

County eyes 72 turbines

By JAN KATZ ACKERMAN
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A Spanish firm hopes to plant 72 wind turbines southeast of Colby as the proposed Solomon Forks Wind Farm gets underway in eastern Thomas County, providing landowners with a windfall of lease payments and creating as many as 15 jobs.

"Nothing is for sure until the shovel is in the ground," Peter Kennon of Acciona, an international wind-energy development company, told county commissioners Friday, "but this project is going forward and a number of landowners are eager to participate."

Kennon said the generating facility will cost about \$250 million dollars, have 72 turbines and generate 108 megawatts of electricity. Acciona plans to work with Sunflower Electric Power Corp. of Hays to move electricity produced at the farm.

"We are working with Sunflower at the Mingo substation to connect," Kennon said. "We are confident things will be resolved."

Mingo is 9 miles east of Colby on Interstate 70.

Kennon said Acciona, with corporate headquarters in Madrid, Spain, is a "world leader" in renewable energy, focusing on wind power, solar and bioenergy technology.

While locations for the proposed wind farm are not set in stone, he said, the firm expects to put the

turbines in a pattern running about nine miles from just west of K-25 south of Colby to just south of the "Nine Mile" intersection of U.S. 24 and U.S. 83 east of town.

Workers should break ground this fall and construction will last about nine months, Kennon said. Acciona will be the owner and operator.

"We've been looking for this for a long time," said Commissioner Ken Christiansen.

"It's private enterprise at its best," added Commissioner Paul Steele.

Kennon said, as project developer, he is working with landowners to make sure they are comfortable with having the firm on their land.

He said Acciona has installed research towers throughout the proposed project site to analyze how the wind flows through the area.

Environmental scientists and survey crews are studying bird migration and hazardous material issues, and working with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks to make sure wildlife and the environment are protected.

"We are looking at the history of the area to see what has been there the past 100, 200 and 300 years," he said.

Craig Hills is one landowner hoping to put his land into the project.

"Look at the weather we've had the last 10 years," Hills said. "We can't raise crops, but we can

sell wind."

Kennon said the 72 turbines will most likely be set three rows deep, with four to six turbines per mile running side by side, in a pattern one to three miles from front to back.

"They will face south, but the turbines can rotate north," he said.

With a turbine life span of 20 to 25 years, Kennon said, landowners are being asked to enter into agreements that will run 25 years. He said the leases can then be extended to 30 to 40 years, or be perpetually renewable.

"We will ask the general contractor to hire as many local people as possible," Kennon said. "We'll have between 200 and 250 people on site each day, and when done, we'll have 10 to 15 full-time people to support the wind farm."

Steele said he understands that service roads to the towers, as well as concrete bases used to anchor turbines, can be added to the tax roles. He asked Kennon whether property taxes would increase for landowners having turbines on their ground.

"We understand taxes may be applicable, but Acciona pays the taxes," Kennon replied.

Sowers asked Kennon how much noise the turbines will make.

"Unless you are right below one," he said, "the wind makes more noise than the blades. Our turbines make very little mechanical noise."

Council: carnival rides coming down

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Administrator Lawson said he had discussed with the Norton County Community Service Association to leave the rides up all year, but that the insurance company would not allow it. He said he would have the city crews take the rides down as soon as possible. Mayor Corns suggested the Parks Committee meet with the Norton County Community Service Association before next year's fair to discuss any concerns.

City Administrator Lawson said that Doug Bahms, contractor for Bieber Cottages, has submitted a request for the city to double chip and seal the alley adjacent to Bieber Cottages, beginning at Armory Drive and going south for 152 feet.

He is requesting the city provide the labor, and he would pay the cost of the materials, according to the city's alley improvement policy. The motion was approved.

City Administrator Lawson also reported on a claim against the city filed by a lady who fell at the fair, the fire trucks were pump tested at the pool and the swimming pool will be drained on Sept. 4, the power plant passed the capacity test that it has to take each year,

Timbercreek Road has been chip sealed, and the lights at Steve Schrum Field and the concession stand electricity will be completed this fall after the sprinkler system is turned off.

He also said he has received several compliments about the police department and the positive appearance they portray in Norton.

City Administrator Lawson said the city has received the new contract with Mapes & Miller with the 2007 audit cost to be based on the 2006 fee plus the consumer price index.

A short recess was called while City Attorney Griffith looked up and found the consumer price index to be about 2.8 percent. The new contract was approved, with Councilman Briery voting no.

Councilman Briery asked City Administrator Lawson if the refuse crew could keep a record of how many households pick up recyclables on Fridays. City Administrator Lawson said that wouldn't be a problem.

A disciplinary form drawn up by City Administrator Lawson was approved to be used.

Councilman Otter reported that the Personnel Committee dis-

cussed the subject of dress codes. He said people should dress with common sense based on the job they are doing.

He also reported that the salary survey was reviewed and no changes in the current pay rates are being recommended at this time.

Councilman Kuhn said the Public Safety Committee met regarding a citizen complaint about a Police Officer.

Councilman Kuhn said that after reviewing the tapes of the incident, the Police Officer should be commended for his professionalism in how he handled the situation. Councilman Kuhn also commended the Police Department for how they handled a potentially dangerous situation recently.

Councilwoman Elaine Mann made a motion to go into an executive session for 10 minutes with Mayor Corns, City Attorney Griffiths, City Administrator Lawson and City Council.

Council resumed at 7:02 p.m. with no motions made as a result of the executive session.

Ordinance #17, paying city bills, was accepted as a whole.

City council adjourned at 7:03 p.m.



