

Goodland man gets county trash deal

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News
The Sherman County commissioners narrowed trash collection proposals down to the two local companies and then unanimously chose In the Can to start hauling the city's trash.

Chuck Redlin, operator of In the Can, and Kevin Butts, operator of EBC Trash Service, were both present at the meeting Tuesday morning when the commissioners made the decision. Justin Comer of Haysville, the third independent bidder, said he would be available by phone if there were any questions.

Commission Chairman Kevin Rasure said he was pleased they had

a good group of proposals to choose from.

Commissioners Mitch Tiede and Chuck Thomas agreed they were good proposals. They said all their questions were answered Friday.

Rasure said he felt the best proposals were from Butts and Redlin. Tiede and Thomas agreed.

Rasure said he liked Comer's proposal to have individual roll-out containers, but he didn't feel the dollars are there to pay for it.

Before making a decision, Rasure gave Butts and Redlin two minutes each to sum up why they would be the best choice.

Butts went first. "I am in the trash business. Have been for 15 years. "I would change the business

containers and believe using a rear-load truck will help.

"My track record speaks for itself, and I would really like the chance to do this for all the residents of the city."

Redlin said, "We can do a good job. We have an office site.

"I know the trucks inside and out. I haven't done it, but I am willing to learn and can learn.

"I am not afraid to do it; just get it done. I would like to have the opportunity."

"I think both can do the job," Rasure said.

"There is not a lot of difference between the two," Thomas said.

"I would like to see two different services in town so we have a sec-

ond one to rely on if something happens," Tiede said.

"I know both will do a good job," Rasure said. "This is a tough decision."

Rasure suggested each commissioner write their choice down on a piece of paper. Tiede collected the three pieces and made a motion to award the contract to Redlin's In the Can. Thomas seconded the motion.

Butts operates a trash service mostly in rural areas. His wife, Cynthia Butts, who arrived late, said, "If we don't get this bid, we will be out of business. We will not last more than a year or so."

"I appreciate your concern," Rasure said. "I believe it is our best choice and that Redlin will do a

good job."

Before the commissioners voted, Cynthia Butts left the meeting. The vote was unanimous, and Tiede revealed that the three pieces of paper each had Redlin written on them.

The motion was passed contingent on working out the contract details with Redlin. The county has 90 days to make the transition from the city collection to their sub-contractor.

A little bit later, City Manager Ron Pickman arrived with the signed contract from the city which had been approved Monday evening.

The commissioners approved the contract and signed it. Mayor Rick Billinger came into

the meeting and asked who had been awarded the contract.

"I was in favor of keeping it local," Billinger said. "I hope the county will take the money and improve the system. We have people here who cannot take any increase in rates, and I hope you take that into consideration."

Rasure said it was the county's intention to look at reducing fees where possible, and there was no plan to raise any rates.

Commissioner Thomas was to arrange a meeting with Redlin and County Attorney Bonnie Selby to work out the contract details.

Redlin has indicated he hopes to have his operation running by July 1.

City signs 10-year compact for trash transfer

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News
It has taken about eight months, but Goodland is close to being out of the trash business after the city commission unanimously approved a contract with Sherman County on Monday to handle its trash collection.

The 14-page contract lays out the specifics of a 10-year deal. The county has 90 days to complete the transition and begin handling the trash.

It took the city commissioners about 25 minutes of discussion before it approved the contract on the motion of Commissioner Chuck Lutters, with the second by Commissioner Dave Daniels.

Mayor Rick Billinger, who has always felt the trash system should not be sold, asked if the city was going to get any money if the county

sells or leases the trash containers and trucks to a subcontractor.

City Attorney Perry Warren said the only provision for getting money for the equipment is if the county fails to continue the contract for five years.

"No matter what happens to the equipment, they will owe the city \$80,000 for each year less than five that they operate under the contract," Warren said. "If they only operate the system for two years, they will owe the city \$240,000, but if they go beyond the five years, they will not owe the city anything."

"I thought it was a good deal when I thought the county was going to operate the system," Billinger said. "If they subcontract it, I think we are going to get the short end of the stick."

"I have always felt that way," said Commissioner Dean Blume.

Commissioner John Garcia asked about the \$100,000 liquidated damages clause, and City Manager Ron Pickman said this was included to give both sides a monetary settlement if either side decided to cancel the contract or if either side fails to comply with the provisions.

