

weather report

95°
at noon



Today

• Sunset, 8:17 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 5:22 a.m.

• Sunset, 8:17 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil Temperature 79 degrees
- Humidity 24 percent
- Sky sunny and clear
- Winds south 15 m.p.h.
- Barometer 29.97 inches and falling
- Record High 104° (1990)
- Record Low 42° (1958)

Last 24 Hours*

High 92°
Low 58°
Precipitation none

N.W. Kansas Forecast

Today: mostly sunny with 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms at night, high 103, low near 70, winds south 10-20 m.p.h. Saturday: partly sunny with 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms, high upper 90s, low upper 60s.

Extended Forecast

Sunday: partly cloudy with chance of thunderstorms and showers, high upper 90s. Monday: partly cloudy with chance of thunderstorms in the afternoon and evening, high upper 80s. (National Weather Service)
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.
* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$2.94 bushel
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Corn — \$2.13 bushel
Posted county price — \$1.93
Loan deficiency pmt. — 3¢
New crop — \$1.94 bushel
Milo — \$1.77 bushel
Soybeans — \$5.10 bushel
Posted county price — \$5.14
Millet — \$4.50 hundredweight
Sunflowers
Oil current crop — \$8.75 cwt.
Loan deficiency pmt. — 73¢
NuSun — \$9.00 cwt.
Confection — \$17/\$7 cwt.
New Crop — \$17/\$10 cwt.
Pinto beans — Withdrawn
(Markets by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

inside today

More local news and views from your Goodland Star-News



Solar race cars follows Rt. 66

The Auburn University solar car, "Sol of Auburn," passed through the town of Moriarty, N.M., on Historic Route 66 as it made its way to the checkpoint in Albuquerque. See story and photos on Page 3.

Attack plan to be drafted for dogs

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

A plan of attack to control the prairie dog problem in Sherman County is to be drafted by representatives of several of the townships after a 90 minute public meeting Thursday.

Over 35 citizens gathered in the court room of the county courthouse to discuss the prairie dog problem, and alternatives for controlling the population.

The question what the county could do about the problem, and Commissioner Kevin Rasure said the major responsibility for controlling the dogs belongs with the landowners.

"We know there is a problem," Rasure said. "We are not the solution. We may be able to help with the solution, but we are not financially able or have the manpower to solve it."

"We are looking for solutions."

At the end of the discussions it was a suggestion from the audience that a committee be appointed by the commissioners with representatives from the townships to draft a plan for controlling the dogs. Volunteers were asked for and Harlan Dale House, Ron Schilling, Ken Klemm, Brent Flanders and George Cramer were appointed to meet with the county commissioners and Daryl West of the county noxious weed department.

The plan is to establish a date for the county to send letters to all landowners about the control of prairie dogs, and that in the letter there will be a deadline date for the landowner to take care of his dog problem.

If the landowner does not comply by the date the group will spell out a procedure to have the problem handled either by county personnel

or by hiring a private firm. The cost will be billed to the landowner, and if not paid it will become a lien against the land.

"The main thing is to have everybody working together," Rasure said. "It won't work unless everyone is on the same page. This will not be solved overnight, and it will take more than one treatment."

One lady in the audience said it has to be a routine that is repeated on a regular basis, "like a Monday morning chore," she said.

Mike Hopper, area wildlife officer, spoke about the possibility of allowing hunters to help control the dogs, and that he was willing to refer hunters to any farmer who has dogs and is willing to allow them to be hunted.

"I am interested in assisting any way I can," Hopper said. "I would be the first to say that the prairie dog is not threatened and does not belong on the endangered list. Yes, there is a problem, but we have along way to go before they are in danger of being extinct."

"Can all the hunters in the world kill enough to make a difference," one man asked. "If not why let them in at all because they do more harm."

Hopper agreed that the hunters by themselves will not control the problem with the number of dogs in the fields now.

He was asked what the rules are for hunting prairie dogs.

Hopper said that a landowner and his immediate family do not have to have a hunting license to kill dogs on their property. However, anyone else who is shooting has to have a small game hunting license.

He said the other major problem is hunters who are shooting from the roadway or shooting across a road.



A prairie dog ran for safety after searching for food late Wednesday evening in a field of off County Road 78 and 28.

Photo by Shannon Davidson The Goodland Star-News

"Hunters tell us the dogs are wild," said Dale Stephens farmer from northeast of Goodland.

"We've had hunters from Philadelphia, Kentucky and Wyoming and they tell us the dogs hear the first shot and won't come back out until it is dark."

Hopper said he would be happy to give phone numbers out of any farmer who is willing to have hunters, and he will ask the hunters to get permission to be on the land and have a hunting license.

"We haven't had much cooperation," Stephens said. They (prairie dogs) are going to eradicate us rather than us kill them."

"I want to see prairie dogs hunted down like we did with Saddam's sons," said Ron Schilling, farmer from northeast of Edson. "I think the county commissioners need to make this a countywide issue."

