

Man chosen to fill seat until April

By Tom Betz

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City commissioners on Monday agreed unanimously to appoint a Goodland man to fill the vacancy created when a commission member was sworn in as state representative.

Mayor Josh Dechant said the commissioners had two options for filling the vacancy. One was to consider one of those who have indicated an interest in running for the commission position, and four potential candidates were present at the meeting. The second was to appoint someone who was willing to hold the seat for the next two months, but was not interested in running.

The commissioners decided to opt for the second option and selected Kevin Rasure to fill the seat until April.

Commissioners Dave Daniels and Annette Fairbanks and Dechant were present at the meeting, and Commissioner John Garcia joined the meeting by phone for the discussion and vote on the appointment. Garcia was not present because of an unexpected need to travel because of his mother.

When Garcia joined the meeting on speaker phone Dechant asked him his opinion of which way to go.

Garcia said he felt it would be better to have someone fill the seat until April rather than one of those who have indicated they are interested in running for the seat.

"We have a good community," Garcia said.

Five file for Goodland school board

The Goodland School Board has four positions up for election in April, and as of Thursday five people have filed at the Sherman County Clerk's office.

Those filing so far are Incumbent board member Chuck Wilkens, and the four others include Mike Brannick, Theresa Seick, Jessica Cole and Jennifer House.

All Goodland School Board positions are at-large and will be for four-year terms. The top four in the April 5 election will be elected.

Those elected will not be sworn in until July, but the school board has previously indicated that the top person on the ballot would be appointed to fill Andrew House's unexpired term until the members are sworn in for the next year.

Positions are open in Kanorado for Mayor and Council. County Clerk's office said Dennis Korbelik has filed for Kanorado Mayor.

Deadline for school board and Kanorado seats are at noon on Tuesday.

As of Thursday Chris Zimmerman had filed to run, but Deeds had not turned in the paperwork. Filing deadline is noon on Tuesday. If Deeds files the city will have a primary on Tuesday, March 1 to reduce the number of candidates to two per seat.

Dechant asked each if they understood the consensus of the commission about filling the position.

All four individually said they understood and were sure the two men would keep their word not to run.

Fairbanks made a motion to appoint Kevin Rasure and Daniels second. The vote was unanimous 4-0.

City Attorney Jeff Mason said he was glad he did not have to vote. The past couple of times a vacancy was to be filled the city attorney had to break a deadlock.

The vacancy was created when Rick Billinger, who had served on the commission for 20 years was selected to fill the State Representative seat for the 121st District in Topeka, filling the vacancy left by the death of longtime State Representative Jim Morrison of Colby.

Billinger had served as vice-mayor and once the vacancy was filled the commissioners agreed to appoint Fairbanks as the vice-mayor. Once elected she was sworn in by City Clerk Mary Volk.

Dechant said Rasure would be sworn in at the meeting on Monday, Feb. 7.

Study next step in power plans

By Tom Betz

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Commissioners listened to a presentation by representatives from the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency on Monday and agreed to participate in a transmission study to be done with three other cities this year.

The transmission study was the first step recommended by Tom Saitta, director of electric operations who made the first part of the presentation. Neal Daney, power supply manager, made the other half of the presentation and explained what the benefit could be to the city.

Saitta said the KMEA plan would move the city forward and help the city in the future. He said the transmission study request will give the city options in the future.

He said the study would be more important with the Sunflower Electric power contract expiring in the next year.

Goodland could be a transmission customer of Southwest Power Pool, and Saitta said the network option is the economical choice no matter who is the power supplier.

He said the transmission study request must be made by Feb. 1, and that it could take up to a year to complete.

He said the study being proposed would include four cities - Goodland, St. Francis, Sharon Springs and Oberlin - and the estimated cost of \$10,000 would be shared equally. He said St. Francis and Sharon Springs had agreed and they were to make a presentation to Oberlin this week, but felt confident that city would agree to the study.

Daney explained the KMEA proposal for the four cities to become part of the second Energy Management Project that provides a grid for power and would give the city a good delivery point for buying power.

Commissioner Dave Daniels asked if the city going ahead with the transmission study would lock the city into the EMP2 project.

Saitta said it would not lock the city into anything beyond doing the transmission study.

"The study would give us other information," he said. "All we are asking at this time is to do the study to get the process going."

"We submit the transmission study request to Southwest Power Pool and they do the study. KMEA does not make any money on this."

City Manager Doug Gerber said the city doesn't have to do the study, but without the study the city would not have any options and be stuck with Sunflower Electric. He said Sunflower is a good option, but feel the city wants to have as many options as possible.

