

# Prairie dog management is a big problem

By Karen Krien

Dave Flemming, county road and bridge supervisor, and Dan Schlittenhardt, noxious weed/prairie dog manager, reported that the prairie dog budget was not in good condition.

Mr. Schlittenhardt, at the Friday meeting, told the Cheyenne County Commissioners that there was \$9,200 in the budget and \$9,100 had already been spent. There was \$5,000 outstanding bills but there were still eight months of the year left and prairie dog errata will begin again in the fall.

The commissioners discussed that in some counties, townships provide the cost-share for getting rid of the prairie dogs. However, while some Cheyenne County townships have money, others have none. They talked about doing away with cost sharing but they felt that cost sharing encouraged landowners to get rid of prairie dogs. They also noted that it was not fair to neighboring landowners if prairie dogs were moving in on their land.

The commissioners agreed that something different was going to need to be done in the way of getting rid of prairie dogs. Possibly, Mr. Schlittenhardt could charge the landowner for the total amount of bait used and the landowner would collect from the township.

The matter was tabled with no decision being made.

### Sheriff's report

Sheriff Troy Gardner told the commissioners that the new pickup for the county was here and he traded off the Lumina vehicle. He said that this will leave one vehicle for part time use in both St. Francis and Bird City. The new pickup will need a light bar for the top. Earlier he had budgeted \$2,000 for it but had forgotten that they had a grant to purchase two bullet-proof vests. The grant pays for one-half of the cost and the county has to pay for the other one-half. When all the figures are in, the sheriff's budget will be over \$600.

The money paid back from the vest grant will go into the General Fund and the sheriff wondered if it could be paid back to the sheriff's budget. That was not an option but the commissioners would keep in mind that this money had been paid back and a budget credit can be applied.

They turned to the light bar and after talking about the fact that a better light bar could be moved to the next new pickup and would have a five-year warranty. The commissioners agreed to have the sheriff get the light bar that he thought would work the best.

Sheriff Gardner asked for an executive session to discuss personnel. When coming back into session, he asked the commissioners

to approve hiring Craig Van Allen to fill Bob Juelson's position as deputy. They approved the proposal.

### Business incentives discussed

Carol Redding, Cheyenne County Development Coordinator, presented a draft of incentive plans for bringing in new businesses and expanding existing businesses. There was editing for revising the list. A committee will check over the plans and the commissioners will look at them again at the next meeting.

### In other business

In other business: Deb Lindsten, deputy clerk, said she disappointed in the election equipment meeting she had attended as there was no-hands on training. There are two more trainings coming up and, if the commissioners approve, she will go to one meeting and the clerk, Terry Miller, will go to the other.

• Mr. Schlittenhardt was given permission to go to the West District Weed meeting on April 19.

