

weather report

47°

10:30 a.m.
Thursday



Today

Sunset, 5:59 p.m.

Saturday

Sunrise, 7:04 a.m.

Sunset, 5:57 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 51 degrees
- Humidity 51 percent
- Sky Sunny
- Winds South 13 mph
- Barometer 30.03 inches and rising
- Record High today 90° (1921)
- Record Low today 18° (1996)

Last 24 Hours*

- High Wednesday 60°
- Low Wednesday 30°
- Precipitation —
- This month 1.87
- Year to date 18.32
- Above Normal .31 inches

The Topside Forecast

Today: Sunny. High in mid 70s.
Tonight: Partly Cloudy. Lows in the upper 30s. Light winds.

Extended Forecast

Saturday through Tuesday:
Mostly sunny and clear. Highs in the 70s. Lows in mid 40s.
Tuesday night: Cloudy, chance of light rain then a chance of light snow after midnight. Low in mid 30s. Chance of rain or snow 30 percent.

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

local markets

10:30 a.m.

- Wheat — \$6.45 bushel
- Posted county price — \$7.31
- Corn — \$6.22 bushel
- Posted county price — \$6.58
- Milo — \$5.85 bushel
- Soybeans — \$10.87 bushel
- Posted county price — \$11.81
- Millet — \$11.50 hundredweight
- Sunflowers
- Oil current crop — \$27.30 cwt.
- Confection — \$ no bid.
- Pinto beans — \$28 (new crop)
- (Markets by Scouler Grain, Sun Opta, 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 finish second

Cowgirl Berkley White returned a volleyball against Scott City Saturday. Cowgirls were second in league, and host 3A sub-state at Max Jones on Saturday. See story, photos on page 9A.



Unanimous vote for replacement

Ava Betz

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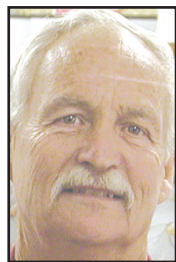
Gary Farris, owner of Farris Manufacturing, has been appointed Goodland's newest City Commissioner by unanimous vote at Monday evening's regular commission meeting.

Before the vote, Commissioners Bill Finley, Chris Zimmerman, Annette Fairbanks and Mayor John Garcia all commented on Farris' passion and persistence for the position. At one election he was defeated by one vote for the slot currently held by Fairbanks.

During a candidate interview held by the commission on Thursday, Farris said he wanted to see the town grow and jobs developed to keep young people in the area. "We all have to be salesmen for the town," he

said in the interview.

At Monday's meeting, Mike Campbell, the other candidate for the position, was thanked by commission members for offering to serve the community.



Farris

The vacancy occurred when Josh Dechant moved out of the city limits, making him ineligible to serve on the commission. Dechant was warmly thanked by the other commissioners and by Mayor Garcia for his time on the board. He relinquished his seat to Farris and took a seat in the audience for the remainder of the meeting.

When the meeting opened at 5 p.m., the first citizen to address the commission was Fred Russell, owner of a house at 520 W. 16th, which has been targeted for demolition by the city as being a dangerous

and unfit structure.

The house has been deemed dangerous for over a year, when it was owned by someone else, Russell said, but he has been the owner since September and has been attempting to clean up the property and repair the house. Russell said he was not told by the previous owner that the city had marked the house for demolition.

Russell met with the commission on Sept. 6 and was told substantial repairs needed to be made and progress on those repairs reported to City Building Inspector Brian James by the next commission meeting or bids would be asked for to carry out the demolition order.

Russell admitted he had not been in touch with James and he had been misinformed about the date of the following commission meeting and had shown up a day late for it. He said his physical handicaps and the dif-

ficulty in finding volunteer help had been a problem, keeping him from making repairs to the property quickly.

However a shed had been demolished and cleared away, along with other debris on the property, and some repairs and painting had been done around the doorway to the house. "It's just taking a little longer than expected," Russell said, adding he hoped to move into the house in December.

After some discussion, the commission decided to accept demolition bids, which had been asked for at the last meeting, and if "a good faith effort" with significant improvement to the property had not been made by the Nov. 7 commission meeting, the commissioners would decide at that time whether to have the property cleared.

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Cesspool issue appeal hearing officer named

By Tom Betz

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Differences over replacement of a rancher's cesspool move to the next stage with the naming of a hearing officer by an area environmental agency and approval of the hearing officer choice Tuesday by the Sherman County commissioners.

The issue has to do with whether or not Ron Schilling must replace his cesspool that was pumped in May when a line from his house to the cesspool clogged.

Schilling received a notice from the Northwest Local Environmental Protection Group that he would have to replace the cesspool with a septic tank system.

Schilling appealed to the Sherman County Commissioners based on the Sherman County code that seems to indicate the cesspool does not need to be replaced unless it has failed. Schilling said the blockage was in the line from the house and not in the cesspool. It is his opinion the system has not failed and does not need to be replaced.

Sherman County Commissioners voted in September to request a hearing on the issue as detailed in the code.

Tuesday morning the commissioners were on a conference call with Shirley Weber, director of the local environmental group from Colby. She said the local board had met and selected a hearing officer for the appeal hearing.

Weber said the board named Kim Christiansen, general counsel of the Kansas Water Office.

Commissioner Cynthia Strnad

asked about the timeline on the hearing. She said she was concerned that this was getting close to the Dec. 31 deadline Schilling is facing to have a septic tank installed if the appeal is denied.

Weber said if it got to that point, the local group could issue an extension to Schilling.

"We will work with him," Weber said. "We are in the middle of this. We are waiting to see what the outcome will be. We can give him an extension to next year so he can apply for cost-sharing. It is up to us to do that, but we want to work with him."

