

weather report

45°
at noon



Today

• Sunset, 5:57 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 5:50 a.m.

• Sunset, 5:57 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 40 degrees

• Humidity 43 percent

• Sky clear

• Winds northeast 8 m.p.h.

• Barometer 30.12 inches

and falling

• Record High 83° (1921)

• Record Low 0° (1965)

Last 24 Hours*

High 47°

Low 20°

Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: mostly clear, low lower

20s, light west wind. Tomorrow:

mostly sunny and warmer, high upper

60s, low lower 20s, winds west

5-10 m.p.h.

Extended Forecast

Thursday: partly sunny, high upper

30s, low upper teens. Friday:

mostly cloudy, high mid 50s. Saturday:

partly cloudy with slight chance of

snow, high mid 60s, low upper 20s.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$2.55 bushel

Posted county price — \$2.48

Corn — \$1.86 bushel

Posted county price — \$1.85

Loan deficiency payment — 14¢

Milo — \$1.58 bushel

Soybeans — \$3.98 bushel

Posted county price — \$3.94

Loan deficiency payment — 98¢

Millet — \$3.25 hundredweight

Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$9.30 cwt.

Nu Sun — \$9.45 cwt.

Loan deficiency pmt. — 26¢

Confection current — \$16/\$8 cwt.

Pinto beans — \$26

(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Sigco

Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century

Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

afternoon wire

Late news from the Associated Press

1 p.m.

Arafat offered big incentives

JERUSALEM (AP) — Yasser Arafat was offered major incentives Tuesday to help stop Mideast fighting: Vice President Dick Cheney said he would meet with the Palestinian leader after a truce takes hold, and Israel said it might lift a travel ban on Arafat in time for next week's Arab summit.

A meeting with Cheney would mark Arafat's highest-level contact yet with the Bush administration. Attending the Arab summit would mean an end to Arafat's three-month confinement to the Palestinian areas by Israel.

In fighting Tuesday, two Palestinian gunmen infiltrated an army training area in the West Bank, killing an Israeli officer and wounding three soldiers before being shot to death. Elsewhere, a Palestinian man standing outside his shop in the West Bank town of Beit Omar was killed by Israeli troops.

School rejects offer for gym

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

With four members saying the offer on the building was too low and one suggesting the gym could be used as a grain bin, the Goodland School Board decided Monday not to sell the Edson gymnasium to two auctioneers for \$15,000.

After about 30 minutes of discussion and a 5-minute break, four members voted against selling the old school gym — President Dick Short, Kathy Russell, Eric Gray and Mike Campbell — while three voted for it — Ron Schilling, Jane Philbrick and Ben Duell. Members decided to take bids on the gym earlier this year because they said they needed the extra money.

The district still needs the space for sports practices, Short said, adding that the offer is too low to warrant the board selling the gym.

Russell and Campbell agreed, with Campbell, district director of the Farm Service Agency, saying he has not seen an appraisal on the building and suggesting the board could get more money if they advertise it as a grain bin. He estimated the gym could hold about 80,000 bushels of grain.

Schilling, who lives in Edson, said the district could save on utilities and maintenance by selling the building and added that Tom Harrison and Tom Simpson, owners of TNT Auction, plan to spend thousands fixing up the facility. He said the board won't find a better offer.

Duell, who lives in Ruleton, said he's watched as old abandoned school buildings in Kanorado and Ruleton go to pot.

"Currently, both are well occupied by pigeons," he said.

Harrison and Simpson, who both attended the meeting, said they would hold auctions in the gym and let the Edson community use it for events.

Simpson said they planned to spend \$3,000 on a covering to protect the wood floor and about \$10,000 to put in a new well. Harrison said they would also have a new sound system installed.

The auctioneers said the old school next to the gym is dilapidated, unsafe and needs to be torn down. They said they planned to buy the school, which isn't owned by the district, and pay to have it leveled. That could cost about \$100,000.

After the board rejected the offer,

there was no further discussion.

Board members took bids on the gym, which is about 10 miles east of Goodland, because they said the district needs extra money in the face of declining enrollment and possible cuts in state aid for education.

They opened three bids at a meeting earlier this month and found the highest was from TNT Auction for \$15,000 — triple the second-highest offer. Members put off deciding whether to accept the bid because they said they wanted input from Campbell and Short, who both couldn't attend the meeting because they were out of town.

The board agreed that the building is worth a lot more than \$15,000, but members said they probably couldn't find a better offer. Included in TNT's bid was a stipulation that the district, which uses the gym about 30 days a year mainly for junior high basketball practices, pay \$325 a day to rent the facility. Harrison said TNT would be willing to negotiate that price.

On Monday, Harrison and Simpson said they would rent the gym to the district for whatever price suited the board. Superintendent Marvin Selby said that would probably be \$2,000 a year.

Simpson said people have told him they support TNT buying the gym and appreciate them offering to let the community use it. He said he feels it's important to preserve the building and keep it as a gym. He added that the building beside the gym has to come down because it's falling apart.

Jim Mull, Grant Junior High principal, said the junior high needs the gym because many times it doesn't have another place where athletes can practice or play games. The bid price is low, he said, noting that it would cost the district much more than \$15,000 to buy or build another gym if enrollment happened to increase in the future.

During a break, Philbrick said the district could probably afford to build a new gym in Goodland if enrollment dramatically increased.

After Selby said TNT would rent the gym to the district for \$2,000 a year and allow them to hold practices and games there, Mull did say, "that would be a viable solution."

Russell asked Harrison and Simpson if they would be willing to rent the gym from the district, but they said they are looking to buy a building where they can hold auctions.



