

# Plans for hospital need to still fit in ten or fifteen years

By Karen Krien  
karen.k@nwkansas.com

Two questions were asked of the Cheyenne County Hospital Board when they met on Thursday: 1) "What do you think Cheyenne County's demographics will be in 10 years?" and 2) "Are there things we can or should do to improve this?"

The board and staff were to meet with Kent Carmichael, architect, the next day to see the facility improvement plan he had developed for remodeling and renovations to meet the needs of the hospital, staff and patients. Les Lacy, hospital administrator, said he wanted to make sure that any planning would still fit the community's needs in 10 to 15 years. When the last renovations had been made, there was still room lacking for the specialty doctors and their patients as well as an obstetrics room and the kitchen/dining room. The last facility improvement plan began in 1996.

Some of the key issues the facility improvement plan is to deal with are crowding of patients on surgery day, confidentiality, lack of space for outpatient services, the above mentioned specialty consult area, obstetrics, and kitchen/dining room improvements. In addition, diagnostic imaging is somewhat cramped and has been scattered through the facility in its' current configuration.

There was good board participation and a thorough discussion of the topic.

Traci Neitzel, board member, was concerned that there may not be the need for additional space in 10 years.

Kari Gilliland, board member, disagreed, saying that she thought that economic development and the hospital needed to continue to move forward. The hospital, she said, has grown in services. Cheyenne County is an area where grain and land prices are good and people are making it.

We need forward thinking instead of living in fear and woe, she said.

It appeared to be the consensus of the board to proceed with the facility improvement plans.

To improve the future, Mr. Lacy suggested that the hospital continue to build their staff by training locally. One key for the future of Cheyenne County, he said, is jobs.

At the present time, the hospi-

tal's coding is being outsourced. Mr. Lacy said that he would prefer this kind of work be done locally and suggested coding training could be offered to people in the county. An idea related to this aimed at economic development was that a central coding office might be developed to serve local needs as well as other hospitals and medical offices in the region.

Erika Zimbelman, clinic manager, said she thought assisted living was needed. The board discussed the need and that the Village had apartments and a nursing home but no assisted living. However, it was noted that there may be plans to add assisted living on the nursing home campus.

The conference room at the hospital is being used more and more but the staff agreed that it needed some remodeling. They will be applying for a grant. Mrs. Gilliland said a lot of people see the room and it needs to be seen in a professional light.

It was noted that 12 members of the hospital staff has been delivering meals on wheels for the St. Francis Senior Center.

#### Administrator's report

In the administrator's report, Mr. Lacy said the hospital has used \$150,000 in funded depreciation dollars so far in March. The money is used to cover the cash flow.

"We expect this to slow down shortly," he said. "We are making plans to repay some portion of this before cost report."

The replacement of the floor and counter surfaces in the kitchen has been completed.

A Primary Care Clinic grant for \$156,550 was applied for on March 15.

The county health department nurse is the health nurse in the Cheylin School. Mr. Lacy said he had talked to the superintendent of the St. Francis schools and is working to provide some benefit from the Primary Care Clinic Grant to both school districts in the county.

#### Great Plains report

Jackie John, area director for Great Plains Health Alliance, the company which leases the hospital, reported on the new Health Care Plan, noting that, at this time, there are still a lot of unknowns. As she knows more, Jerry Toler, board member, asked that either she or Mr. Lacy give updates.

She then turned to the opening

Hospital statistics for February	
Total Patient days:	156
This would be an average of:	5.5 patients per day.
Lab tests:	1,892
Outpatient specialty clinic visits:	108
Emergency room visits:	35
Outpatient services:	1,930

of the hospital in Kiowa County. The hospital was destroyed when a tornado wiped out almost everything in Greensburg. She told about how they had been able to survive and care for people, first in huge tents, then modular units, and, finally, on March 12, they had an open house in the new facility.

The hospital has 15 patient beds, emergency services, full diagnostic services, rural health clinic, and area for specialty physicians, dental suite as well as a daycare center for children of staff members. It cost \$25 million and employs approximately 90 staff members.

#### In other business

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• Teri Morris, who will be taking classes at Colby Community College, asked the board to support her in applying to the Kansas Nursing Scholarship Loan Program to help pay for her education. She is currently working at the hospital and is an emergency medical technician. In 5 years, she said she plans to still be working at the hospital.

• Ryan Murray, radiology manager, and Darrel Reed, lab manager/ultrasound, told about what is happening in their departments.

#### Next meeting

The next meeting of the hospital board is planned to start at 3 p.m. on Thursday, April 22, in the basement of the clinic in St. Francis.



# First meeting of two entities opens door for discussions

By Peggy Horinek  
phorinek@nwkansas.com

The first of the informal exchanges between two entities, Cheyenne County Commissioners and the St. Francis City Council was held prior to the city council meeting on March 22. The next joint meeting will be the commissioner's meeting to be held May 28 at 7:45 a.m. The meetings will be held every other month and alternated between the commissioners and city council.

Scott Schultz, mayor, thanked the commissioners for the work that was done at Keller Pond. He said that it looks great and the fishing tournament was very successful with a large turnout of people. The River Walk is in good shape and they discussed the possibility of a bridge at Keller Pond.

The Emergency Building was discussed and they were informed that the duct work is done and the air conditioning had been hooked up in the meeting room.

They discussed how they might improve things at the landfill. They plan on talking to the grocery stores and other businesses to see if they would start recycling their cardboard and papers as these are some of the big items filling up the landfill.

