



LIBRARIAN Carol Smith checked out a book to former librarian Kay Jones. Card holders can check out a variety of books, music and movies at the city library. — Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

City approves vacation time for employee

The Oberlin City Council approved allowing an employee to use vacation time earned, although the employee hasn't worked for a full year, and discussed overtime and on-call pay for the police officers.

At the meeting last Thursday, the council asked for a proposal on the personnel policy, including the vacation time and how the police officers are paid, but went ahead and OK'd an exception for one employee.

According to the personnel policy, said City Administrator Austin Gilley, an employee must work for 12 months before becoming eligible to use vacation time. Employees accrue one vacation day for each month of work.

He said the change could affect five city employees. There is a request pending, he said, and one exception has been made for a part-time employee. Mr. Gilley said the person had worked for the city for a year, just not full time. The employee is full-time now, he added.

The vacation time accrues at one day a month, said Councilwoman Rhonda May, so it can only be used after the time is worked.

Employees, said Mr. Gilley, also get one personal day a year, sick leave and compensatory time off, if it applies to the position.

Councilman Bill Riedel said it sounds to him like, if an employee gets one day per month that they work, then they "own" it.

The council wanted to know how long the policy had worked this way. Foreman Dan Castle said it's always been this way, "for years and years."

The council would need to see a proposed change to the ordinance, said Mayor Joe Stanley, and then take a vote.

For a stopgap, said Mr. Gilley, the council could allow him to give the employee time off and then look at each policy.

Councilman Rob McFee made a motion to allow the employee to use his time off, with Mr. Riedel seconding.

Ms. May said she could see the rational, but thought this kind of a bad policy. If the city is going to follow the rules, she said, then it should follow the rules. The council meetings are expanding to five hours with everything that doesn't follow the ordinances, and then the council votes to make an exception, she said.

Agree, said Mr. Riedel, but only if there isn't a hardship on the employee. Mr. Gilley said the employee wants to take the vacation in August.

Ms. May said her vote would be no because she doesn't think they should put a bandage on the policy, but change it, if that's what the council wants.

The vacation was approved in a 3-1 vote.

With the police department, said Mr. Gilley, there is no policy for on-call time. The current records are unclear for the actual amount of time the officers work.

The city should maybe pay the officers on-call for the actual time worked, not for the hours they are home. Mr. Gilley said he also doesn't want to undermine the police or their compensation, but the policy is unclear.

This came up, said Chief Wade Lockhart, because of the new time cards, which are done weekly. Most officers don't work a straight 40-hour week, because the shift isn't just Monday through Friday. The officers work Saturday and Sunday and also have days off.

The guys were staggered shifts, said Chief Lockhart, so there is always one off for three days.

He said he would recommend going back to monthly time cards for the department. The officers have overtime for anything over the eight-hour shift, but can take time off to compensate for it.

Since 1993, said Chief Lockhart, the officers have received 2 3/4 hours of overtime pay, time and a half, for covering an eight-hour shift of on-call time during the week. If they cover one on the weekend, they are paid for the straight 12 hours.

Part of the confusion is that on-call time is getting called overtime, which it isn't.

Chief Lockhart said he talked with Treasurer Patti Skubal, who said she can calculate the time if she knows what it's supposed to be.

If the city had to hire another officer to take care of the on-call time, he said, it would cost a lot more. These guys are giving the city an awful lot of free time, too, said Chief Lockhart, as are all city employees.

The U.S. Department of Labor suggests that an amount of time be set for officers for a week or a month and then anything over that is overtime, said Mr. Gilley.

All city employees are getting overtime after eight hours of work in a day, he said.

For on-call time, said Mr. Gilley, his opinion is that the city only should pay when the officer is on a call. If an officer is paid partly for on-call time, then the city has to pay for all of it that is worked.

When on-call, said Mr. Riedel, the officer can't leave the city for the shift. It's a lifestyle change, said Chief Lockhart; they can't mow the lawn, leave town, start a project or anything. They have to be ready to answer a call.

If the city takes this pay away from the officers, it won't be pleasant, said Chief Lockhart. Mr. Riedel said he didn't see why they would take the pay away, but they want to clear up how it works.

Library offers a range of services

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Oberlin City Library doesn't offer just books, but services ranging from a summer reading program to wireless Internet to movies and music available to be checked out.

Librarian Carol Smith said the library has 2,308 cardholders. Last year, they checked out 32,588 items, not including what was used just in the library.

The library operates with city tax money, donations and memorials. The library received \$39,000 from the city this year, she said, plus grants through the Northwest Kansas Library Association.

In 2008 the county sent \$28,663 in tax money to the Northwest Kansas Library Association. Treasurer Jean Hale said she's not sure how the money is distributed after that.

In 2006, said Mrs. Smith, the Oberlin library was ranked No. 14 out of 45 city libraries in Kansas in the Kansas Public Library rankings. It was second in northwest Kansas, just behind Oakley.

The city's library, she said, is ranked as a service center, which provides for 1,500 to 2,499 people. Rankings are based on population, size, resources and use, she added.

Library services include books, movies and music to check out,

Grant provides computers

The Oberlin City Library received four new computers last year from a grant and plans to get two more this year from the same source.

Librarian Carol Smith said the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation looks throughout the United States for areas that have done a survey for low-to-moderate income and fall into the target category to get a grant. The city had a study about five years ago,

computers and service for the web, wireless Internet, magazines, newspapers, music, movies and, for whatever it doesn't have, interlibrary loans, to name a few.

In the summer, said Mrs. Smith, they offer a reading program for children. The kids have to read 15 books or 15,000 pages to get a personal pan pizza from Pizza Hut, a slushy from Crossroads Express and a book of their own from the library.

