



City looks to stimulus to pave Range

By Andy Heintz

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The Colby City Council agreed Tuesday to ask the state for \$550,000 in federal stimulus money to pay for a "mill and overlay" repaving job on Range Avenue from College Drive to Fourth Street.

The city estimates the resurfacing will cost \$500,000 and inspection costs will be \$50,000. The money would come from what the state got for transportation from the stimulus bill, known formally as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. A total of \$348 million went to the Kansas Department of Transportation,

and out of that amount, \$2 million was targeted for northwest Kansas, said City Manager Carolyn Armstrong. The rules for the act say that if a project is selected for stimulus money, but cannot meet the requirements, the city will lose the grant.

The state already plans to repave Range from I-70 to College under the connecting link (K-Link) program.

Armstrong said that each project would take about 30 days. The K-Link project will cost the city \$276,000 and state will pay \$400,000, she said. The city is still accepting bids for that job, she said.

The city's stimulus grant request has to be turned in by Friday, March 13, Arm-

strong said. She said she hopes to get a response from the state by April 1.

In other business, the council:

- Heard Michael Lewallen dispute the city's accusation that his house, at 505 S. Lincoln Ave., is an unfit structure reported at the last meeting. The city gave Lewallen 60 days to get an evaluation from an architect or engineer stating that the structure is fit to live in, said Armstrong. The city will re-evaluate the situation after it gets a report, she said.

- "There are issues with the foundations," Armstrong said later. "One side of the foundation is bowing to the north basement wall and a portion of the south

basement wall is missing."

- Approved a bid from Tubbs and Sons Ford for \$21,530 to trade a 1992 Chevrolet C-1500 for a 2009 Ford HD F250. Councilman Tim Hutfles voted against the purchase because he didn't think the city should buy a truck in this poor economy, said Armstrong.

- Agreed to have Vertitron Midwest Inc., based in Colorado, update the controls on the Community Building elevator for \$37,300. Armstrong said the work should be done in six to seven weeks.

- Approved advertising materials from the old wastewater treatment plant in the Kansas Municipal Utilities Dispatch and

the Kansas Government Journal. The equipment the city is selling includes three blowers, two which were in use and one for parts only; a 75-horsepower Allis rebuilt motor with no hours, a grit screw press and chamber equipment and a Vulcan bar screen. To view the equipment, contact Public Works Director Chris Bieker at (785) 460-4420.

Bieker said he is trying to locate someone to give the city a bid on moving a tan metal building near the Meadow Lakes Golf Course to the public works complex near the fairgrounds, where it can be used by the electric department to store transformers, wire and supplies.



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Dan Proctor (left), Ed Collins (center) and Dave Axland talked Monday about how they were going to lay out the 18-hole golf course proposed for east of town near the city's new wastewater treatment plant.

Golf course planners excited about new layout east of town

By Andy Heintz

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When Ed Collins drove Dan Proctor and Dave Axland to a tract east of town near the city's new wastewater treatment plant Monday, the two golf course designers figured it would be another piece of flat corn ground.

They soon found out how wrong they were.

"Immediately we could say we have a piece of property that's feasible for a golf course," Proctor said.

"The land has severe ground with little canyons, Prairie Dog Creek and the Kansas prairie element," said Axland. "We don't have to create features that aren't natural. The land doesn't have to be altered."

Proctor said every hole on a golf course is unique.

"Each hole is its own separate entity," he said. "It has its own character."

Water rights have played a pivotal role in making it possible for Collins and company

to build a golf course on the land. Collins said his partner, Lonnie Wilson, owns the land.

The Colby City Council signed a memorandum of understanding with Collins on Oct. 2, 2007, to provide him with treated water from the plant for irrigating and maintaining a golf course.

The memorandum says the agreement may be terminated if Collins had not made satisfactory progress on developing and building a golf course within 18 months of the date of the agreement.

The city agreed to give Collins a three-month extension at a meeting Feb. 17. Collins asked for six months, but the council was only willing to give him three.

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said Collins' agreement was originally set to expire on March 2. It will now expire on June 2. Collins said if he couldn't gain access to water, the golf course wouldn't be built.

The designers want to start construction this summer and hope to begin planting turf next year, said Axland. They hope the course will be open to the public in 2011.

The pair said local businesses and contractors will be involved with building the course.

"We want to use as many local people as we can," said Proctor. "It's our desire to do this in a cost-effective manner."

The two were busily placing wooden stakes in the ground Monday to give themselves a rough idea of where holes and tees will be.

"We're in phase 1 of 10 phases that are done to make the most of a piece of land," said Axland.

Collins said once hole routing is finished, people could come out and walk the course. He declined giving an estimate of when that will be.

Collins said he believes his course will help economic development in Colby. It is designed to serve not only area golfers, but people from nearby cities who would come in to play a challenging course.

"This golf course will put the city on the map," he said.

