

Visitor board gets new office, acting director

VISITORS, from Page 1

on the highway, but felt that Main had good visibility.

Arlo Hansen, manager of Sinclair Service, said he felt the best location was downtown because he believed that economic development and the visitors bureau should work together. Hansen said he felt he should not vote on the matter because he would have a conflict of interest because the building was handled by his boss, Pete Whalen.

Judy Siruta, manager of the Comfort Inn, moved to accept the 1206 Main Avenue location. Ryan Hageman, manager of Wendy's; seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The board plans to have the office moved by the beginning of February. The next question was about

office equipment and furniture. The visitor's bureau has been using furniture that belongs to the Chamber for more than 10 years, but there was some question about whether some of the furniture had been donated to the bureau. Chairman Dale Neil said they were trying to find out about this.

Price said right now, she needs two four-draw file cabinets. She said she was hoping to be able to share a fax machine and copier with the economic development office until the visitor's board could afford to buy one. Economic Development Director Carolyn Applegate said she had offered to do that.

Notz said she had a couple of file cabinets she could loan the office, and maybe even a desk.

"We need to find out what is ours," Notz said. "What do we need

to spend?"

Price said she did not know what expenses there might be, adding: "Everybody's been very nice and supportive."

Hageman made a motion to allow up to \$1,000 for office furniture and supplies. Siruta seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Neil said he had been pleased to find that insurance costs would be within the \$3,000 they had budgeted. He said a quote from Eklund's Insurance on liability coverage was \$500, and insurance for the white van was \$1,725. The only concern was the tour bus.

Neil suggested not including the tour bus because it had not been used much the previous year. He said they had done quite a bit the first year it was used, but there were only one or two tours this year. He

said taking the bus out of the budget would save \$10,000.

Looking at the proposed budget, Neil said the main idea had been to maintain the \$50,000 for marketing efforts while making cuts in other parts to make it balance.

He said room tax collections were down the past year, and that they had reduced the budget to reflect that. The proposed budget for last year was \$128,444, but the actual expenditures were \$106,441. The proposed budget for this year is \$104,160. He said the budget was open for review and if anybody had questions or suggestions, he would welcome them. The budget was not adopted at this meeting.

A question was raised about the billboards the group leases and what they now say.

Price reported that the four big

ones at Topeka, Salina, Grainfield and Kanorado have been updated and now have a field of sunflowers with a slogan "Goodland, we're waiting for you." The two small ones they own on either side of the city have not been updated.

Applegate said she had noticed that many of the business billboards out on the highway did not have Goodland listed. She said that it would be a good reminder for people on the highway to have the name of the town on each of these billboards.

Neil said the board's next regular meeting would be at 9 a.m. on Jan. 21, at the chamber conference room, and that the election of officers would be on the agenda.

The board approved a motion to spend \$100 toward refreshments for the Northwest Kansas Liberty

League basketball tournament that will be in Goodland Jan. 17-18. There will be 10 boys teams and nine girls teams playing at Max Jones Fieldhouse. The Goodland Ambassadors will handle the hospitality room. Hagerman offered to provide paper products.

The board voted to go into closed session to deal with personnel matters. When they returned to public session, a motion was made to remove Harding as the executive director. Neil said it passed unanimously.

Harding, executive director of the Goodland Chamber, had been the director of the visitor's effort for over 11 years, when the Chamber had a management contract with the board, but the contract was canceled in December. The board then promoted Price to acting director.

Sebelius names six to fill Cabinet in administration

SEBELIUS, from Page 1

tion is not necessary.

With the appointments today, Sebelius has filled eight of 12 Cabinet positions. She's already named Howard Fricke, chairman of the Security Benefit Group of Companies, secretary of administration, and Lt. Gov.-elect John Moore, a former Cessna Aircraft Co. execu-

tive, as secretary of commerce and housing.

Sebelius has yet to name secretaries for the departments of Aging, Agriculture and Corrections, or a commissioner of juvenile justice. She said she does not plan to keep any more of Graves' cabinet members.

The governor-elect said she does not know how long Garner and

Wagnon will remain in their jobs. Garner, a lawyer, served in the House for 12 years before running unsuccessfully for insurance commissioner last year. Wagnon also served 12 years in the House, leaving in 1994 for an unsuccessful run for governor.

