

Wind power promoter courts council

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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The Oberlin City Council heard a proposal Thursday to buy power from a wind farm a firm called Sunflower Wind wants to build in Decatur County, but didn't make any decisions.

Dan Rasure of Goodland, with Sunflower Wind, said the firm is looking at building a 50-megawatt wind farm in Decatur County, along with a 4-megawatt hydrogen generation plant and 5 to 25 megawatts of methane-powered generation.

He said the company wants to sell most of the power locally and then open it up to others. The proposal, said Mr. Rasure, is to sell the power

Council Countdown

At the meeting Thursday, the Oberlin City Council:

- Tabled a decision whether to let the Creative Movement gymnasts use The Gateway arena for classes for a discounted rate until the coach could ask the board to pay more than \$400 a year. Story below right.
- Decided to buy a new tractor and mower attachment for \$54,650 to be used at the waste water treatment

plant and other areas in the city. Story on Page 3A.

- Heard a proposal to buy power from the Sunflower Wind wind farm proposed to be built in Decatur County, but didn't make any decisions. Story at left.
- Increased the monthly price for yard lights by a dollar because of the recent changes in the electrical rates. Story on Page 3A.

to the city at 5.75 cents a kilowatt hour for the first five years and then at 6 cents for the 15 years after that.

Currently, said City Administrator Gary Shike, the city buys hydro-power from Western Area Power

Administration for 3 cents per kilowatt hour and from Sunflower Electric for around 14 cents.

Mr. Rasure said they are asking for a 20-year contract with the city and then the city would need to cancel its other power contracts.

Sunflower Wind will offer a minimum 1 cent power discount for any existing or new business that increases their energy use by two megawatts.

The company can provide economic development, he said, with the idea of building three sites in northwest Kansas. Each will be used for research and development as well as power production, he said.

Originally, said Mr. Rasure, the

company wanted to build the wind farm northwest of Oberlin, but they will wait to see what happens with the airport. Of course, he said, they will work with the Federal Aviation Administration on any runway restrictions. He added that their wind towers are lighted at the peak.

In the first three months, he said, they will have 50 to 75 employees doing construction. After construction, they could have four to eight employees here.

If the city decides to not buy power from them, he added, they will probably only have two employees here.

At some point, said Mr. Rasure, the wind farm might become com-

pletely automated, but with it being used for research, people will still be coming in to see it.

He said landowners will get \$5,000 per turbine on their land each year. That's \$100,000 yearly to people in Decatur County.

The equipment is being made in Phillipsburg, he said, but they will be looking at other areas. The prototype for the turbines has been around since 2004 and in use since 2006 with no problems, he said.

Councilman Jay Anderson asked about the status of new coal-fire generating units going in, which are under pressure to burn cleaner.

Jim Widener, general manager of (See WIND on Page 10A)

Gymnasts try again to get Gateway OK

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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The Oberlin City Council tabled a decision whether to let the Creative Movement gymnastics class use The Gateway arena at a discounted rate until the coach could ask her board for approval to pay more than \$400 a year rent.

Mayor Joe Stanley said they would leave the discussion on a positive note with the idea that the gymnasts can probably use the arena but the coaches need some time to talk with the board about how much the group can pay.

Councilwoman Marcia Lohoefer made a motion to allow the gymnasts to use the arena on either Tuesday or Wednesday, then rescinded it because she hadn't included the price.

Coach Robyn Rouse came to to council meeting on Thursday night with four or five other parents and coaches to discuss the request for the gymnasts using the arena. The

group had been using the Bohemian Hall at the Last Indian Raid Museum, but after a new finish was applied to the floor, the gymnasts were asked to look for another place.

Mrs. Rouse talked with the council at a meeting in June, but didn't get a definite answer. With classes starting in early September, she asked again about using the arena.

Creative Movements was started in Atwood 10 years ago by parents, said Mrs. Rouse. Then seven years ago, there were enough kids from Oberlin to start a class here.

Gymnastics isn't just about tumbling, said Mrs. Rouse; it is about kids building self-confidence and body awareness. The classes serve over 50 students ages 4-14, she said.