"It was a countywide effort in Wallace County several years ago and they went from one corner of the county to the other and killed prairie

dogs. They had two men and they billed the landowners every year, but it worked."

"You have the authority to levy taxes to control prairie dogs," House said. "It is like the roads. You can do it on a township level or a county wide levy."

"We need to take care of this now because in the next few years the laws may change and we will not be able to do anything."

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Citizens complain about city mowing

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Citizens complained about the enforcement of the weed ordinance at the commission meeting Monday, and said they did not feel they were being treated fairly.

Mike Miller, contractor and rental owner, said he didn't like the way the ordinance is being handled, and that his rental property is not out of compliance at 618 W. 9th.

"Where is a photo of what the weeds looked like," Miller asked. "I don't think this is right because I mowed the lot the day after your people said they mowed it, and it had not been that long since I had mowed it before."

"I will admit it got a bit tall when we had all those rains, but when I got the letter it had been mowed."

Mayor Rick Billinger asked if the city could use a digital camera to take photos of the ones out of compliance.

"I've had four or five calls on this," he said. "It looks like we need to do a better job of determining which properties are being mowed."

"We have two inspections and the

person doing the mowing is not to mow a lot unless the weeds are over 10 inches tall," said Ron Pickman, city manager.

"How can you prove it," Miller asked.

Miller said he got the letter on June 2 and mowed the lot on June 9. He said he sent a letter to the city saying it had been mowed.

"Maybe we need to talk to the mowing contractor," said Commissioner Dave Daniels.

Pickman said there are 216 properties on the list, and they check them frequently.

"I'll bet most of those are the same people every time," Miller said.

"Maybe we ought to take photos of the lawns that get mowed," said Commissioner John Garcia.

Elaine Ellison, 1200 E. Hwy 24, complained that she was out of town visiting her family back east when the letter was sent on July 3, and that they did not return until the 14th and did not get their mail until the 15th.

"We did have it mowed," she said.

"We were condemned into the

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Keeping it wet in hot weather



Gerald Nett worked out in the sun weeding and working on the soaker hoses of his garden Wednesday afternoon. Nett's garden includes 17 varieties of sunflowers from Canada, along with a variety of vegetables and flowers.

Photo by Shannon Davidson The Goodland Star-News

Beneficial system would handle wastewater for city

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

An alternative to building a new waste water treatment plant was presented at Monday's commission meeting, and the cost would be about half of a new plant.

John Zupancic of Bene Terra of Pratt, told the commission his firm had completed a feasibility study and felt that a reclaimed wastewater system would be workable and a beneficial asset to the city.

"We hate to see good water go to waste," Zupancic said. "We believe this system would cost less to build, be easier to build and operate and provide a positive economic impact."

He said the lagoon system would be an asset by using water to irrigate field crops, help extend the life of the aquifer and provide a revenue

stream from crop sales or leases.

The feasibility study included a conceptual layout of the waste ponds, estimated costs, estimated economic impact and steps toward implementation.

Zupancic said as a preliminary step they looked at the engineering study done by Evans, Bierly and Hutchison on the replacement of the existing solid waste treatment facility.

"We looked at the population figures in the 2000 census," he said, "and felt with the present trends we could look at a maximum growth of 10 percent over 20 years."

"We looked at the zonal limits where the ponds could be located, within three miles of the city and at least two miles away from the airport."

"Our figures show there would be about 295 acre feet of water for irri-

gation, and that would grow to 309 acre feet with the growth projection.

"Our goal with the beneficial reuse would be to meet treatment standards, minimize salt concentration and maximize the value of the water and nutrients," he said.

The plan calls for 10 acres of treatment ponds which would be 5 feet deep and there would be a larger holding pond which would be 20 feet deep.

"When we looked at the water quality we had a pleasing result," Zupancic said, "we did not see a tremendous increase in salt in the city water, and it is much better water than other cities we have seen."

The project would cost approximately \$1,245,250 to construct with an additional \$519,500 for engineering, inspections and other costs making the total \$1,765,750.

Zupancic said there would be the additional question of whether the city leased out the water to a farmer or had to purchase the land and the center pivot equipment. If the city had to purchase the land and equipment it would add approximately \$740,000, bringing the total project cost to \$2,505,750.

He said there might be some private sources for funding of such a project and that the Environmental Protection Agency might have some grant funds. He said when they were doing the project for Dodge City the EPA provided about \$12 million for the startup of the project.

"They look very favorably on this kind of project which reuses the water in a beneficial manner," Zupancic said.

The next step he said was a conceptual design phase which would

identify suitable potential sites; look at land ownership options; identify right of way issues; design the ponds in greater detail and send a facilities plan to the state health department for review.

Mayor Billinger asked how long it would take to get a new system in operation.

Zupancic said he felt if the state moved on the plan quickly it could be in operation within 18 months.

One question was whether the city would have their grant writer pursue money from the EPA. Zupancic said they had a person on their team who did a lot of grant writing, but that it could be decided at a later time how much each side would handle.

The commissioners thanked Zupancic for the presentation and said they would look at the option