for last year with increases expected in outpatient numbers and for clients at the Goodland Family Health Center.

The number of people in the hospital for acute care has dropped from a high of 1,823 in 2005 to an annualized 803 last year. The budget for this year expects about 800 acute care patients. The combined total including acute, day and observation, skilled and non-skilled provides a total of 1,980 for last

year. The numbers have dropped from 4,060 in 2005 with an anticipated total of 2,612 for last year, but the estimated actual is 1,980. Budget expectations for is year are for a total of 1,978.

Hospital census figures anticipate an average of 5.42 daily for this year, which anticipates acute daily census of 2.19 acute care patients, 1.48 for day and observation patients, 1.68 for skilled care patients and .07 for non-skilled care.

New baby deliveries are expected to raise about 1.2 percent with 41 deliveries. That would be up from the 38 in 2009.

The bright spot is the continued increase in the outpatient services

with an anticipated increase of 2.2 percent this year up to 44,028. The outpatient estimates for last year are 43,082 and was up 4.4 percent from the 41,238 seen in 2009.

The Goodland Family Health Center is anticipating a 3 percent increase in clients up from the estimated 25,482 for last year, but down from the 27,711 seen in 2009.

The hospital anticipates adding more staff and clients as work should begin soon on a kidney dialysis unit to be established in a wing of the hospital.

Another part of the capital expenditure planned for this year is remodeling of the emergency room area.

Nurse Practitioner earns award



Jorgensen

A Goodland Nurse Practitioner has been selected for an Award of Excellence for Kansas.

Jackie Jorgensen, ARNP, has been notified by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners she was selected to receive the 2011 Nurse Practitioner Award for Excellence for Kansas.

This prestigious award is given annually to a dedicated nurse practitioner in each state who demonstrates excellence in their area of practice. Jorgensen will be recognized for this achievement on June 22 during the AANP 26th National Conference in Las Vegas.

Jackie Jorgensen began her career at Goodland Regional Medical Center in the nursing department

and served as director of nursing for several years. She was hired as a Nurse Practitioner in 1994 by Rural Health Ventures and continues today with the Goodland Family Health Center. She has been a member of the Goodland medical team for 40 years.

The AANP was founded in 1985 and is the oldest, largest and only full-service national professional organization for Nurse Practitioners of all specialties. AANP represents the interests of more than 125,000 NPs around the country. AANP continually advocates for the active role of NPs as providers of high-quality, cost-effective, and personalized healthcare.

Pediatrician gets certification

Dr. Lisa M. Unruh, pediatrician at the Goodland Family Health Center, recently received board certification from the American Board of Pediatrics.

The American Board of Pediatrics (ABP) is one of the 24 certifying boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties. The board is an independent, nonprofit organization whose certificate is recognized throughout the world as a credential signifying a high level of physician competence.

Certification by the board has one objective – to promote excellence in medical care for children and adolescents. Certification represents dedication to the highest level of professionalism in patient care. Certification provides a standard of excellence by which the public can select pediatricians. Although certification is voluntary, nearly all qualified pediatricians seek this recognition.

Certification requires a degree from an accredited medical school, completion of a three year pediatrics accredited residency program, a valid and unrestricted state license and the successful completion of a comprehensive one-day written examination covering all aspects of health care for infants, children and adolescents. Dr. Unruh completed her examination on Oct. 18.

Dr. Unruh joined the other providers at Goodland Family Health Center in August 2009. She received her medical education at the University of Kansas and completed her residency at The Children's Hospital in Macon, Georgia.

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Unruh or any provider, please contact the Goodland Family Health Center at (785) 890-6075.



Dr. Lisa Unruh

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Caring Kind Annual Giving Campaign 2010

NW Kansas Area Medical Foundation is raising funds for outpatient renal dialysis services at Goodland Regional Medical Center, and to assist the hospital's satellite cancer clinic in moving to "clinical trials" for local cancer patients in 2011.

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