Leroy Newell looked over his three gigantic cabbages he grew. Mr. Newell has a small garden in his back yard, and gives a lot of his produce away to neighbors.

— Telegram Photo by Brandy Leroux

Small garden yields big produce

By BRANDY LEROUX
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Leroy Newell, Norton, has a small garden in his back yard. This year, his small garden — with its

own watering system created by Mr. Newell — yielded big results. He recently picked three large heads of cabbage — one weighed 13 pounds, one 14 pounds, and the

biggest came in at 15 pounds. When Mr. Newell planted his garden last May — after the frost — he had no idea what treasures he'd find this summer — three heads of cabbage, together weighing 42 pounds.

Mr. Newell bought the seeds at Pamida and used "good garden fertilizer" to help his vegetables grow, and set up his own watering system. He spends about 45 minutes a day tending to the garden.

He also grows tomatoes, zucchini, jalapeno peppers, bell peppers and cucumbers. He had one zucchini that weighed four pounds. Excluding the three biggest, the rest of his cabbages weighed between 10 and 15 pounds each.

"I have been real pleased with my garden this year," said Mr. Newell. "I give a lot of my garden vegetables away to my neighbors. I'd rather do that than sell them."

His wife, Shirley, will freeze what vegetables aren't given away to be used during the winter.

Treasurer: restricted licenses

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not a wallet-sized copy — and an original social security card.

The student's parent or guardian needs to bring in a form of identification as well for an instructional permit to be issued.

The applicant will take a closed-book multiple choice test. Study material for the test is in the treasurer's office at the courthouse.

"I am excited to be able to issue instructional permits to the young drivers in Norton and surrounding counties. I feel this is a valuable service to both our young drivers and their parents," said Mrs. Linner.

She is in the process of being trained to issue restricted driver's licenses to students who have passed a driver's education class. If a student has passed a driver's education class, and is turning 15, he or she can get a restricted license at her office.

Mrs. Linner is also being trained to issue new Kansas licenses for people who have moved here from out of state.

"My training includes issuing

restricted and new licenses, so if anyone needs these services, please contact my office to set up an appointment," she said.

The treasurer is the only person in the office trained for these services and said she would appreciate a phone call ahead of time to work out what time would be best to issue the instructional permit or the restricted license.

Once a student has successfully completed driver's education, reached the age of 15 and held an instructional permit for at least six months, they may bring the yellow driver's education completion slip along with the 50 hours supervised driving log — with at least 10 of those hours being at night — into the treasurer's office to get a restricted license.

One service that still will not be offered is issuing or renewing commercial driver's licenses. "That is beyond Norton County's capabilities to decide."

"It would take a state decision to be able to issue or renew commercial driver's licenses," said Mrs. Linner.

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Feature idea? 877-6908



TFI Family Services Inc.



TFI Family Services, a state wide mental health/social service agency, has immediate openings for a full time Resource Family worker in our Phillipsburg office.

Responsibilities include managing caseload of foster care placements, coordinating with other agencies that provide services, assessing placement needs, safety, family strengths and resources for child and foster/kinship caregivers. Licensed Master's or Bachelor's degree in Social Work preferred. Bachelor's degree in social service field with two or more years of experience is required.

BENEFITS INCLUDE: Paid health/dental/life insurance, 401 (k) employer matched plan, paid holidays, sick, and vacation, annual longevity bonus, overtime pay, flexible work schedules, agency vehicle fleet, and more....

SEND LETTER OF INTEREST AND RESUME TO:

Human Resource Department
TFI Family Services

PO Box 2224, Emporia, KS 66801
or apply on-line at website below

TFI is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Service Provider

TFI Family Services



Building Brighter Tomorrows for Families and Children

To learn more about
TFI, visit our website,
www.the-farm.org

2008-2009
SEASON TICKET EVENTS

— HOMES TOUR —
Sunday, September 14, 2008

2:00 - 4:00 P.M.

- Judy Jocelyn - 805 Timbercreek
- Judy Carlyle - 815 Timbercreek

•Bernie and Jane Mindrup - 807 Valley Vista
•Whispering Pines - W. Highway 36, Norton, KS
Refreshments will be served at 805 Timbercreek

Sunday, October 5 — Stanton Nelson Senior Recital

Featuring his original compositions

Adults: \$5.00; Students: \$2.00; 12 and Under: \$1.00; Reciprocity: \$3.00

Monday, October 13 — Children's Show — Wichita Children's Theatre

9:30 a.m. — Three Little Pigs; 1:30 p.m. — Amelia Earhart

November 8 — 9 a.m.-4 p.m. — Annual Arts and Crafts Fair

Monday, January 12 — 1:30 p.m. — Children's Show — Albadora

Sunday, January 18 — 3 p.m. — FourStar

Featuring Music of the Statler Bros., John Denver, Alabama and Others

Adults: \$5.00; Students: \$2.00; 12 and Under: \$1.00; Reciprocity: \$3.00

February - TBA

Saturday, March 28 — 7:00 p.m. Free Staters

Music from the Mid-19th Century on Authentic Instruments

Adults: \$8.00; Students: \$4.00; 12 and Under: \$1.00; Reciprocity: \$4.00

Sunday, April 26 — 3:00 p.m. — The Magic and Illusion of Eric Vaughn

Adults: \$8.00; Students: \$4.00; 12 and Under: \$1.00; Reciprocity: \$4.00

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

SINGLE — \$20.00 • FAMILY — \$40.00 • PATRON — \$100.00

Save by Purchasing a Membership!!

Norton County Arts Council Inc.

For more information or to purchase memberships,
call Carol at 877-5611 or 877-3341