

Weather

County talks about plan issues

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resumes paying all the taxes on their property's improvements, which must first go through a four-step approval process.

"The owner must continue to pay their taxes," stressed Christy Rocca, director of the Thomas County Economic Development Alliance, during the public hearing in May, "and, if all goes well, the rebate is mailed back to them. However, any delinquent tax payments can result in the property owner being disqualified from the program."

One problem is time. Right now, the plan requires people to complete their construction projects by the second January following their approval date, Rocca said Monday.

For example, she said, if a project receives conditional approval - the first of four approvals needed - in October 2012, it must be completed by January 2014. However, if the person waits three months and receives approval in January 2013, construction doesn't have to be finished until January 2015.

The current timeline presents a problem, she said, especially for large-scale construction projects that can take years to complete - but most notably because of the winter months when cold weather limits outdoor work. This is a concern for one potential participant, said Rowilson.

"We used January as a deadline because this is when the appraiser's office normally does valuation assessments on property throughout the county," she said. "We didn't reinvent the wheel for our plan; we modeled our plan after others. Mostly, we looked at Rooks and Sheridan counties, and they use January as a deadline date."

Although he was not present at the meeting, Rowilson said attorney John Gatz suggested leaving the plan as is but to give people an opportunity to make an appeal to commissioners if their project is denied because of timing issues.

Commissioner Paul Steele said he thinks the plan needs to be amended. The group agreed, against the attorney's opinion, to prepare an amendment giving people 24 months to complete their construction projects from the conditional date of approval on the application.

They also agreed that people will not get tax relief on their projects until construction is done.

"I'm also not certain about how to determine rebates," added Rowilson, "since property valuations fluctuate with depreciation, inflation or other factors. At the beginning of the 10-year period, say construction is valued at \$100,000. What if there is a fire ... or another reason that causes a depreciation in value? Do you want us to issue the rebate based on a value of \$100,000, or on

the new valuation?"

"I think each year stands on its own," said Steele.

"I agree," said Rocca. "To me, the tax rebates are determined annually and they may increase or decrease based off of the assessed valuation increasing or decreasing."

After that interpretation was agreed upon, the group also discussed how to issue rebates if the owner pays only part of the property taxes.

"The plan clearly states that any delinquent payments disqualify the project from the rebate program," Rowilson said, "but partial payments are not considered delinquent."

They agreed that partial payments on property taxes will receive similarly partial rebates in return, rather than waiting for the taxes to be paid in full before issuing the entire rebate.

Also, since dirt work doesn't affect the property's value, said Rowilson, it was decided that people should be allowed to begin this preliminary step of construction prior to conditional approval. Sheridan County allows this, she said.

Rocca was given approval to draw up an addendum, based on the discussions, to clarify wording in the plan. It will be submitted for approval by Gatz before it is presented to commissioners for a decision at the last meeting of the month.

House member talks Congress in Colby

From "HOUSE," Page 1

American businesses are hampered by higher regulations and taxes.

Several years ago, he said, Phillips Lighting began using 21 employees in Salina instead of 100 workers in Indonesia, even though the Kansas employees made four or five times as much money.

To make up for lost taxes on businesses in this country, he said, foreign imports might have to be taxed, adding to the price for consumers.

Many of the questions he got from the crowd concerned regulations and laws being passed under the current administration. Colby resident Joan Albers asked him about so-called "czars" appointed by President Barack Obama. She also felt

that non-elected judges were given too much latitude to "dictate" the law.

"He's doing a lot of unconstitutional things," Albers said of the president. "How's he getting away with that?"

To enforce deregulation, Huelskamp said, Congress could pass a law to take away bureaucrats' authority, or take away their money.

"We'll see on Nov. 6 if he's getting away with it," the congressman added.

Huelskamp sponsored an amendment to the 2011 appropriations bill - the closest thing Congress has done to passing a budget - to "de-fund" nine out of over 30 so-called government "czars", ultimately focusing on two of them: "Guantanamo closure czar" Ambassador Daniel Fried, and "climate czar" Car-

ol Browner, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, who has since retired from that position.

He also introduced an addition to the farm bill called the "Farm Act" to prohibit government oversight of farming operations, including regulations of gas from livestock and dust kicked up from farming vehicles.

Obama added his own provision when signing the bill to give the officials their money back, Huelskamp said. As for the Farm Act, it was never taken up by the Senate.

Huelskamp had a little more difficulty when citizens asked about their own benefits.

Albers said she receives a Social Security check via direct deposit, but heard that some people receiving their checks got a note to the effect that they were get-

ting a handout.

