

Cost of facility shrinks

New sewer plant may be smaller than planned

By CAROLYN PLOTTS

While Norton still needs a new sewer plant it may not have to be as big and expensive as was once considered.

In a special meeting last night, Norton City Administrator Rob Lawson told the council that new designs need to be submitted for the waste water treatment facility now under consideration.

Mr. Lawson said Habib Ghali, a representative for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, doesn't think the city is going to grow significantly and has suggested the original plan be reduced.

The modified plan, which will still adequately serve a population of 4,500 should save the city \$180,000. Mr. Lawson said that money could be used to update some of the infrastructure, like man holes.

There are lots of other pluses with the proposed plan, he said.

The new plant could be complete before the "switch-over" is made. It will have back-up power, something the old facility lacked. It will have a lab, be computerized and the area will also be concrete paved.

Dick Hahn, water/waste water plant supervisor, said, "The best benefit will be that the new plant will push the water — not pull it. I looked at a similar plant and it was very efficient. Odors were minimal."

During the discussion board members learned that if bids can be let in June, construction could begin in August and the project completed as early as next July.

They also learned that if they would consider allowing an additional 90 days on the original 330-day completion date, they could possibly save more money by not having to pay overtime.

Mr. Lawson said the old plant is 41 years old and has served the city well. However, the state has new requirements and if the city does not comply the fines could be as much as \$15,000 a day. He said the city has already been approved for a 20-year, low-interest state revolving loan for the \$4 million project.

The board discussed the necessity of raising city water usage rates.

It was suggested that the base rate for residents inside the city limits be raised to \$16.82 and \$25.73 as a minimum for meters outside the city limits.

Monthly sewer fees were also discussed. Suggested increases were to \$13.25 for city residents and \$26.50 for homes outside city limits.

Bulk water rates were discussed also. Right now, people are being charged \$3.88 per 1,000 gallons of water. Mr. Lawson was asked to find out what surrounding cities charge.

The special meeting was for discussion. No motions or decisions were made. The official city council meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m., Wednesday in the city offices. The public is invited.



Farming couple celebrates 74 years as man and wife

Claude and Ellen (Withington) Archer were married 74 years ago.

On May 14, 1931, they and another couple, Claude and Velma (Henry) Luse were married in a double wedding at the Methodist Church in Stockton.

They didn't have a honeymoon, Mrs. Archer said.

"We just went home," she said. Home was a farm north of Densmore.

She was 22 and he was 21. Mrs. Archer was a graduate of Densmore High School and took normal training, which qualified her to be a teacher.

She taught at a rural school close to Densmore and after she married she occasionally substituted

Mr. Archer finished eighth grade and began farming when he was 16.

The Great Depression was in full swing when they got married and life was not easy, they said.

Mrs. Archer said they made their own soap, she made the children's clothes, raised a big garden and canned.

They butchered their own meat and baked their own bread. In exchange for flour, Mrs. Archer baked bread for a neighboring bachelor.

"It was a treat for us to have a slice of store-bought bread," she said.

Farming was hard work, too. Mr. Archer farmed with mules and horses. He picked corn by hand.

Two children were born on the farm, a daughter, Wava Conard, who lives in Norton and a son, Wayne Archer, who farms northeast of Almena.

Mr. Archer's mother, Artensia Ray, was a mid-wife and assisted at the births.

They both agreed the most exciting thing that happened during



Ellen and Claude Archer celebrated their 74th wedding anniversary Saturday with friends and family at the Andbe Home. Mr. and Mrs. Archer (left) were married on April 14, 1931.

their long marriage was a tornado that struck their farm on June 21, 1947. He said it tore up the barn and took the windows, doors and half the roof off the house.

"We didn't know it was coming and didn't get into the cellar," she said. "Not a one of us got hurt."

"A bowl of gravy was on the table. After the tornado, I saw it had landed on the floor, underneath the radio — with the gravy still in it."

He recalls seeing the lumber wagon go rolling down the hill.

Both agree it's been a good life. "Wouldn't have lasted this long if it hadn't of been," she remarked.

Mrs. Archer's advice for a happy marriage is, "You've got to work at it — every day. Don't give up."

She must have followed her own advice because she said they never had a serious quarrel.

The Archers moved off the farm to Almena in 1973. They retired from farming, but not from working. They did their own yard work and lived by themselves until February when they moved to the Andbe Home.

They have 11 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

Saturday their family and staff at the Home held an anniversary party for them.

Attending the celebration were: Lane Archer, Ruth Rusink, Cole Archer, Esther Wharton, Erin Archer, Lynette and Cameron Archer, Dorothy Lueschen, Lorraine Wolfe, Judy Wood, Sherrill Wendel;

Wava Lee Hogan, Gail and Doreen Harbers, Nikki Cook, Wava Hickert, Beth Mustoe, Philip and Rachel Hadley, John and Marilyn Mann, Cheryl Mann, Mary Mann, Genola Campbell, Wayne Archer;

Shari Archer, Betty Lawrence, Alice Kuiper, Carolyn Bivens, Betty Bivens, Ailene Houghton, Laura Craig, Jean Leuszler, Gisela Harrington, Paul Ballinger, Wava Conard, Merle Hawks, Dawn Bevill, Eldo and LaVerne Graham, Tracy Engelhardt, Karla Anderson, Judy Moppin and Michele Donovan.



Mary Beyler (foreground), Charlotte Neff (kneeling), Maggie Dykens (standing) and Doris Yeager (behind sign) planted flowers on the west border of the parking lot at First Avenue and West Main.

— Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

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