Oberlin offers lots of summer opportunities for kids, she said, so instead of a group reading program, the library offers this individual plan.

she said, and must have fallen in the right category.

She said she's been told this is the last grant the foundation will give for hardware, however.

The next grant process is for connectivity, she said, but the library gets its Internet service through Eagle Communications for free. She said she's not sure if the library will qualify for the next round, as they don't have any problem getting service.

Kids of all ages can participate, including those young enough that they still need stories read to them. They count, too, said Mrs. Smith.

The summer program started at the beginning of June and ends on Saturday, Aug. 1. As of the end of June, she said, 83 kids had enrolled, down a little from last year. Kids can sign up whenever they want, she added.

The library, said Mrs. Smith, does accept donations, both items and cash. Some of the books donated go out on the shelves to be checked out and some are used in case a book on the shelf is damaged.

Sometimes, a donor will specify

what the library is supposed to use a donation for, she said, and that is done. If not, then the money is used for general projects and needs.

The library doesn't have any big projects on the table right now, said Mrs. Smith. With the economy the way it is, they don't want to push the taxpayers.

The city appoints a library board, made up of Duane Dorshorst, chair; Richard Carman, secretary; and members Nila Hafner, Marianne Larue, Teresa Shaughnessy, Carolyn Burtis and Glenn Tabor. They have talked about making the basement handicap accessible, she said. Today, it's mostly used for storage, but it would be nice to make it useable.

There's a big room that is available for rent for special meetings (not weekly or monthly meetings, however) for \$10. There's no elevator, so it's only accessible by the stairs.

Anyone can get a library card, Smith said, although new customers have to wait three months to rent movies or do an inter-library loan.

The library is open from 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday.

don't know where the house was. A marijuana pipe was found during the incident, he said.

Oberlin man arrested for stealing a car

An Oberlin man was arrested in Dundy County, Neb., with a car which had been reported stolen by an Oberlin teenager.

Thomas Vilar, 20, was still in the Dundy County jail, said Chief Wade Lockhart. He said he thought Mr. Vilar would go before a judge sometime Monday. The Oberlin City Police Department has a warrant for his arrest for one count of a nonfelony theft, the chief said, with

\$1,000 bond attached to it.

Chief Lockhart said the 1999 Dodge Avenger, which had been parked on the street at 716 E. Oak, was reported missing around 6:09 p.m. Saturday. The vehicle, he said, belongs to Serena Stacy, who said the keys were inside.

Mr. Vilar, said Chief Lockhart, had stopped at a bar in Dundy County, trying to buy two tires for the vehicle. He said he'd been driving

on flats for a while. Chief Lockhart said he isn't sure what was said in the bar, but officers were called out to quell a disturbance.

Sometime during that event, Mr. Vilar told officers he had borrowed the car, and then said it was stolen. He had cuts on his arm that were treated. Mr. Vilar told Nebraska officers he got the cuts when he broke into a home somewhere to get a drink. Chief Lockhart said they

Council talks personnel behind closed doors

The Oberlin City Council spent almost the first hour of the meeting last Thursday in closed sessions to discuss non-elected personnel.

The first session, called for 20 minutes, included the mayor and council. It was followed by an ad-

ditional 30 minutes including the mayor, council and city administrator. There was no action taken afterward.

During the meeting on July 9, the administrator, Austin Gilley, complained that the council wasn't

clear on what he was supposed to do and felt at least one council member wanted to get rid of him. Mayor Joe Stanley suggested a closed-door session, and the council talked with Mr. Gilley for about half an hour.

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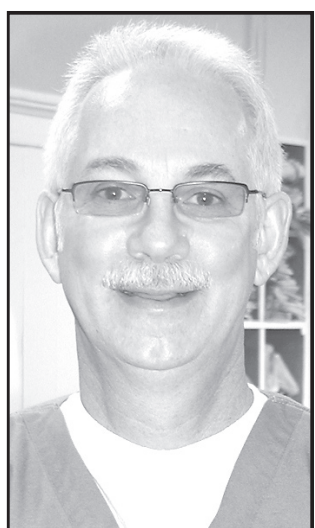
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PUBLIC AUCTION

Sat., August 1, 2009 • 10 a.m.

Location: Go 8 miles south of McCook, NE on U.S. Highway 83 and 1 mile west.

Signs will be posted.

Lunch will be served

Seller: Wayne Dodot

Yard Equipment



Snapper Hi vac, yard cruiser riding mower w/grass catcher

- Gas post hole digger
- Stihl 025 chain saw
- Fimco sprayer for 4-wheeler
- Agri Fab utility trailer
- 6.5 H.P. Lawn Boy self-propelled mower
- 5 H.P. 22" Murray mower
- Pull-type aerator
- Garden carts



Lawn General, 17 H.P., 42" riding mower w/grass catcher, like new

Pull-type fertilizer spreader

Shop Equipment and Tools

- Lincoln welder, 225 amp
- Acetylene torch w/full bottles
- Blow torch
- Wooden storage cabinet
- Lots of pipe fittings
- (3) Michelin P 215 R15 MTS tires
- 16' Aluminum extension ladder
- Heavy duty metal stands

- Cut off air wrench
- Timing light
- Air socket
- Power Mate spray gun
- Table saw
- Jig saw, 2-sp.
- Power fastener
- Staples Degreaser
- Propane torch
- Log chains
- Floor jack
- Chain link fence posts
- T-posts
- Tap & Die set
- Napa bearing puller
- Propane torch Drill vice
- Metal milk crates
- 5" bench vice
- Miscellaneous tools

Household Items

- Whirlpool heavy duty washer and dryer
- Couches
- China hutch
- Frigidaire deepfreeze
- Drop-leaf dining table, 4 chairs, real nice

Manu other items too numerous to mention



Back blade, 7', 3-point

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