"It's not a handout, they earned that," she said. "They've been paying for that all their lives."

One man, who would not give his name afterward, asked how to obtain benefits at the Department of Veterans Affairs hospital, saying it was extremely difficult for vets to prove they had been exposed to things such as chemicals or continual loud noise.

"You are correct," Huelskamp's assistant, Annie Boyajian, told the man. "There is no good record of Agent Orange and things like that."

Huelskamp could not say how to make the process of documenting injuries easier, but agreed that veterans were having trouble under the department's system.

Briefly

Senior-parent ceremony set Friday

Senior-Parent Recognition Night for Colby High cheerleaders and the cross country, dance, golf, football and tennis teams as well as trainers, managers and the pep band, will be held at about 6:30 p.m. Friday before the Colby-Concordia football game. Parents are asked to meet their senior at 6:15 p.m. by the game clock at the northeast corner of the track at Dennen Field. For information, call the high school at 460-5300.

Farewell event Friday for Extension agent

Everyone is invited to a farewell reception for Clint Milliman, Thomas County Extension agriculture agent, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday. For information, call the Extension office at 460-4582.

Independent Baptists plan free gospel concert

The Colby Independent Baptist Church plans a free gospel music concert with evangelist Greg Waggoner at 7 p.m. Saturday at the Colby Community Building. For question, call Pastor Bernard Heinz at 460-0313.

Once a Month Lunch coming up on Saturday

The Once a Month Lunch will be served from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday in the basement of the Colby Presbyterian Church, 515 W. Fourth St. No reservation is needed, and the free meal, held the second Saturday of each month, is open to everyone. For questions, call the church office, 462-6342.

Groups will pick up food donations Sunday

From 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, the Colby Girl Scouts, the Catholic Youth Organization and the Colby Community College presidential scholars, women's and men's track and cross country teams, wrestling team and the women's and men's basketball teams will be going door-to-door collecting food for Genesis-Thomas County. If you are not going to be home and would like to donate, you can leave a sack by the front door. For information, call Penny Cline at 460-2929.

'Demo pod' to be displayed at meeting

A "demo pod," which has been proposed as part of a possible structure for the new Thomas County jail project, will be on display during a Public Building Commission meeting at 1:30 p.m. Monday at the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range in Colby. The meeting is open to the public. For information, call Mike Baughn at 460-4580, Marc Finley at 460-4573 or Paul Steele at 462-2558.

Third graders will perform next week

Colby Grade School third graders will present a free musical at 2 and 7 p.m. next Thursday in the school auditorium. For information, call Jennifer Koel at 460-5100, ext. 1104.

Search continues for missing Colorado girl

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overnight to identify the body. Officers searched more of the park today as well as areas closer to Jessica's home.

Police have ruled out her parents - Sarah Ridgeway, who lives in Colorado, and Jeremiah Bryant, who lives in Missouri. Authorities believe

Jessica was kidnapped by an "unknown suspect."

Jessica's mother last saw her daughter walking to school. The girl never arrived, setting off a frantic search by hundreds of law enforcement officials and residents. Photos of the fifth-grader have been posted in the neighborhood and online since her disappearance.

Women gather in Rexford

From "WOMEN," Page 1

"The worst way to react to conflict," Shoup-Olsen said, "is to turn away, ignore and reject the other person. You aren't connecting with them, so you can't resolve issues with them."

She said that when in conflict, you have to use "two eyes and two ears to listen." It's respectful, she said, and respecting one another is key to a healthy conversation.

"It's important to have good

eye contact," she said, "and no eye rolling."

"Being aware of distinctive patterns in communication helps you know how to work together," said Jeanne Dunn, manager of the Cheyenne County Conservation District.

Following Shoup-Olsen's session, the women heard from Stacey Seibel, a lawyer from Hays who specializes in estate planning. She explained the importance of proper estate planning and building and preserving a

"generational dynasty."

Libby Curry, an extension specialist at K-State, facilitated the "color" session, where women identified their own personality types and styles based on their "inner color." Many were most interested in this session, which helped to give insight into different styles of work and collaboration.

Women also learned how to make salsa, received tips on nutrition and shared stories during the afternoon.



Table with columns for time slots (7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 10:30, 11:00, 11:30) and rows for various TV channels (KAKE/ABC, KBSL/CBS, KSNK/NBC, KSAS/FOX, Cable Channels, A & E, AMC, ANIM, BRAVO, CMT, CNN, COMEDY, DISC, DISN, EI, ESPN, ESPN2, FAM, FOOD, FX, HGTV).

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