She was elected Topeka mayor in 1997 but lost her bid for re-election in 2001 and became president of

Central National Bank in Topeka.

Sebelius said she doesn't have any preconceived ideas about whether the departments of Revenue and Human Resources need to be reorganized. But she later said Revenue's auditing staff "has almost vanished." Outgoing Secretary Stephen Richards has disagreed, saying the agency is being aggressive in its efforts.

Sebelius said: "It seems to me that the history in Revenue has been either full speed ahead, which has really alienated a lot of people, or don't do anything. We'd like to find a way to be effective in that agency again and not alienate the business community and individuals across the state." As for Human Resources, Sebelius expressed concern that work force training programs are

scattered across too many agencies and that the agency has too many missions.

Garner said: "I think right now in this economy, we want to make sure that we have good work force development programs that are getting people trained for productive jobs. We've got to make sure that unemployment benefits are being handled in a timely manner."

Bush pushing tax cuts, job growth to stimulate economy

BUSH, from Page 1

a go-for-broke effort by Bush to seize and control both the domestic and political agenda in the run-up to his 2004 re-election campaign.

Democrats offered a rival plan and hurled predictable charges that Bush's plan was a budget-buster that favored his rich supporters.

Bush addressed some 2,300 business leaders in downtown Chicago, and many of them cheered his economic plan during interviews.

"The dividend tax cuts are a good idea — people will move more money into the market, because their earnings will be taxed less," said Jeffrey Katz, chief executive officer of Orbitz.

John Leonard, the chief of North American equities for UBS Global Asset Management, said Bush's growth package was "pretty appealing."

Eliminating double taxation on dividends "is a smart thing to do so capital can be allocated more wisely," Leonard said. It would spur the economy by sending more money into the economy, he said.

Democrats offered a rival tax-cutting plan and said Bush's favors the rich.

"The president really is investing \$600 billion on an old, old Republican theory of trickle-down economics," said Rep. George Miller, D-Calif. "We're saying no. Give it to the people who need it."

The Democratic plan would expand unemployment benefits by 26 weeks and give all workers a refundable income tax rebate of up to \$300 per person or \$600 per working couple. States would get \$31 billion for homeland security, highway, Medicaid and unemployment insurance programs.

Bush said that under present law, corporations first pay taxes on their profits, and then investors pay taxes again on the same profits when they're distributed as dividends. Bush asked Congress to end this "double taxation" of dividends.

"One half of American households own stock, and we have an obligation to make sure American investors are being treated fairly,"

he said. However, much of these holdings are in 401(k) or other retirement accounts — and would not be affected by Bush's proposals, since such dividends are already sheltered from taxes.

The elimination of taxes on stock dividends is the biggest element of the plan, and is estimated to cost \$364 billion over 10 years. Bush's plan also calls for an immediate acceleration — retroactive to Jan. 1 — of the tax rate cuts that had been scheduled to take effect in 2004 and 2006.

Bush also proposed immediate relief from the so-called marriage penalty which hits two-earner couples — at a 10-year cost of \$58 billion.

Another key element, one that the administration hoped would mute some of the Democratic criticism, was an increase in the child tax credit, currently at \$600, to \$1,000 per child. Even families without enough income to pay taxes could get up to \$400-per-child rebate checks, under the plan.

The administration said that checks reflecting the higher child care credit would be issued this year and it estimated 34 million families would benefit from this element of the president's plan.

Overall, the administration said that \$102 billion of the cost of the program would occur in 2003 and the rest of the \$674 billion total cost would be spread out over the next

decade.

"This is a plan that provides tax relief to the working citizens," Bush had said Monday. "It's a plan that is a very fair plan. It's a plan that recognizes when somebody has more of their own money, they're likely to spend it, which creates more jobs."

Bush's package would also boost tax relief for small businesses by expanding the amount of equipment purchases they can write off as deductions from the current \$25,000 to \$75,000 and index future increases to inflation.

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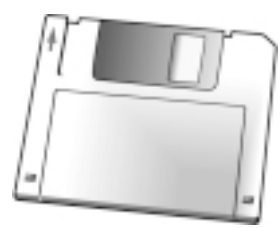
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