

weather report

29°

noon
Thursday

Today

• Sunset, 6:02 p.m.
Saturday
• Sunrise, 5:43 a.m.
• Sunset, 6:03 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil temperature 34 degrees
and rising
• Humidity 75 percent
• Sky cloudy
• Winds north at 7 mph
• Barometer 30.48 inches
• Record High today 85° (1907)
• Record Low today 1° (1965)

Last 24 Hours*

High Wednesday 24°
Low Thursday 20°
Precipitation .01
This month 1.92
Year to date 2.50
Above average .75

The Topside Forecast

Today: Partly cloudy, high of 44
with a low near 24.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: Mostly sunny, high
near 51 and a low of 31. Sunday:
Partly cloudy, high near 57 and a
low of 29. Monday: Partly cloudy
with a high 54 with a low of 26.
Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high
around 55 and a low around 28.,=
(National Weather Service)
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.
* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

Hotel investors ask for city help

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

The city agreed Thursday to help get investors a tax break for a Holiday Inn Express hotel on the site of the old Apple Trail truck stop south of I-70.

At a special meeting Thursday morning, four members of the city commission approved a resolution to begin the process for taxable industrial revenue bonds for the project. Under Kansas law, that allows the city to grant a property-tax break on a project.

The hotel is expected to cost \$5 million, said Theron L. Froggatte, an investment banker from Wichita. He told the commission he repre-

sented Prairiesky Capital; the investors are asking the city to approve bonds to help get the project moving.

Froggatte said Mike Woofert of Colby has been asked to participate in the hotel program by Doug Irvin of Goodland and his brother, Mike, of Manhattan. He said Woofert has developed several projects in Colby, including the Holiday Inn Express.

The banker said they are asking the city to do the industrial revenue bonds to help offset the increased cost of the hotel over the past two years.

Froggatte said once the city has approved the resolution, he will begin a cost-benefit analysis to show

the potential impact of the project.

"I wanted to come out and explain the process," Froggatte said. "There are specific procedures under state law we have to follow.

"We will gather information from the city, county and other agencies and prepare the cost-benefit analysis. We work with the state Department of Commerce and they have a formula that calculates the benefits the city would get for supporting the bonds."

Froggatte said it will take about three weeks to do, but he will get that material to the city before the next time he comes to a meeting. He said at the next meeting, a public hearing will be held on the bond issue, and

if it's approved, he will then draw up the bond documents.

At a third meeting, the city commission would be asked to formally accept the bond documents and approve the issue. Froggatte expects the process to take about 60 days.

City Commissioner John Garcia asked Froggatte if he has reviewed the tax incentive programs the city and county approved last year, and if the investors are asking for 100 percent tax abatement with the hotel project.

Froggatte said he was familiar with the program, but that was not what the investors were asking for. He said they are asking for 100 percent abatement of the property taxes

on the project, meaning the hotel would pay no city, county or school property taxes for the 10-year life of the bonds.

"This is a taxable bond issue," Froggatte said, "but we always ask for 100 percent."

City Commissioner Josh Dechant asked if Froggatte was asking for both the rebate and abatement programs. Commissioner Dave Daniels asked if he was familiar with the differences between county property tax abatement and tax rebate programs.

Froggatte said he wasn't, but a rebate wasn't what the investors want.

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Tuesday morning downtown, business people were busy cleaning off sidewalks from the 13.5 inches of snow that fell on Monday. City crews piled snow in the center of the street to give cars a lane to drive down on each side, and hauled the snow to a pile along the railroad right of way south of the city shop at 18th and Arcade.

Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Third snowiest March day breaks dry spell

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Goodland's third snowiest March day Monday brought 1.73 inches of moisture from 13.5 inches of snow and reversed winter's dry spell, taking the county from a deficit of moisture for the year to a plus.

Scott Blaier, meteorologist at the National Weather Service, said the storm was the third heaviest on record for March. He said the top storm was on March 22, 1897, when 14 inches fell. He said the storm Monday was just a bit shy of moving in to second place, which was on March 1, 1940, when 13.6 inches of snow fell in a 24-hour period.

