

THE NORTON TELEGRAM



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8 PAGES

Tuesday

March 17, 2009

Norton, Kansas
Home of Mike Luft

Briefly

Hospital board to meet Wednesday

The Norton County Hospital Board of Trustees will meet on Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. in the board room at the hospital. Items on the agenda are: Corporate Compliance-Confidentiality Inservice; Statistical/Financial reports; Fiscal year 2010 budget planning; Discussion of written-off accounts; Personnel report; Electronic payroll deposit policy; Quality improvements summaries; Board member reports; Chief Executive Officer report; and Other business. The meeting is open to the public.

City's Wednesday agenda released

The Norton City Council will meet Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. at the city building. The agenda includes: Approval of building/demolition permits for Jason and Mindy Jones, \$6,000 to add on a room and hallway to connect the garage to the house at 514 N. State Street, and Donald Launchbaugh, \$800, to construct a ramp over existing concrete steps at 1113 Eisenhower Drive; City Administrator Rob Lawson will give his report; and Elaine Mann will give a report on the Utility Committee meeting. The Parks Committee will meet at 5:30 p.m. next Monday, followed by the Public Works Committee, at 6 p.m. All meetings are open to the public.

Cancer Survivors meeting tonight

Dr. Glenda Mauer, local family practice physician, will address the Norton Cancer Survivors' Group tonight at 7 p.m. in the meeting room in the basement of Norton County Hospital. She will talk about general ways to maintain good health. Any person who has had a diagnosis of cancer is invited. The group meets on the third Tuesday of each month at the hospital.

Forecast:

Tonight - Mostly cloudy with a low around 40.
Wednesday - Partly sunny with a high near 59.
Wednesday Night - Mostly cloudy with a low around 35.
Thursday - Partly sunny with a high near 61.



Kingham report:

Fri., March 13 Low 18, High 48
Sat., March 14 Low 19, High 59
Sun., March 15 Low 30, High 66
Mon., March 16 Low 38, High 77
(Readings taken at the Kingham farm 9 miles northwest of Norton)

Prayer

Lord, help us to acknowledge our sins and shortcomings. Then give us courage to take responsibility for them and to change where we need to change. Thank you for your love and forgiveness. Amen.



Short line railroads in line for aid

Special to The Telegram

The Kansas Department of Transportation has set aside \$3 million for short line railroad projects from its American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 highway funds (better known as the economic stimulus package). The recovery act allows states to devote a portion of the highway funding to railroad needs. The transportation department is soliciting applications from short line railroads, such as the one operating through Norton, and port authorities for projects to help address economic development opportunities throughout Kansas.

Short line rail accounts for about 41 percent (1,930 miles) of the nearly 4,780 miles of rail across the state. Short line railroads transport about 14.5 million tons of freight in Kansas each year.

"Short line railroads are important to our state's economy," said Deb Miller, Secretary of Transportation. "They move a variety of goods between our local markets and the national railroad system — connecting many communities to national and global markets. Since the intent (of the recovery act) is to promote economic development, it seems only fitting that we support our short line rail system."

The short line funds are intended for construction projects that provide new or improved service to shippers and improved operating efficiency for the railroads, such as siding or spur extension improvements. Applications will be evaluated on a variety of criteria including, but not limited to, economic impact and job creation/retention, project purpose, project cost, and completeness of application. Priority will be given to projects that show clear economic development opportunities.

The Kansas Department of Transportation has set a deadline of 5 p.m. on March 23 to receive the applications and will announce the selected projects on March 30.

The selected projects must be let to construction by the end of the year and be completed within three years. The transportation department expects to receive more project requests than it can fund. If a project is selected and the applicant is unable to meet the deadlines and requirements, it will recall the funds and use the money for other projects in the state.

More information about the short line railroad funding is available at the Kansas transportation department's website at www.ksdot.org/EconomicStimulus.asp.

Group eyes new playground equipment at Sebelius Lake

By BRANDY LEROUX
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A group of people is raising money for new playground equipment at the Sebelius Reservoir.

"There is a swing set there now," said Vickie Bailey, who is helping to spearhead the effort. "But it's old, in bad shape, and kids have to cross a high traffic road to get to it."

Added to that, said Mrs. Bailey, is the fact there seems to be a lot more people using the campgrounds at the lake, which means more children, and smaller children as well. The group is trying to raise \$25,000 through donations, but they also

And another one!



Another big piece of machinery went through Norton Friday afternoon. This is a turbine motor on its way to Alberta, Canada from Houston, Texas. The motor is 350 feet long, weighs 850,000 pounds, and will take about a month to get from Houston to Alberta. Once in Alberta, it will be used to produce electricity. The Norton route seems to be a favorite of the movers of giant machinery as this is about the fourth such piece of equipment to crawl along State Street.

- Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

Driver's ed program fees increased

By BRANDY LEROUX
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The State of Kansas suspended funding aid for schools' driver's education programs, Greg Mann, Norton Schools Superintendent, told the board at last week's meeting. However, he added, that for the 2009-2010 school year, the Kansas House reversed that suspension and approved an increase in state funding for those programs.

A poll sent to 140 school superintendents, with 43 responding, showed 17 districts were considering increasing the fees. The highest fee being considered was the Kingman School District, at \$310 per student.

Mr. Mann recommended to the Norton School Board that they continue charging a \$50 fee for students who live in-district and a \$100 fee for students who live out-of-district. The board discussed the fees.

Board member Craig Renner suggested raising the prices by \$10, and board member Scott Ellis suggested making the fees the same as the state average, which is \$103 for in-district students and \$153 for out-of-district students. Board member Jennifer Boller said she felt less students would take driver's education if the cost was that high.

Mr. Renner made a motion to change the driver's education fees to \$100 for in-district students and \$150 for out-of-district students. Mr. Ellis seconded the motion. Board member Elaine Lofgreen amended the motion for \$60 for in-district students and \$110 for out-of-district students, but because the motion lacked a second, it failed. The original motion was voted on, two in favor (Mr. Renner and Mr. Ellis) and four against.

Mrs. Lofgreen made a motion to change the driver's education fee to \$60 for in-district students and \$110 for out-of-district students. It passed by one vote, four to three, with Mr. Ellis, Chris Harting, Mrs. Lofgreen and Mark Keilig voting for it.

In other school board news:

• Norton Community High School wrestling coach Bill Johnson, who is also a board member of the Kansas Wrestling Coaches Association, said he nominated Dick Boyd for the Media of the Year award for the Kansas Wrestling Coaches Association, which Mr. Boyd won. The Media of the Year award is a different award from the Oscar Stauffer Sports-writer of the Year award; former Norton wrestler Gary Ulmer was named to the Hall of Fame; and Mr. Johnson also nominated Mr. Mann for the Administrator of

realize they will probably have to ask for a grant to help fund the project. Mrs. Bailey said they plan on applying for Hansen Funds, and might look into other grant avenues as well.

"The playground will be expensive," said Mrs. Bailey. "The cushioning under the equipment alone is as expensive as the equipment."

Mrs. Bailey said the group wants to get new a swing set, maybe a couple of slides, and a jungle gym to start with, and will hopefully add more equipment to the playground every year if they can, like tunnels and monkey bars.

"We've already received some dona-

Airport among several picked for funding

Thirty-seven projects that will improve safety and service enhancements at public use airports in the state, including Norton, have been selected for funding under the 2010 Kansas Airport Improvement Program.

Norton's airport project is a self-service fueling system. Rawlins County/Atwood will receive an upgrade airport weather observation system and pilot controller for airfield lighting. Over at Osborne, the only other project in Northwest Kansas, is an airport weather observation system (Continued on Page 5)

the Year by the association, which he also won. Mr. Mann said he is surprised and humbled, and thanked Mr. Johnson.

• Mr. Mann said utility and fuel costs continue to be a pleasant surprise — the district has paid about \$16,000 less than they did at this time last year for fuel and utilities. Mr. Mann said he attributes that to the milder winter this year and the lower fuel prices.

• The Kansas Legislature has set the Base State Aid Per Pupil amount at \$4400, only \$33 per student less than it was earlier this year. Mr. Mann said the budget will need to be republished.

• Based on the Kindergarten Round-Up held at Eisenhower Elementary last week, Eisenhower Elementary is expecting about 35 new kindergarten students to enroll next year.

• Mindy Fleckenstein, high school biology teacher, gave a curriculum report on the new biology labs, which teach students how to measure a person's cardiovascular health.

• Keith Hauser, the district's Technology Director, presented the 2009 to 2012 Technology Plan.

• Steve Zodrow, Mapes and Miller, presented the audit of the school district's budget. There were no budget violations (Continued on Page 5)

tions," said Mrs. Bailey. "We will probably put donation cans out at local businesses. All donations are tax-deductible."

"To get new playground equipment would be a tremendous improvement," said Prairie Dog State Park Ranger Toby Kuhn. "I know the patrons would really enjoy it. We've put in requests for new playground equipment every year, and every year, the request has been turned down."

To make a donation, contact Vickie Bailey at 785-678-2344 or Larry and Diane Enfield at 785-877-2328 or 785-877-5135.