Billinger asked about the county's duty to try to employ the current city trash employees if they are going to a subcontractor. Pickman said that provision is in the county proposal and it will be up to the contractor to make a good faith effort to hire the city employees.

"I doubt the city employees will want to leave because of their retirement and benefits," Pickman said.

Billinger asked about the 10-year term of the contract and wondered if it was tying the hands of future city commissions.

Warren said the county had asked for a long term commitment, and that it was not unusual for city commissions to enter into agreements for this length of time.

A question was raised about the rates and if the county could set the rates without approval of the city commission.

Pickman said the provision of the contract are that the rates will remain the same as they are, but that the county can recommend to the city that rates be raised if there is an increase in the cost of operation.

The contract calls for the appointment of a five-member County Solid Waste Committee and that one member will be a city commissioner and at least two of the members live in the city. Pickman said the committee will review the rates each year, and if there is a need to raise them, they will recommend it

to the county commissioners. If they approve the increase, they will send it to the city commission for their approval.

Daniels was a bit concerned about the makeup of the solid waste committee having people from outside the city determining the rates, but Pickman pointed out that there will be a majority of the members who live in the city, and with a city commissioner as a member, there is a good balance.

Lutters made the motion to approve the contract.

"I think it is the best for the community," he said.

Daniels seconded the motion after a moment of silence, and the vote was unanimous 5-0.

The county has until Aug. 20 to complete the transition and begin handling the trash collection, but Pickman said he expects it to hap-

pen earlier than that.

Later in the meeting Pickman brought up a letter from the county asking the city to pay \$234 for the cost of handling a pile of tires that have been pulled out of the trash loads since January. He said most of the tires were bicycle size, and that there were some passenger and truck tires which were still mounted on the wheels.

"I think we have made a good-faith effort to keep these out of the dumpsters," said Lutters, "and I would say not to pay this."

"I think we need to pay this and hope that it will go away in the next 90 days," said Blume.

Daniels said to pay it. Garcia said to pay it. Billinger said he thought the city should not pay the bill. Billinger then said to Pickman he had his answer on an informal 3-2 vote to pay the bill.

Hospital moves registration

Goodland Regional Medical Center will soon have a central location for patients to register, reducing the number of people having access to medical records and helping make the best use of clerical personnel.

Starting Tuesday, patients will register at the outpatient services building, whether they are there to see a consulting physician, for lab work, x-ray or other diagnostic tests or to be admitted to the hospital.

Emergency room patients should go directly to the emergency room.

The central registration desk will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday-Friday and from 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

The change is to help the hospital consolidate patient registration to a single area, to improve patient



Vicki Transue (above), department manager at the Rural Health Ventures clinic, organized patients' paperwork Tuesday. Jamie Baker checked in at the outpatient registration window. The window will be the central registration point for the hospital and clinic starting Tuesday, except for emergency patients.
Photos by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News



corrections

In Ida Crotinger's obituary in the Tuesday, May 20, issue of *The Goodland Star-News* omitted the names of two brothers who preceded her in death. They are Henry and Edward Reifschneider. This was due to an omission by the funeral home.

☆☆☆☆☆
The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

services and to make the best use of clerical personnel, Director of Public Relations Brenda McCants said.

Having one location for scheduling and registration will help the hospital comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), McCants said,

by centralizing patient records. There will be better confidentiality, she said, since not as many people have access to the records.

It will also be easier on patients, she said, because people won't be sent from one desk to another.

The federal law encompasses

many areas, McCants said, including patient convenience, patient security and confidentiality. The act is not the only reason the hospital is making the changes, she said, just a part of it.

The central registration will be better for the hospital, she said, and

more importantly, for the patients.

But officials know it will be an adjustment, McCants said. There

will be signs to direct patients, she said, and volunteers to help with the change.

*In observance of
Memorial Day
S&T Communications
and S&T Telephone in
Brewster, Dighton, Colby
and Goodland will be
CLOSED
Saturday, May 24th and
Monday, May 26th.*



**One Day Only
Final Blowout Sale
May 29, 2003**

All fine jewelry and gifts remaining
75% to 90% off
B-E's Jewelry
1105 Main
Goodland, Kan. 67735
785-899-5400

ENJOY
TONIGHT AT THE MOVIES
AT THE MOVIES
The Goodland Star-News
SUBSCRIBER
Curtis McKenrick
You receive two free passes to see
The Matrix
R
Sherman
1203 MAIN - Phone 899-6103
Present Ticket at Box Office
Tickets are Non-Transferable