At the last council meeting, said Mrs. Rouse, some of the council members said allowing the group to use the arena wouldn't be a smart business decision, but she disagrees.

People looking to move to Oberlin (See COUNCIL on Page 10A)

Townships shuffled so commissioners will have fair share

The Decatur County commissioners moved some townships into different commissioner districts at the meeting last Tuesday to even out the number of residents in each.

Census numbers from this year showed that commissioner District No. 1, which included Center, Olive and Roosevelt townships and Oberlin City Precinct No. 1 had 1,145 people. The district is represented by Commissioner Stan McEvoy.

District No. 2, which included Oberlin City No. 2, Beaver, Finley, Logan, Liberty, and Sappa townships, had 1,090 people. The district is represented by Commissioner Ralph Unger.

District No. 3, which included Allison, Altory, Cook, Custer, Sherman, Harlan, Grant, Lincoln, Garfield, Oberlin, Bassettville, Summit, Prairie Dog, Dresden, Lyon, Jennings and Pleasant Valley townships, had 865 people. This district is represented by Commissioner Doyle Brown.

The three commissioners discussed evening out the population in the three districts, which they

County Roundup

At their meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Moved several of the townships into different commissioner districts to even out the populations in the three districts. Story at left.

- Asked the noxious weed director to send out a specification sheet for new or used pickups to haul the recycling trailer and be used by the weed department. Story on Page 3A.

- Hired the assistant emergency preparedness director on as the full-time director for the county. Story on Page 3A.

haven't done since 1994.

County Clerk Marilyn Horn said a county census is taken every year (See SHIFTS on Page 10A)

Water usage drops to below trigger point

With cooler weather and more than an inch of rain, water use dropped last week as residents kept numbers under the 700,000-gallons-a-day trigger point for water restrictions.

The city has been on watering restrictions for several weeks with an even/odd system in place for all outdoor use.

Those with odd addresses can water on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday and those with even addresses on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. Outdoor water use is al-

lowed from midnight to 9 a.m. and from 8 p.m. to midnight on the proper days. No outdoor water use is allowed on Mondays.

The city pumped:

- 500,600 gallons on Monday, July 30.

- 420,300 gallons on Tuesday, July 31.

- 524,000 gallons last Wednesday.

- 522,000 gallons on Thursday.

- 550,000 gallons on Friday.

- 677,000 gallons on Saturday.

- 372,000 gallons on Sunday.



ON MONDAY AT THE FAIRGROUNDS, board member Dr. Travis Hissong (above) put up signs in the new livestock building with the help of Kevin Brown, owner of

Sappa Valley Construction. Renee Harman (below) got the kitchen ready at the 4-H food stand, which included opening jars of condiments. — Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Fair ready for fun

The Decatur County Fair and Home-Owned Carnival are in full swing, with many events to come this week.

Last Tuesday, kids in the 4-H program showed clothes they made with their sewing machines or hand stitching, or in the buymanship class, ones they purchased and modeled for a judge.

The judge asked them questions about where they will wear the clothes, how to take care of them and what kind of material they were made from.

At the end of the event, the youths were given ribbons for their outfits. People can see the students in their new outfits at the public fashion revue at 5:30 p.m. on Friday.

On Saturday, the 4-H and open class horse show took place at the horse arena just south of the fairgrounds. Kids and adults alike showed their riding skills and horses off to earn ribbons.

On Tuesday, things were to get busy at the fairgrounds, with all the 4-H and open class exhibits being brought in. The food auction was to be held and the carnival was open to the public for the first night.

Events left during the week include:



Today

- 8 a.m. Bucket calf show at the livestock building.

- 8 to 10 a.m. Open class and 4-H floriculture entered with judging to follow.

- 9 a.m. Dairy/beef show at the livestock building.

- 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Benefit ribeye steak sandwiches for new livestock building, Oberlin Jaycee porkburger

stand.

- 5 p.m. Sheep show at the livestock building.

- 5 p.m. Register for the kids' pedal (See SCHEDULE on Page 2A)