He said the city expects Sunflower to make a presentation about renewing the power contract in the fall.

Daney said it could be better for the city to join the existing EMP2 groups made up of nine cities. He said the group members have options to purchase power from the Grand River Dam Authority in Oklahoma, Western Area Power Administration for hydro power and the Jeffrey Energy Center.

Additionally, Daney said KMEA is par of Rainbow Energy Marketing operations that can buy under the market price, and about 65 percent of the time under Sunflower's open rate.

Mayor Josh Dechant asked if Goodland having an operational power plan was important.

"Absolutely," Saitta said. "We feel it is critical to have the city have the ability to produce power."

Dechant asked if the city could produce power and send it somewhere.

Saitta said it was his understanding the city has a

Ice, snow create winter scenes



Streets were icy Wednesday, and less than a half inch of snow fell between 5 p.m. and midnight to put a white layer on top of the ice. The icy conditions decorated the trees with layers of frost and with the light snow created interesting winter scenes. The tree above was in the

Western State Bank parking lot. The National Weather service reported Goodland received .01 of moisture and the forecast is for clear skies and warmer temperatures until Sunday when there is a 30 percent chance of more snow.

Photo By Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

County changes credit card system

By Tom Betz

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Sherman County commissioners decided Tuesday to change the credit card system and start with new cards this year.

Chairman Cynthia Strnad said she had called Frontier Ag and asked about the yellow copies from when a county employee signs for fuel. She said she was told Frontier Ag no longer mails those with the bills.

Strnad said she felt the county was not getting the individual usage information to see what is happening in the departments.

Commissioner Larry Enfield said he had gone to the Fire Board meeting in Brewster on Monday, and had asked about the credit cards the department has.

He said they have a card in each truck.

Commissioner Max Linin said he felt

the county ought to start over with new cards and where possible issue the card with the employees name on it rather than try to keep track of equipment numbers.

Enfield said he liked the idea of giving a card to each person who fuels county vehicles to know what each person is doing.

Strnad said she felt the employees needed to sign and bring in the yellow slip or a receipt of some kind.

County Clerk Janet Rumpel said the county van has a credit card and the County Health Department has a card. She said the County Appraiser's office has a pickup.

Enfield made a motion to have all new cards for road and bridge and sheriff's department with the person's name on it. For the fire trucks and county van leave the card in the vehicle with a number to identify each.

Linin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously 3-0.

Enfield said he talked to the firemen about filling the trucks separately so the county can see what each truck is using. He said it has been a practice to fill a truck and keep the pump running and pull up a second or third truck without turning off the pump.

The commissioners gathered names from road and bridge and were to get them from the sheriff and Linin was going to take them to Frontier Ag to get the new cards.

The commissioners were planning to schedule an employee meeting in the near future to explain the changes and hand out the new cards.

The commissioner will meet at 8 a.m. on Monday to pay bills. The first evening meeting will be held at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1.

weather report

25°

noon

Thursday



Today

Sunset, 4:54 p.m.

Saturday

Sunrise, 7:02 a.m.

Sunset, 4:55 p.m.

Midday Conditions

Soil temperature 32 degrees

Humidity 63 percent

Sky sunny

Winds northwest 8 mph

Barometer 30.25 inches

and rising

Record High today 73° (1950)

Record Low today -16° (1930)

Last 24 Hours*

High Wednesday 29°

Low Wednesday 8°

Precipitation .01

This month 0.33

Year to date 0.33

Above Normal 0.04 inches

The Topside Forecast

Today: Partly sunny with a high near 45, winds out of the northwest at 20 to 45 mph and a low around 21. Saturday: Mostly cloudy with a 20 per cent chance of snow at night, a high near 45, winds out of the southwest at 10 to 15 mph and a low around 18.

Extended Forecast

Sunday: Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of snow before 11 a.m., a high near 37 and a low around 17. Monday: Mostly sunny with a high near 38 and a low around 15. Tuesday: Mostly sunny with a high near 41 and a low around 19.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$7.36 bushel

Posted county price — \$7.36

Corn — \$5.68 bushel

Posted county price — \$6.09

Milo — \$5.53 bushel

Soybeans — \$12.70 bushel

Posted county price — \$13.22

Millet — \$5 hundredweight

Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$26 cwt.

Confection — no bid

Pinto beans — \$18

(Markets by Scouler Grain, Sun Opta, Frontier Ag and 21st Century Bean.)

These may not be closing figures.)

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Cowboys upset TMP

Cowboy Reed Bellamy took a reverse shot against Colby at Max Jones. The Cowboys upset TMP in the Trojan Classis at Hillsboro. See story, photo on Page 10.