County hopes to form unit for animal aid

By Vera Sloan

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After tornadoes in Greensburg and Chapman, homeless pets and other animals displaced by the disaster wandered the street and hung out around the debris.

Officials of the Kansas System for Early Registration of Volunteers are urging counties to recruit volunteers to help round up and care for pets and even farm animals and match them with their owners, Susan McMahan, Thomas County emergency management director, told four people at an organization meeting Feb. 23 at Ferguson Hall on the Colby Community College campus.

She said sometimes people in Colby seem to feel safe because Indian folklore held that the area is protected from a tornado. These assumptions were debunked last year, she said, when two tornadoes raked the area. Both were going the "wrong" direction, she said, not coming out of the southwest as tradition dictates.

She said the state wants volunteers who are willing to step up here and in other small towns that do not have animal shelters. Some counties in Kansas have already established programs using guidelines set by Kansas State University Extension.

The state has set up criteria for those who want to volunteer, she said. They must be organized and take on-line classes, pass a test and get approval to become certified. It can all be done on line, she said.

To set up an approved Animal Response Team, she said, they need at least 10 people willing to volunteer. The team must be formally organized and have its own bylaws. A governing board of 28 people should include 16 people who will be able to handle displaced animals, she said.

McMahan said the team should have a veterinarian, someone from the state Department of Wildlife and Parks, the fire department, law enforcement and emergency medical services, and plenty of volunteers. 4-H members who are 16 or older can volunteer, McMahan said, and there will always be things younger 4-H'ers can do.

The main problem facing a local organization is money, she said. The state does not have a budget to help. The cost to get set up would be around \$2,200, she said.

The team would need deployable corrals and trailers, which can often be borrowed, but need to be available in an emergency.

The main thing is to acknowledge that disasters can happen,

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Churches to mark world prayer event

A World Day of Prayer service for Colby will be from noon to 1 p.m. Friday at the Colby United Methodist Church. A light lunch of sandwiches, vegetables and cookies will be provided.

World Day of Prayer services for Brewster churches will be a fellowship gathering at 9:30 a.m. and worship service at 10 a.m. at the Brewster United Methodist Church, 202 Nebraska. It will be hosted by the Pleasant Home Church.

World Day of Prayer is celebrated each year on the first Friday of March. The observance begins at daybreak in the South Pacific and continues around the world. This year's service was written by the women of Papua, New Guinea, from Roman Catholic, Evangelical Lutheran, United, Baptist and Pentecostal churches and the Salvation Army. They invite women to join them in celebrating their unity in Christ, where diverse communities may be one.

Briefly

Two 'Pickin' bands here Friday

The bluegrass bands that headlined the Pickin' on the Plains Festival last year will be back in Colby on Friday at the Frahm Theater at Colby Community College. Marshall Allen Bailey and the Silver Bullets will perform at 7 p.m. and Gold Wing Express at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at Plum Creek downtown, Farmers and Merchants Bank at Dillons and the Colby Convention and Visitor's Bureau at \$15 for adults and \$10 for youths. For information, call (800) 611-8835 or 460-7643.

Support group available

Living a full life with disabilities is the topic of a support-group meeting from 1:30-3 p.m. Friday and next Friday at the Colby United Methodist Church high school classroom. For information, call Doug Finley at 460-2306 or Connie Menges at 460-3112.

Pets available for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has a yellow female lab, about 2 years old, available for adoption on Monday. Lost or strayed animals are often brought to the clinic. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. For questions, call 460-8621.

Food sign up to be next week

Prairie Land Food sign up will be Monday to Friday, March 9 to 13, at the State Farm Insurance office, 905 E. Fourth. A food package is available at a reduced rate in return for volunteer hours. Specials are available each month. Delivery will be Saturday, March 28, at the Sacred Heart School Gym, 1150 W. Sixth St. For information, call 460-3579.

Seniors plan potluck Tuesday

The group More Fun Together plans a potluck din-

ner for people 50 or older who are alone, widowed, divorced, separated or who have partners in nursing homes at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the First Presbyterian Church. Bring a dish to share. Table service and beverage will be provided. The building is handicapped accessible with an elevator by the east doors. For information, call the church at 462-6342.

Justice scholarships available

The Thomas County Community Foundation is looking for applications for criminal justice scholarships to attend Colby Community College. For an application, contact the foundation office at 350 S. Range, Suite 14, in Colby. These must be post-marked by Tuesday. Call Melinda Olson at 460-9152 for information.

Stop at Fotogirl After Hours

The Colby-Thomas County Chamber of Com-

merce Business After Five will be at Fotogirl Photography, 230 E. Fourth, at 5 p.m. Wednesday. Any business or organization interested in hosting a Business After Five should call the Chamber office at 460-7643.

Free tax help at library

Free tax help will be available for with low- and middle-income taxpayers, with special attention to those 60 and older, from 1 to 4 p.m. on Thursdays through April at the Pioneer Memorial Library. The program is sponsored by the American Association of Retired Persons. Call 460-2645 for information.