Weber said the next step is for the Sherman Commissioners to accept Christiansen as the hearing officer.

Commissioner Larry Enfield asked if there were other people suggested.

Weber said she did not know, but the board had agreed on Christiansen.

Strnad asked if Christiansen will listen to both sides of the issue.

"I do not know," Weber said. "We have not been down this road."

She said the hearing can be open or closed.

Enfield said he felt it should be open because a lot of people in the county are interested in the issue.

Strnad asked who would be presenting each side of the issue at the hearing.

Weber said it was her understanding her group would be doing the presentation for their side based on the information in the county code.

See HEARING, Page 5



City electrical crew supervisor Dustin Bedore explains different electric meters as part of the tour of the city power plant as part of the final Take Charge Challenge event. Amy Thorsen said about 225 people attended the ice cream social on Sunday, Sept. 25.

Take Charge Challenge winds up

The final event for the City's Take Charge Challenge was the ice cream social and power plant tours held on Sept. 25. The nine-month contest came to an end at the end of September, and Shauna Johnson and Amy Thorsen, who have handled the contest for the city will be in Topeka on Tuesday morning for the announcement of which city wins the \$100,000 in energy improvements.

Photos by Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News



City Judge LeAnn Taylor and Chris Bauman of Black Hills Energy dished out ice cream at the Take Charge event.

Moonlight Madness costume contest downtown on Friday

Goodland's 10th Annual Moonlight Madness celebration and costume contest will bring out spooks and goblins from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 28, for a night of hauntingly good fun, candy and costume contests.

Several downtown stores will be open late with specials for shopping, and many of the sponsoring merchants will have treats for the kids who stop by.

The annual Goodland Star-News and Goodland Merchants costume contest will be held at First Baptist Church, 1121 Main.

The doors at the church will open at 4:30 p.m., and the first round of judging will begin at 5 p.m.

Three age groups will be judged, with cash prizes for first, second and third in each. The three-and-under group will be judged at 5 p.m., those four to eight years old at 5:30 p.m., and kids nine to 12 at 6 p.m.

The Goodland Kiwanis Club

is donating the prize money, and Walmart is providing candy for all those who participate.

Businesses sponsoring Moonlight Madness include Carnegie Arts Center, 120 W. 12th; Gambino's, 402 E. 17th; Dan Brenner Ford, 224 W. Business U.S. 24; T&J Wireless, 1018 Main; Cowboy Corner Express, 1613 Main; Z Wireless 716 W. Business U.S. 24; High Plains Museum, 1717 Cherry Ave.; Walmart, 2160 Commerce Road; First Baptist Church, 1121 Main; and The Goodland Star-News, 1205 Main.

For those looking for a safe, fun time on Halloween Northwest Tech is planning a Campus Candy night from 6 to 8 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 31 at the Student Union.

Friends and family of all ages are welcome to trick-or-treat on campus, play exciting games, dance to fun Halloween music and much more. Bring your decorated pumpkin for the pumpkin contest. All activities take place in the Student Union.

City considers draft agreement with county rural fire board

By Ava Betz

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A proposed agreement between the City of Goodland and Sherman County Rural Fire District No. 1 was discussed at the Monday evening city commission meeting.

Discussing the agreement were City Commissioners Bill Finley, Chris Zimmerman, Annette Fairbanks, Gary Farris, Mayor John Garcia and City Manager Doug Gerber.

No action was taken at Monday night's meeting on the contract. It will be brought up for a vote on Monday, Nov. 7 at the next Commission meeting and taken to the Rural Fire District Board, which meets that same evening, for consideration by that board.

Gerber went through the document paragraph by paragraph, answering questions from the commissioners and noting suggestions.

Points under discussion included a suggestion by the commissioners the term of the agreement be three years to allow a fair trial of the conditions of the agreement, with either side allowed to dissolve the agreement at the end of any calendar year when notice is given by March 1.

This gives the parties time to make alternative arrangements so fire protection services are not dis-

rupted, commissioners agreed.

Cost to the rural district is a proposed 1.5 mills, which will enable the city to hire a building inspector, should the duties of city fire chief and rural fire chief prove to be too time-consuming for Fire Chief Brian James, who is currently the city building inspector. In addition to James' services to the rural district, the city would provide routine maintenance, gas, oil and minor repairs (at or below \$250) to district equipment, and liability insurance coverage on all district vehicles which might be operated by city personnel. A mill should raise approximately \$50,000 Gerber estimated.

The agreement included a stipulation the city's fire chief, or person in charge of the city's fire department would assign fire equipment and personnel at his or her discretion for the most effective fire control.

An annual inventory of vehicles and equipment will be taken and added each year as part of the agreement, if it is accepted, according to another proposed paragraph. In the agreement the district is to provide housing for its equipment, though the document states, "However, nothing in this agreement shall prohibit the city and district from building or purchasing additional or new suitable

housing in a cooperative effort."

The district will be able to maintain its own fire departments within the district and enter into agreements with other fire departments without responsibility for those agreements falling to the city.

Both city and county have a right to bill for use of their own equipment and personnel under another paragraph that Gerber described as a "mutual aid agreement" concerning billing practices.

The final paragraph clarifies that any sums paid under the agreement by the county to the city are for fire protection and not as a purchase of vehicles or equipment.

Gerber and James said the agreement was based on the agreement in place between the City of Colby and the Thomas County rural fire department. The departments have been operating under the agreement "for 30-plus years," James said.

Commissioners agreed the fire board can draft its own suggestions, but felt the Colby model gave them a platform to work from. James said he had been meeting with, fighting fires with and holding training sessions with both city and rural crews and, in his opinion, "everything has been working great."