At the end of the 30 minute meeting, it was agreed that these meetings would be useful and the door for discussion between them was now open.

#### Council meeting

City Superintendent J.R. Landenberger told the council that the trees lining Main Street are in need of attention and the work should be started right away. Some could cause damage to the sidewalks and others need to be replaced. The trees on the south side of the street are larger than the ones on the north side. Some trees need to be replaced and that needs to be addressed right away.

#### Web page

The new St. Francis web page is now up and running. Several people have said that they still get the old one. Eagle Communications needs to be informed that they need to shut down the old page. It seems that the people who are on that seem to be having trouble. To look at the new web page go to <http://www.stfranciskansas.com>.

#### Playground

It's spring! The playground behind the courthouse has been a busy place as they have started working getting the ground ready for the new playground equipment. The equipment is here and waiting to be set in

the ground. It is hoped to have it completed for the car show which will be held May 8.

#### Swimming pool

It was reported by Bruce Swihart, city councilman, that a new manager has been hired for the swimming pool for the summer. Crissy Cooks will be the pool manager and will be paid \$8.10 per hour. Two of the returning guards will be paid \$7.60 and \$7.35 per hour. Five other returning lifeguards will be paid \$7.25 while new hired lifeguards will start at \$6.75. These wages were approved by the council.

#### Employee recognition

Two employees were being recognized for their long term of employment. John Larson for 30 years on April 4 and Mike Meyer for 15 years on June 16.

The council wanting to be consistent on recognizing the city employees voted to honor them after 20 years of employment and then every 5 years after that.

#### Building permits

Building permits were approved for Noble Energy to erect a 40-foot communications tower and Scott Houtman for a fence.

The next meeting of the council will be on April 12 at 7:30.

# Program stretches the food budget

The deadline for the Prairie Land food program for April is Monday, April 12. Pick up will be between 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus, 7th and Caldwell, Goodland, on Saturday, April 24.

For more information concerning the program, call Crissy Cooks at the Empire Motel in St. Francis, 785-332-2231 or Linda Hagen, 1-800-298-1989, e-mail [linda@prairielandfood.com](mailto:linda@prairielandfood.com). Other contact information can be obtained by calling Cathy Eddleman (785) 821-4364 or

Sandy Cotten (785) 899-4278.

One way to help make the food budget stretch is with the Prairie Land Food Program. The only qualification is helping others, something most people do every day.

Prairie Land Food is for everyone. There are no income guidelines.

Included in the Prairie Pak for April are F/C Oven Roasted Chicken Thighs, breaded pollock fillets, Maple River Breakfast Sausage, lean deli sliced ham, Asian style skillet meals,

lean ground beef, potatoes, carrots, broccoli, apples, tangelos, and kwai. Additional seasonal items will be announced later. Plus two hours of volunteer service

Additional packages (must purchase Prairie Pak first) include meat only package; or fruit and veggie pak.

April specials include Supper Time Entrees, Stuffed Chicken Breast, The Little Combo and Gourmet Red Velvet Cupcakes. Plus one hour of volunteer service.

## New Physician Helps Keep Patients Closer to Home



Help has arrived for those patients in Western Kansas suffering from kidney disorders. This summer Hays Medical Center hired its first in-house nephrologist, Johanna "Joni" McCullagh, M.D. The addition of Dr. McCullagh, medical director of the Nephrology Center program, means advanced kidney care is now available for patients closer to home.

Dr. McCullagh and the Nephrology Center staff provide a variety of services, including caring for patients with:

- Kidney failure
- Hypertension and hypertensive kidney disease
- Diabetes and diabetic nephropathy
- Inflammation, scarring or hardening in the kidney
- Cystic kidney disease (polycystic)
- Inflammation of blood vessels in the kidneys
- Kidney stones

- Management of dialysis patients, transplant patients and those with end stage renal disease

One of the biggest benefits of this addition to Hays Medical Center is that the hospital now has greater capacity to care for patients in need of regular dialysis. While the hospital previously treated dialysis patients, they can now treat more patients – and patients who need a higher level of care – eliminating the burden and stress of travel for additional families in the area.

Dr. McCullagh, a Wichita native, grew up in Kansas City and completed her education

at the University of Kansas School of Medicine. She completed both her residency in Internal Medicine and her fellowship in Nephrology and Hypertension at the University of Kansas Medical Center. Dr. McCullagh is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and holds memberships with the American Society of Nephrology, American College of Physicians and the American Medical Association.

Wanting to stay within driving distance of family and friends, Dr. McCullagh and her family were excited to make the move to Hays.

## CHEYENNE COUNTY HOSPITAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

### Environmental Services

Part-time housekeeping and linen services assistant needed to perform a variety of general cleaning tasks to maintain patient rooms, offices, and hallways.

Monday through Friday from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m.; weekend rotation will be required.

Other responsibilities include operating mechanical floor cleaners, setting up chairs and tables for special events, distributing emergency supplies as needed.

Please pickup an application at the front office or contact:

Human Resources, (785)332-2104 Ext. 116  
210 West First, St. Francis, KS 67756

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### St. Francis Outreach Clinic Schedule

Cardiology – Dr. Curtis  
Fourth Thursday  
(785) 625-4699

Mobile Mammography  
Every Fourth Tuesday  
(785) 332-2104

Call the number listed for specific clinic locations.