Wells used as monitors

Mark Carter (above) with Woofter Pump and Well of Colby poured rocks around the outside of a monitoring well he helped drill Friday in the parking lot in front of Subway on K-27. Travis Lanning (left), a co-worker, helped clean up after the well was drilled. Carter said the crew drilled four wells in the area to monitor the groundwater for contamination from gasoline. Another company recently removed two gas tanks from the ground under the parking lot that were no longer being used. Photos by Rachel Miscall The Goodland Daily News

City saves money on sweeper

By Doug Stephens

The Goodland Daily News

The Goodland City commissioners saved a little money Monday when they approved buying a street sweeper and a water department truck for less than they had budgeted.

The city agreed to buy an Elgin Pelical Series P street sweeper from Key Equipment and Supply Company of Kansas City for \$89,553, including trade-in of the city's current sweeper. The city had one other bid, from Sellers Tractor Company of Colby for a Johnston 3000 Mechanical Sweeper for \$90,992 with trade-in.

The city had budgeted \$120,000 for the street sweeper, said Mary Volk, city clerk.

The city approved buying a 2002 GMC 3/4 ton pick-up from Finley Motors for \$21,864, including trade-in. The city had bids from Yost Ford Mercury for \$23,814, and Dan Brenner Ford for \$22,150.

Dan Brenner had also offered a truck with 260 horsepower, when the city's specifications called for 310, for \$21,675.

City Manager Ron Pickman said \$33,000 had been set aside for the truck, and the city will be able to use the money saved on the vehicles for other projects.

The city's current sweeper is a 10-year-old Elgin. A salesman from Sellers Tractor was at the meeting and said the life expectancy of a street sweeper is about 8 years. With the amount of maintenance the city has been putting into the old sweeper, the salesman said, the city should have traded it in two years ago.

The water department truck will replace a 1983 truck which Ed Wolak, city director of public works and utilities, said is "on it's last legs, or should I say, leg."

During the meeting, the commissioners also approved the utility write-offs of bills which remain uncollectible.

Even though the bills are written off of the books, Pickman said, the city will still try to collect them, except for the bankruptcies, which account for \$5,255 of the \$10,352 write-offs.

The Coastal Mart stores at 316 E. 17th Street and 320 E. 8th Street, which went bankrupt, left \$4,278 in utility bills.

"These (utility write-offs) are another reason taxes are what they are," said Commissioner Curtis Hurd.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Went into closed session for 10 minutes to discuss pending litigation involving the city. Pickman said he could not discuss the litigation.

- Reviewed a draft of a grant writing program to be jointly held with Sherman County and the school district. The city commissioners will discuss it at the next meeting.

The draft proposes the three government bodies split the cost of the program three ways, \$12,000 each per year. The city has already agreed to join the program for a year.

The grant writer will be considered a private contractor, and will be responsible for his own taxes and insurance. Mayor Tom Rohr will serve on the board of advisors with Kevin Rasure of Sherman County, Ron Schilling of the Board of Education, and Daniel

Hayden and Schyler Goodwin, members at large.

Goodwin is the president of the Goodland Development Corp., which proposed the idea.

- Received a schedule for construction work on K-27, U.S. Highway 24 and Cattletrail from Pickman. The Kansas Department of Transportation is scheduled to be done by Thursday, August 1, and was supposed to start putting out signs yesterday.

"They haven't started yet, said Pickman. "I guess they're already behind schedule."

- Read a letter from Biking Across Kansas, which will be using Goodland as its starting point when its members ride across the state, starting June 8. There will be about 900 people in the group staying overnight, and the group wanted to give advance notice to restaurants in town so they could be prepared.

"We predict our overnight visit on Friday, June 7 and the morning of Saturday, June 8, will make a generous economic impact on the City of Goodland," wrote Charlie Summers, executive director of the organization.

- Approved the annual operations and maintenance assurance statement for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. It is an annual statement the city signs, Pickman said, guaranteeing that the Steever Water Park area is being kept for outdoor recreational use. The fund gave the land Steever Water Park sits on to the city for recreational use.

"This is something which will be done every year as long as the city is in existence," Pickman said.

Teacher's car ruined as he's volunteering

Someone threw concrete rocks through the back windshield of a high school teacher's car last week, while he was voluntarily performing with the high school show choir in Missouri.

Bill Gable, a physical education teacher and football and wrestling coach at Goodland High School, said he parked his 1992 Ford Tempo at Max Jones Fieldhouse when he left with the X-Pressos for Branson, Mo. on Wednesday night.

Around noon on Friday, Goodland police responded to a call that the car had been vandalized.

Two concrete rocks had been thrown through the back windshield of the car, said Police Chief Ray

Smee. The police are investigating the crime, he said.

Gable said the back windshield is broken, and the front windshield has a hole in it and, "is pretty much shattered." There was also damage to the dash and the ceiling of the car, he said.

Gable said he is still getting an estimate of the damage, but has gotten a couple of "guesstimates" which say there could be \$2,500-\$3,000 worth of damage.

"That might be more than the car is worth," Gable said.

Gable said he is part of the volunteer combo ensemble team which plays music for the X-Pressos, and is a faculty sponsor of the choir.

Senators say Lawrence split in remap gaining support

TOPEKA (AP) — Even senators who oppose splitting Lawrence between two congressional districts say the idea is gaining momentum now that the House has approved it.

The House's 68-53 vote Monday sent a congressional redistricting bill to the Senate, where Republican leaders haven't been able so far to find a plan they believe a majority will support.

"It clearly means splitting Lawrence is on the table and in play," said Senate

Reapportionment Committee Chairman David Adkins, R-Leawood, who opposes the idea. "It may not be able to be avoided."

Senate Minority Leader Anthony Hensley, D-Topeka, another opponent of splitting Lawrence, said the House vote "probably gives that cause some momentum."

Under the House bill, Lawrence would be divided between the 3rd and 2nd districts under the bill.