

Physical therapy project moving as scheduled

The physical therapy project at the hospital is moving along and plans will be in place when the last of the tax credit commitment has come in. At the Oct. 17 Cheyenne County Hospital Board meeting, the tax credit figure was at \$150,500 and another \$4,000 had come in that day. The total cost of the physical therapy and ambulance entrance projects which will be paid for with state income tax credits is \$180,000.

Les Lacy, hospital administrator, said the architect had the latest drawings which were reviewed with the involved departments. The final drawings would be ready by the end of October.

The architect's contract was presented to the board and the rate, 10 percent of the total project cost, was pretty much the same as earlier contracts for work done.

He noted that the reimbursable expense will be brought in at a direct cost with no mark-up cost on it. Rueben Schultz, board president, asked about the bidding process and noted that contractors will have a hard time bidding because of the hurricane disasters and the affect they have made on costs. Contractors will not know what things will cost six months from now and he thought contractors may bid high because of these circumstances.

Mr. Schultz suggested that it would be better to bid the two projects separately because the physical therapy project will begin before the end of the year and, because of the cold weather, the ambulance entrance will have to wait until spring for most of the work. He said he will check with Pete Jensen of St. Francis Sand and Redi-Mix on the price of concrete. The administrator said he will visit with the architect to see what his thoughts were in regards to these issues.

The board agreed to sign the architect's contract.

Lab losses

Darrell Reed, lab and X-ray manager, and the administrator had reviewed the out-patient lab issues which included mostly the draws done at the clinics and the nursing home. There was a \$54,545 loss last year because Medicare did not pay much on these draws.

The new lab procedure will be to draw blood at the nursing home, charge a fee for the draw and let the nursing home send in the sample. At the Bird City Clinic, blood drawn there will be sent in from Bird City and not brought back to the lab in the hospital.

Up to 75 percent of the loss could be regained by changing these procedures. As an example, the cost for Medicare patients on the out-patient fee schedule for a CBC costs \$33 but Medicare only pays \$3 to the hospital. Administrator Lacy said he would like to see patients write letters to their congressman in regard to this issue. In the county, it is a service to be able to do the blood draws at the clinics.

The providers are aware of the situation and will try to encourage patients to come to the hospital for blood draws.

Doctor visits

Dr. Becky Allard recently visited the county and Administrator Lacy felt it was a "great visit." While in St. Francis, Dr. Allard and her husband Kent visited with Dr. Miller; relator Sondra Bracelin showed them houses and land in the community and the administrator gave them the tour of the hospital and countryside.

They both like to hunt and were impressed when they saw deer and turkey on their country drive. The clinic staff had lunch with them and the providers ate supper with them. Administrator Lacy had given Dr. Allard a contract which was reviewed and questions were asked. He said they appeared very interested in coming to Cheyenne County. Dr. Allard will be covering the hospital over the New Year's holiday.

In the Great Plains Health Alliance report, Jackie John, area director, had Eldon Schumacher write the report on the Medicare Advantage Program. The first contract that Great Plains has looked at is Humana's ????????

Currently, Great Plains is advising the hospitals to not sign anything yet. There are still several issues which need to be addressed. One is with the co-insurance and how it is handled. So far, Humana is not disclosing that information. This program also deals with pharmacists and the drugs.

Mrs. John said one pharmacist is explaining prescription cards to people and allowing the benefit to come back to the pharmacy, which is a Community Pharmacy Card. The new Medicare prescription drug coverage is available to everyone with Medicare beginning Jan. 1. The mail order drugs hurts businesses in small towns plus the people don't have a pharmacist to tell them about the drug.

Mr. Schultz asked that the hospital staff really look at these options and have a meeting to educate the community. He said the information he has received is very confusing. Administrator Lacy said he would talk with Kody Krien, pharmacist, and visit about setting up a meeting.

Electronic medical records

The electronic medical records (EMR) system for the clinic will be purchased. This was budgeted for \$40,000 and should cover the primary software cost of the project. There will be some minor equipment hardware cost for the project as well. The hospital's lab system will be Siemens and will be a lease with Midwest Health Systems and handled as an operational expense.

Hospital statistics

The hospital statistics showed the observation days were higher than the administrator would like to see. The lab numbers are good and the changes with the draw situation shouldn't affect the numbers too much. Ultrasounds are still holding their own. In the specialty clinics, Dr. Perry, pulmonologist, will no longer be coming. He has only been here four times this year. The administrator said another one will be looked into along with some other specialty options.

Great Plains report

Mrs. John went through the

Great Plains Health Alliance financials. She said the accounts receivable is down significantly and that is very good. She said this is the results of several different areas doing a good job. The providers finishing their charts, medical records, charges and billing, it is an entire process where everyone has to do their part for it all to work well.

