

City approves loan for business

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Why have they not been involved in this?"

"I believe the banks have been more involved than most people know," Mayor Rick Billinger said. "There is little risk to the city," said Commissioner Dave Daniels. "The building is something we were going to renovate anyway, and now we have a good building even if this company does not pan out."

"This is a program that is available to any business that qualifies, and this is a way for us to get some of that money back."

"I think it is wrong for these people to come to the government with their hands out," Walker said. "I think this is wrong."

"We are risking something in hope for the benefit in the future," City Manager Ron Pickman said.

"It is not a city loan," Billinger added.

"The banks have been involved," Commissioner John Garcia said. "There has been support from the Western State Bank and People's State Bank."

"What about the First National," Walker asked.

"I can't speak for the First National, but I know the banks have been more involved than most people know," Billinger said.

"I believe this is a risk worth taking for the future of our community," Commissioner Dean Blume said. "We need to bring business to our city to keep it growing."

"I think this dream is going to be a nightmare," Walker said. Billinger thanked Walker for his comments.

Bruggeman said the loan will be used for machinery, equipment and working capital. He said there will be some administrative costs as well, and offered to have the planning agency handle the loan administration.

"The \$200,000 they are asking for will be matched with \$100,000 from the company and they will

agree to create six jobs, with four being middle to low income jobs," Bruggeman said. "They will know the decision from the state by Jan. 16, and will have two years to spend the money and create the jobs."

The commission approved the application on a 4-0 vote. When the meeting opened, it was noted that Commissioner Chuck Lutters was absent. Bruggeman and Pickman said that Lutters did not want there to be any question about a conflict of interest since he has taken a job with Aircraft Seal and Gasket.

In a related matters, the commission approved resolutions approving a statement of assurances and certifications for the loan application.

The commission also approved an ordinance on first reading to grant a conditional use permit for Aircraft Seal and Gasket to operate a manufacturing and assembling plant at 1006 Center Street.

In other business, the commission approved:

- A resolution describing the entire boundary of the city. Pickman said this resolution was required because the city added property on the east side at Eighth Street and Eustis Avenue.

- Payment to Ballou Construction Co. for work completed on the runway crack repair and slurry sealing project at the airport for \$89,033. Pickman said the weather had been good enough that they were able to complete the runway painting.

- A request for reimbursement from the state Department of Transportation for the airport runway repair project of \$78,524. The total request was for \$129,143, but the city is responsible for 25 percent of the project.

- Appointment of Andy Scheopner to another three-year term on the City/County Recreation Commission, and approval of the county's recommendation of Dennis Taylor to a three-year term.

- Payment of city bills totaling \$301,844.

Growing government?



Rod Cooper, owner of Crazy 'R's' was recently elected the honorary Mayor of South Goodland. When he called the city office to inquire about his "office" he was told there was no room, and that City Manager Ron Pickman did not plan to share his office. Virgil Baumfalk, and some unidentified helpers, took it upon themselves to locate a possible site for the new mayor's

office at the corner of Main and 17th. A sign was erected Tuesday, and on Wednesday a desk and chairs was added. Lynn Hoelting of Mueller Grain, which owns the property, said they had been contacted about the project, but final arrangements have not been completed. Cooper has not commented on the new office design Photo by Sheila Smith / The Goodland Star-News

Hospital making progress on old bills

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

The Goodland Regional Medical Center board reviewed October financial reports and got on update on efforts to catch up on bill payments during its November meeting.

Jim Precht, hospital chief financial officer from 1985-96, who returned to the operation after Andy Laue's resignation in October, said at the meeting Nov. 25 that he has been busy catching up on payments, cleaning up the financial records and preparing next year's budget.

The hospital was behind on some payments, he said, and is catching up on some, including employee benefits.

The finance committee has given marching orders to get the health plan caught up first, he said, and then to work on the retirement account. The hospital was behind with the deposits, Precht said, and is now getting money into the plan to pay providers. He said the fund couldn't pay some claims because there was no money.