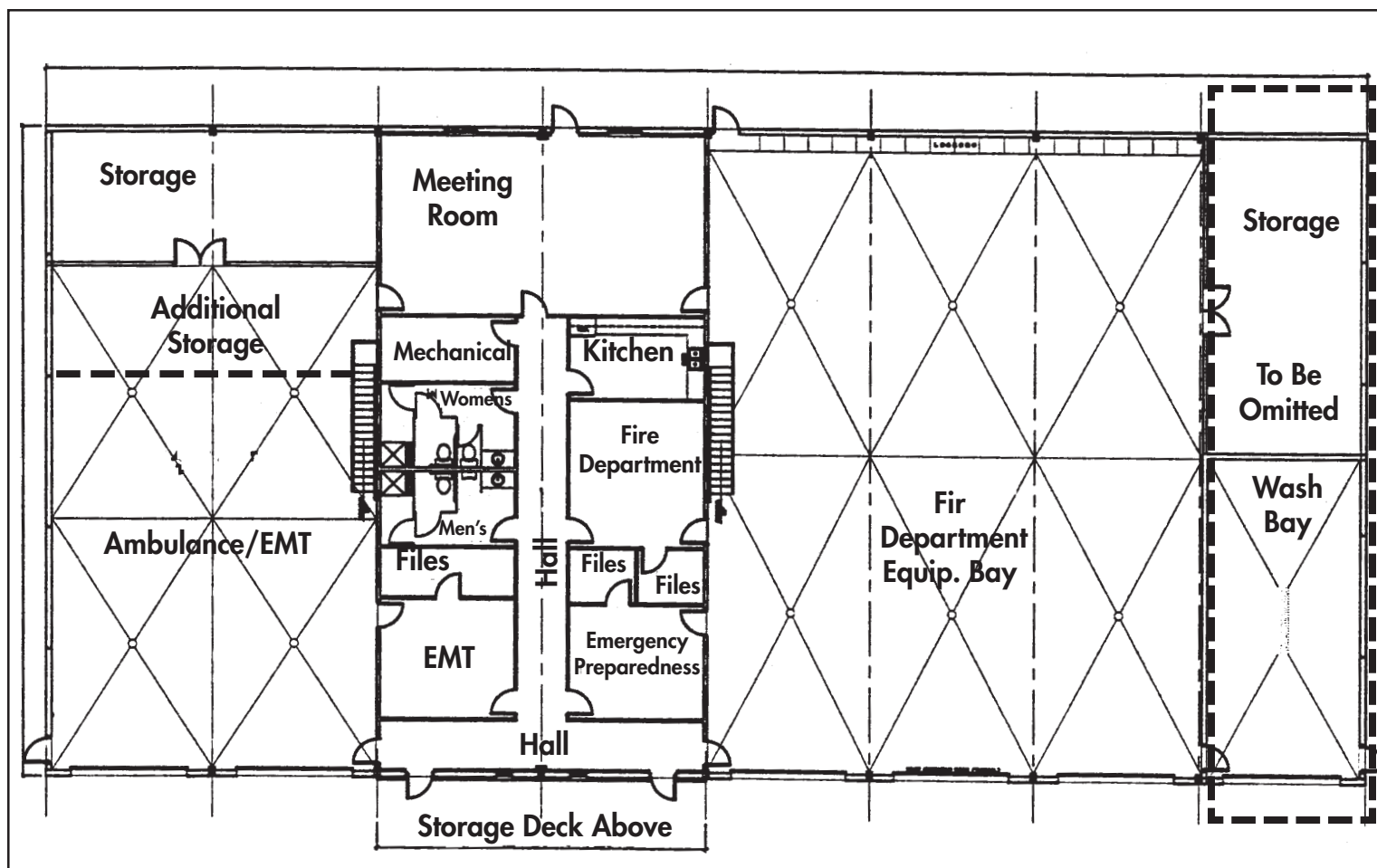
• Supervisor Flemming gave his annual report. He also had highway permits for Rosewood Resources to bore under the road as well as one area where the owner has not been located so the company wanted to use the county's right-of-way to lay a line. He and the commissioners discussed Bird City City Council purchasing the county's dump truck and the county purchasing a tandem-axle state truck with a plow blade. No decision was made.

• Four people were appointed to the Sunflower Extension District Board. They are Perry Keller, Randy Rueb, Penny Gienger and Cindy Burr. (See related article.)

• Gary Rogers, emergency manager, told the commissioners that it was not too late to appoint a representative from Cheyenne County to serve on the Northwest Kansas Regional Homeland Security Council. Individuals will be contacted to serve. (See related article.)

### Next meeting

The next meeting of the commissioners has been set for 8 a.m. on Friday, April 28, in the commissioners' room in the courthouse.



## Council meets with the grant officials

By Karen Krien

The St. Francis City Council met with Kan Step grant officials on Wednesday. This was one of the final steps before the process of building a new emergency storage building starts.

The building will be constructed on U.S. 36 where the old port of entry was located. It was still undecided as to whether the building would face the north or west. That will be decided by the city council.

Among those present were firemen, city council members and the mayor

Dan Hall, architect, BG Consultants, Manhattan, reported that, since the bid of \$390,390 had come in at the start of the grant process, prices have gone up and it was necessary to cut some of the costs. He suggested that the building be downsized the wash bay and storage be cut.

Dale Weeks, fireman and city council member who has been heading the project, suggested, since there would only be two ambulances stored in the building and on the plans, there are four ambulance bays, could part of the area planned for the two extra ambulance bays be used for storage. This seemed to be a workable plan.

There was much discussion as those present checked over the blueprint before it went back to the engineer for the final drawing.

Linda Hunsicker with the Small Cities Community Development Building Grant, talked about how to log volunteer hours. Shane Holthaus, Kan Step tech assistant, will be the inspector and see about



EMERGENCY BUILDING — Dan Hall, architect, Dale Weeks, JR Landenberger and Gary Rogers look over the blue prints for the new emergency building.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

supplying items that can't be obtained locally.

The environmental studies should be done by May 5 and then the site preparation can begin. The architect has 45 days to send out bid information and then contractors will have 30 days to return their

bids. Mr. Weeks said the bids will be opened in August and accepted.

Construction should begin shortly after the bids are in. The "window" completion date has been set for March 15, 2008. However, Mr. Weeks said that the building is expected to be done well be-

fore then. There are stiff penalties if it is not done.

Mr. Weeks said that the grant for the emergency building was one of the last of the bigger grants. In 2006, the grants were dropped to a lesser amount because there is less money available.

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