



THE CITY PARK was busy Friday noon when 42 members of a tour group enjoyed lunch with the Weeden family. Jeff Weeden, who was driving the bus, wanted to acquaint the eastern Kansas visitors to his family and his home town. They were on their way home after a 15-day holiday visiting Teton, Yellowstone and Glasier national parks.
Herald staff photo by Betty Jean Winston

Sunflower Wind's lawyer withdraws contract proposal

By Karen Krien
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The council spent more time discussing the wind power contract but could not come to a decision. At that time, the lawyer representing the company told them that the company was withdrawing the proposed contract.

Kevin Berens, Sunflower Wind's lawyer, was present at the Tuesday, Sept. 18, St. Francis City Council meeting to answer any further questions.

The council expressed concern that wind energy and the proposed contract was so different from anything they had ever dealt with. They said they also had questions about the financing of the project and the contract. J.R. Landenberger, city superintendent, and Mike Day, city attorney, had studied the contract and proposal extensively but there were still unanswered questions.

"I'm all for economic development but I want some questions answered," said Rodney Bracelin, council member.

Mr. Berens said that the company was willing to make a significant investment in the community. The council was told that, if there is no wind generation in the county, then there is no contract. The city would know by June 2009.

The city has been with the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency, the company which provides energy to the city, for over 20 years. The council was concerned if they dropped the present energy agency and went with Sunflower Wind, then, if the wind energy didn't work out, the cost to re-contract with the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency would be much higher.

"This is our financial stability," said Carla Lampe, council member.

The city sells electricity to the residents rather than have all funding generated through property tax. This allows residents to share the burden of the costs to run the city.

History of the wind power proposal

A proposal to sell electricity through wind power was presented to the St. Francis City Council

on Aug. 7.

Dan Rasure, Goodland, a representative of Sunflower Wind, said the firm was seeking to build a 50-megawatt wind farm in Cheyenne County. It would be supplemented with a 4-megawatt hydrogen generation plant with a 5- to 25-megawatt generator powered by methane to be added.

Plans were to be started with the project by June 1 and to be in full operation by Jan. 1, 2009. If up and running prior to Jan. 1, Sunflower Wind would offer the city the electricity at the current market rate at that time or negotiate a rate.

Intentions are to sell most of the power locally and then open it up to others.

Two options were offered to the city. The first option, starting Jan. 1, 2009, would be at 5 cents per kilowatt hour with increases each year in January for the next 7 years to a 5.75 cent rate for 13 years with an additional two 5-years at 5.75 cents.

With the second option, the rate beginning Jan. 1, 2009, would be locked in at 5.75 for 20 years with an additional two 5-year options. A guarantee of 10 megawatts of production is made with two full-time employees. Production would be guaranteed at 99.9 percent with less than 8.5 of down time. A back up of hydrogen would still be available for 7 hours of production.

As an economic development, Mr. Rasure said the project would bring 50 to 75 employees during construction and then four to eight full-time employees after that. It would also be a research and development site requiring two hotel rooms a week. The turbines would bring \$100,000 in revenue to Cheyenne County landowners. Another incentive is 1 percent discount for power used by existing small businesses and others increasing their usage to 2 megawatts. Other sites under consideration in the area are Oberlin and Sharon Springs.

New support for recycling efforts

Cheyenne County, as part of the Northwest Kansas Regional Recycling organization with the central facility in Colby, will share in a \$1.68 million grant. Gov. Kathleen Sebelius said there will be 65 Kansas counties sharing the grant and the Regional Recycling organization will receive \$288,262.

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment has awarded 37 grants to establish electronic waste collection centers and assist cities and school districts in the purchase of playground cover and other products made from recycled waste tires. These grants will continue to stimulate the growing trend in Kansas to reuse and recycle wastes that would otherwise be destined for a landfill.

"We've made great progress in recycling things like paper, metals, glass and plastic, but electronics and tires aren't seen as recyclable, even though they are. These projects will help encourage people to recycle these items and keep them out of our landfills," said Gov. Sebelius.

The eight "E-Waste" collection center grants that range in size from \$47,088 to \$288,262 will be used to form regional programs to consoli-

date these items for later transfer to downstream private processing companies. These grants are funded from the \$1 per ton solid waste landfill fee paid to the state.

Most of the waste tire recycling grants will go toward partially funding the purchase of products that provide safe and attractive surfacing at playgrounds. The 29 waste tire grants range from \$805 to \$78,703. The waste tire grants are funded from the 25-cent-per tire excise tax paid on the purchase of new tires.

"These grants will address a growing waste management challenge," said Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. "Each year in Kansas, millions of computers and other electronic items become obsolete. The new collection centers will provide a convenient way for our citizens and small businesses to recycle these wastes rather than store them or dispose of them, saving valuable space in our landfills while keeping hazardous materials found in these items out of our environment."

An advisory committee appointed by the governor reviewed

all of the grant applications and made recommendation to the department, which administers the grant program.

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment Bureau of Waste Management records indicate that more than \$20 million has been awarded in these competitive grant programs to cities, counties, private businesses, and non-profit organizations over the past decade to improve waste management practices in Kansas. Most of these grants have been to develop community recycling and composting programs.

This grant program complements other department environmental outreach activities related to recycling, composting and the establishment of "Green Teams" in public and private organizations. Green Teams consist of employees or students within an organization who look for ways to reduce waste and energy consumption and to adopt environmentally sound purchasing practices.

More information about the grants awarded in this round may be found at www.kdheks.gov/waste/bwm_grants.html.

Behind the Scenes

Thanks, Neva (DeGood), for the Letter to the Editor last week expressing that Ye Olde Country has history and needs to be preserved. A former minister told us that Ye Olde Country Church is history in a building, and it is relevant to our spirits today.

The old church has an interesting story. Betty and Milton Lampe wrote an article for *Cheyenne County History* about the church's first life as First Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel Church.

According to the article, the congregation organized in 1887 and built a small frame church in 1889. It wasn't until 1914 that the church we know as "Ye Olde Country Church," was built, 12 miles north and 5 miles west of St. Francis. The article explains that it was a custom of the early church for men to sit on one side of the church, and women and children on the opposite side.

Since this was a German-speaking congregation, sermons were preached in that language.

There is more information about the church at the Museum of Cheyenne County.

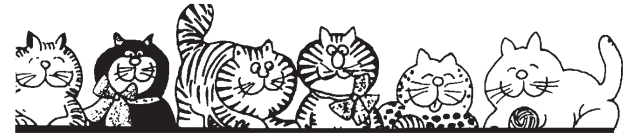
Question of the week: Whose baptism was the last one recorded at First Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel Church?

Did you notice the lighted windmill beside the museum last Christmas?

How about the model airplane displayed during the Stearman Fly-In?

Neil McCumber, another valued volunteer, put up the Christmas lights and brought in the model. He waters the museum's trees and grass and frequently checks in to see how he can help, always with a smile!

Stop by the museum to see how you can get involved!



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