The hospital had poor cash flow this year, he said, and was behind on paying into those accounts. A choice had to be made as to who would get paid at some time, he said, since there wasn't enough money to pay everyone.

"We want to address that as soon as possible," he said.

Precht said he wants to change the monthly financial reports to make them more meaningful and to reflect trends from month to month.

While digging through past reports, he said, he came across the fact that a pay period hadn't been posted, so he posted it.

Precht has had help from Michelle Todd, bookkeeping supervisor, and former hospital bookkeeping supervisor Beverly Hurd, in his efforts to rein in the financial reports.

Precht said he asked Hurd to come out of retirement to help Todd. "She was always a topnotch bookkeeper," he said.

Despite catching up on some payments and paying over \$15,000 for its new bathing system, the hospital had a good month in October, showing \$117,584 in net income. The hospital had \$1,732,118 in gross patient revenue, up from \$906,334 in September.

Patient volume was higher, Administrator Jay Jolly said, with the flu and other bugs going around.

The hospital reported \$63,417 in income from operations and then had \$15,153 in interest income and \$39,014 in other non-operating revenue, tax money from the county.

In other business, the board:

- Scheduled a short meeting for 6:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 15, to discuss the preliminary numbers for next year's budget.

- Heard an update from Scott Focke, part time administrator at Rural Health Ventures, on the clinic's merge with the hospital. Focke recommended that hospital officials decide when to finalize the merge and asked whether they wanted to move toward a contract to merge the Sharon Springs clinic as well.

- Heard from Debbie Hickman about a heart collaborative. The collaborative will meet three times in Hays, Hickman said, with the goal of improving care for heart patients.

Carbon monoxide takes man's life

A 61-year-old Goodland man died Sunday when he was overcome by fumes from a faulty furnace in his trailer at a Nebraska lake.

Marlin Lee Zimbleman was pronounced dead after a 911 call brought emergency medical technicians, the Trenton Rural Fire Department and the Hitchcock County Sheriff's Department to the trailer where he and his wife were staying at Good Life Marina, three miles southwest of Trenton, Neb.

Zimbleman's wife Mary said Monday that her husband had trouble with the furnace and she kept smelling gas fumes. They had gone to bed, but about 4:30 a.m., she became alarmed with the smell and tried to get her husband to leave the house with her. He refused, saying that he couldn't smell anything.

She went to the couple's pickup, where she spent the rest of the night. The next morning about 7:30, she went back to the house, where she found Zimbleman on the bathroom floor.

The Hitchcock County Sheriff Department reported that Zimbleman died from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by improper venting of the LP gas furnace.

He was born Oct. 22, 1942, at St. Francis, the son of Ernest and Martha (Walz) Zimbleman. He was raised in Cheyenne County and graduated from St. Francis Community High School in 1960. His mother, Martha Gilbraith, lives in St. Francis.

Zimbleman's early years were spent on a farm north of St. Francis.

After graduation, Zimbleman enlisted in the Army on Oct. 25, 1961. He began his basic training in

Fort Carson, Colo., before being deployed to Korea for one year and 15 days.

When he returned to the states, he was stationed at Fort Sill, Okla. When his tour of duty was completed on Oct. 23, 1964, he returned home. He was awarded the Expert Rifle and the Good Conduct medals.

Zimbleman was a police officer in Goodland and then transferred to Great Bend. He is a member of the Kansas Peace Officers Association. After a few years of trying different kinds of work, his heart led him back to the family farm in 1974.

Zimbleman was a wheat farmer and became an auctioneer, graduating from the Missouri Auction School at Kansas City, Mo., on Dec. 12, 1980.

He graduated from the Certified Auctioneers Institute at Indiana University in Bloomington, Ind., on April 3, 1982. He became a certified industrial machinery appraiser on Dec. 21, 1987, in Nashville, Tenn. He was a member of the National Auctioneers Association and the Kansas Auctioneers Association.



Zimbleman

corrections

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