

*Pool project faces a veto

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I think it makes a person wonder, "Why even (get involved) if someone can come in and just veto your majority decision?"
The creation of a public building commission is how the city would best approach getting the money to start the pool project, according

to John Haas, the city's financial advisor, who spoke at a meeting on Thursday, Jan. 3. The commission would take out loans on behalf of the city to pay for the pool, and would then pay off those loans with payments from the 1.5 percent sales-tax increase authorized by voters in November.

*New girl runs

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Mrs. Leitner said she grew up in Oberlin and graduated from Fort Hays State University with a degree in business management. She is married to Jeff Leitner, who works for Nex-Tech Wireless, and they have two daughters, Isabelle, 4, and Tessa, 2.
Mrs. Leitner said that her chief skills as a candidate are her attitude

and work ethic.
"I have a can-do attitude," she said. "When I have my mind set on something, there's not a whole lot that can slow me down. I want to differentiate between issues and be level-headed. I've gotten so involved with this (the pool), I feel like I really have to see it through. It's the right thing to do."

*One undecided on school board

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"thing," he said about the coming term. "It always has been, in all the years I've been on. And this is as critical as I've ever seen it. It's going to get tough."
Mr. Brown has a daughter, Skyler, 11, in school, and is in the same boat as Mrs. Hissong, seeking re-election for a second term.
"The school board makes sure that the school is up to government standards," he said, "and that employees are doing their jobs. We don't do any day-to-day operations. Typically, it's the same as any other board of directors. What you do is oversee and hope that the taxpayer is getting the most bang for their buck on the education side. You want an excellent education at a reasonable

cost to the taxpayer."
Mr. Brown is also on the board's budget and negotiations committees, so that budget Mr. Wasson referred to is one of his biggest priorities.
"We help negotiate between the teachers and their benefit packages," he said, "and we try to figure out how much money the government will let the school have, and then give them an equitable salary and benefits so they can make a comfortable living."
As for the race itself though, Mr. Brown said it's simple: vote for the best candidate.
"If I'm the best candidate for the job," he said, "vote for me. If I'm not, vote for someone else."

Making the leap



CHEERING ON THE RED DEVILS' 47 to 42 victory last Friday, Darbi Rouse went into a flip that got the crowd roaring. - Herald staff photo by Susan May

Grants available

The U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service in Kansas will provide about \$1.5 million to conserve the water in the Ogallala Aquifer through the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative.

Matthew Barnes, district conservationist for Decatur County, said applications are accepted all the time, but to be considered for fiscal year 2013 money, the application cutoff date is Friday, Feb. 15. The service will fund this initiative through its Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

"Water quantity is a high priority resource concern under EQIP in Kansas," said Eric B. Banks, state conservationist and head of the service in Kansas. "Agriculture producers have the opportunity with the additional funding to implement water-saving practices. This allows them to implement conservation practices such as irrigation water management, crop rotations and replacing inefficient gravity irrigation systems."

Much of the High Plains region relies on the Ogallala for water, but the water in the aquifer is diminishing because of widespread irrigation use.

The Ogallala, also known as the High Plains Aquifer, is a vast, yet shallow underground water beneath the Great Plains. It is one of the world's largest aquifers, covering parts of eight states: Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Wyoming and Texas.

Financial help is available through this program for farmers and ranches considering converting from irrigated to dryland crops, as well as for more efficient irrigation systems and water management. All participants must meet eligibility requirements. In Kansas, socially disadvantaged, limited resource and beginning farmers and ranchers will receive a higher payment rate for conservation practices than others.

To sign an application, stop by the county office of the conservation agency and visit with the staff or go to www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov.

New commissioners get board positions

The new county commissioners received more than just one title last Tuesday, as they reviewed which boards each man should serve on and what appointments still remained to be made.
The county still has three open board positions, County Commissioner Stan McEvoy said: two on the High Plains Mental Health board and one on the Health Department advisory board.
Anyone interested in serving on one of these boards should apply at the county clerk's office on the second floor of the courthouse.
Mr. McEvoy, on top of remaining the chairman of the commission, is now also the county representative

to the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., on the micro-loan committee for that agency, will serve on the county Health Care and fair foundation boards and become the liaison to the fair board.
Commissioner Brad Marcuson will serve on the health advisory board and be the commission liaison to the Amusement Authority, which runs the carnival at the county fair.
Commissioner Sid Metcalf took an open position on the hospital board and is now the representative to the Northwest Kansas Planning and Development Commission.

Old and new officials get down to business

In a whirlwind morning, Decatur County commissioners marched through a long list of items before and after the swearing-in ceremony of new commissioners, which doubled as a reception for outgoing commissioners Gene Gallentine, who served four years, and Ralph Unger, who served 40.
Outgoing Commissioners Unger and Gallentine and Commissioner Stan McEvoy concluded several items before the swearing-in:
• Presented an award to County Attorney Steve Hirsch for 24 years of service from the Kansas Association of Counties.
• Passed a motion to transfer \$1,348 from the general fund to the transportation bus account.
• Authorized transfer of \$10,709 from the general fund to the county landfill.
• Appointed Dan Morford, Dr. Travis Hissong and Dana Marintzer to the county Fair Board, filling up all vacancies on the board.
• Appointed Shane Bird, J.D. Johnson, Abby Hissong and Gary Juenemann to the Summer Recreation Board, leaving one vacancy to fill.
• Approved the purchase of a Swintec 7000 typewriter for Registrar of Deeds Kari Ketterl for \$649.

Mrs. Ketterl said that she has been saving money for a computer program that can handle the county's index books, but in the meantime, she needs a typewriter that is wide enough to handle the 17-inch-wide paper the books require.
Afterward, the new commissioners:
• Passed a motion to keep the "per diem" allowance for employees who go out of town for county business at \$32 a day: \$8 for breakfast, \$9 for lunch and \$15 for dinner.
• Agreed to continue a contract with the Good Samaritan Center and Decatur Health Systems wherein the county provides a truck of water to the locations in the event of an emergency. The contract is for \$1.
• Approved the purchase of parts and pieces for the repair of two trucks for the Noxious Weed Control Department, to cost no more than \$600.
• Paid the bill for the first three-fourths of the membership dues to keep the county's recycling program going, for \$8,833.
• Heard that the annual meeting of the Decatur County Conservation District will be at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 4.
• Decided to meet quarterly with county department heads.

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