Physical therapy equipment

To purchase a new Nu-Step, equipment for the physical therapy department, it will cost \$3,711, which is more than reported at the last meeting. Shara Johnson, therapist, thought that non-patients using the Nu-Step would be willing to pay \$10 a month to continue to use it. She said a lot of these were patients and are continuing their therapy. The small fee would help cover the cost that is lost in the cost report by having it in the physical therapy department.

The question was asked if two were needed. Administrator Lacy said the equipment needs to be looked at as a "wellness" item. Joy Anderegg said the public response is important to the community, too. The board agreed that there should be two Nu-Steps in the physical therapy department.

Golf tourney money spent

A surgical electrocautery unit for surgery will be purchased with the money raised from the 2005 golf tournament. This will interface with the equipment currently in place. The cost is \$5,695 and any excess over golf proceeds will come out of funded depreciation because it is a replacement.

In other business

In other business:

- There continues to be warranty issues with the previous work done at the hospital. A letter has been sent acknowledging the problems and what they propose to do about them but Les recommends continuing to hold the \$5,000.

- Brenda Hays, a student, had talked to the administrator and said that she will be finishing her schooling faster than planned. Her original contract with the hospital was \$19,000 for six years and she would like to change that to three years. The board agreed to the change.

Executive session

Joy Anderegg, board member, moved to go into executive session for 45 minutes for personnel issues. They came out of the session at 5:30 p.m. with no decisions being made.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 22, in the basement meeting room at the clinic in St. Francis.

Editor's note: The above article was taken from the unapproved minutes of the Oct. 17 Cheyenne County Hospital Board meeting.



DUSTIN DUNN'S (#42) standout play earned him a game ball at Fort Hays State.

Photo courtesy of Bruce Feikert

Football player is college standout

Dustin Dunn, Fort Hays State University Tiger football player, and former St. Francis Indian, was awarded the game ball following the Fort Hays/University of Nebraska-Kearney football game on Saturday.

Dunn, a linebacker, intercepted a UNK Lopers pass and ran in back for 40-yard giving the Tigers good field position.

In an article in *The Hays Daily News* on Sunday, Oct. 30, sports writer Randy Gonzales said "Dunn, who has been playing with a stress fracture in his foot in recent weeks, said he was going to play this week,

no matter what."

Fort Hays Coach Kevin Verdugo had taped Dunn's foot and he had been practicing with the squad.

The *Tiger Report Card* is quoted as saying Dunn received the game ball because he "played tough again with a stress fracture in his foot, and also made an interception."

This is the third year in a row that Dunn has intercepted a pass during a Fort Hays/UNK game.

Unfortunately Fort Hays fell to UNK by a final score of 54-20.

Dunn was named captain of the Tiger squad for the 2005 season.

Theater coming to Colby

ArtsPower National Touring Theatre will present "The Little Engine That Could Earn Her Whistle" at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 6, at the Colby High School auditorium, sponsored by Western Plains Arts Association.

Admission will be by season ticket or at the door.

In this new musical version of the beloved children's classic, the Little Blue Engine, against all odds, finds a way to conquer her fears and demonstrate the extraordinary strength of "I think I Can!" The production features a Broadway-style score and colorful, inventive sets and costumes. One of the goals of ArtsPower is to instill a genuine love of theatre in those who attend, especially in the children.

This show is presented in part by Kansas Arts Commission, a state agency and National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

— St. Francis News —

Mr. and Mrs. Gaylen Schauer of Bossier City, La., were house guests of Violet Cranmer from Friday until Saturday noon. They also visited his mother, Viola Jones at the Good Samaritan Village and his uncle, Alvin Holzwarth at the hospital.

Betty Jean Winston spent Thursday in Hays. She was joined for lunch and the afternoon by Dan Winston of Ellsworth.



This is the Place

Cheyenne County Development Corporation
Carol Redding, Coordinator
(785) 332-3508

The following is the Mission Statement from the Cheyenne County Strategic, approved by the County Commissioners April, 2004, and approved by the State of Kansas.

"The mission for Cheyenne County shall be to create and market a strategic plan for the restora-

tion of population and growth and revitalization of the population and economic climate of Cheyenne County, Kansas. Our strategic plan will closely align with that of Northwest Kansas Community Economic Development Strategy by fostering innovation and cooperation; creating a healthy economic environment; investing strategically in our people; communities, and business; educating people for high skills jobs."

The Strategic Plan has 10 objec-

tives, all of which need countywide involvement to put into action. The leadership group and CCDC had identified priorities based on the Strategic Plan and personal observation. All of these priorities will be committees of county residents who will "make things happen." YOU can be part of the action, and be able to proudly say, "WOW! We really got things rolling!" Stop by the Cheyenne County Development Corporation office, or call for more information.

PAST REFLECTIONS



Around 1900
John Nelson Farm

Photo courtesy
of Tobe Zweygardt

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