The wet snow brought March's total moisture to 1.91 inches and total moisture to 2.49 inches for the year. Blaier said that is .86 inches above normal. Before the storm, the

Moisture gives wheat 'great boost'

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Crop reports last week showed the wheat crop mostly in poor to very poor condition, but the widespread spring storm that dumped up to 14 inches of snow across much of the state will give it a great boost, officials said Tuesday.

Asked if the snow will save the wheat crop, extension agent Dana Belshe said the moisture sure wouldn't hurt.

"This will help a bunch," Belshe said. "The wheat was just hanging in there. We had some really dry spots, and in places it was turning yellow.

"Snow is great because it goes into the ground slow and will help slow down the growth of the plants."

Asked if this is enough to make the crop, Belshe said it is a good boost, but the crops will need more moisture before harvest.

"It doesn't pull us out of the woods," Belshe said, "but gives us a chance to get into some spring rains. The snow on top really protects the wheat from the cold temperatures, and I don't see a problem with it freezing with it like this.

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snow closed county offices, city of-fices and the senior center. Banks closed early, and the U.S. Farm Service Agency office was closed.

Many businesses tried to open, but most downtown were closed by midday. Some of the businesses out near I-70 closed after the highway shut down. By Monday afternoon, motels reported being full or nearly full, but not overflowing to the point of needing a shelter open.

East of town, a Fed-Ex truck went off I-70 and rolled onto its side. The Kansas Highway Patrol checked to make sure the driver was uninjured, but decided it was better to leave the truck in the ditch until the weather improved.

A trooper said the highway was

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Seniors hear details of joint road program

Sales tax vote Tuesday

By Pat Schiefen

The Goodland Star-News

City and county commissioners took their message about the 1 percent sales tax to rebuild roads and streets to an audience at Wheatridge Retirement Acres Retirement Community.

Balloting will be from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Veterans of Foreign Wars hall, 824 Main. Advance ballots may be cast at the county clerk's office in the courthouse today and Monday.

City commissioners Joshua Dechant and Annette Fairbanks, City Manager Wayne Hill, and Sherman County Commissioner Kevin Rasure explained the project to listeners Wednesday. They used a computer presentation put together by Ray Smee, Goodland police chief.

The commissioners were going to give the talk also at the Senior Center later that morning.



Annette Fairbanks, a Goodland city commissioner, talked about the street and road improvement sales tax proposal being voted on Tuesday with Administrator Donna Swager, Activity Director

The sales tax will be pay for \$12 million dollars worth of road work designed to fix some major problems throughout the county. \$3.2 million will go for city streets and \$9 million for county roads.

A sales tax was used before to re-

surface old U.S. 24 across the county, but that tax expired when the work was paid for.

Rasure said the county received an economic development grant of \$800,000 from the state to help pay for concrete pavement on one mile

Rhonda Sieck and residents of Wheatridge Acres Retirement Community. Voting will be at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall, 824 Main.

Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

of County Road 14 between Eighth street and old U.S. 24 to serve the sunflower plant and the new energy center.

Once construction starts, the project should finished in two to three years, Dechant said. He said

officials figured one big project would attract more bidders.

The alternatives to fixing the roads are either to ignore the problem and hope it goes away or hope

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local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$3.81 bushel
Posted county price — \$3.77
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Corn — \$1.88 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.89
Loan deficiency pmt. — 5¢
Milo — \$1.50 bushel
Soybeans — \$4.83 bushel
Posted county price — \$4.99
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Millett — \$5.50 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$7.10 cwt.
NuSun crop — \$8.10
Confection — Call
Pinto beans — \$17 (new crop)
(Markets by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

inside today

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Kansas Kids head to state

Brook Bahe (on top) and Colton Cooper worked on their moves against each other at practice Wednesday for the Kansas Kids state wrestling tournament Saturday at the Expocentre in Topeka. See story, photos on Page 12.