

County signs agreement on city power plant calls

By Tom Betz

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Sherman County commissioners signed an agreement Tuesday that sets up procedures for central dispatch to answer overnight trouble calls for the city power and water departments.

The contract, expected to be signed by the city commission on Monday, will have dispatch answer overnight calls for the city power plant, electric department and the water department beginning on Wednesday, July 25.

The city will provide central dispatch will at least two cell phone numbers and backup land-line numbers to reach the on-call city employees. Calls will be recorded to be sure there is no liability against the county the agreement says.

The city asked in May that dispatch begin to answer calls between midnight and 8 a.m. City Manager Wayne Hill said the city is not generating power except in an emergency or when called by Sunflower Electric, and plans to drop the graveyard shift at the plant. Power plant operators have been taking city calls at night.

Crissy Conger, central dispatch director, told the county commissioners in June she was not comfortable with handling the power plant calls, and said she did not think it was something dispatch should do because of the liability issue.

Conger had told the commissioners in June she was concerned that the dispatch

Dispatch center to upgrade 911 trunking

Dispatch Director Crissy Conger told Sherman County commissioners Tuesday that improving the 911 trunk lines to allow calls to be transferred out in an emergency could cost \$8,000 plus a monthly fee

The county has been looking at the system since power problems caused outages in June. Conger said the center was able to get 911 calls then, but she discovered there was no way to reroute them if that became necessary.

Conger said Phillip Ryan of AT&T told her they need to change the direct trunk system for the 911 calls, which is now provided by AT&T, to a tandem trunk system to allow the calls to be transferred to another dispatch center, such as Thomas County in Colby, if the center here goes down.

She said Ryan estimated there would be a one-time installation fee of about \$8,000 plus a monthly charge.

She said Ryan had included two AT&T administrative phone lines in his costs, but she was working with another AT&T person to get these installed. The total monthly cost for the two lines is \$75. They would allow the center to have outgoing lines if the existing lines go out again.

Rasure asked if S&T Communications, which provides the incoming lines now, could do the tandem trunking as well.

"Yes they can," Conger said. "I need to talk to Colby about how theirs is done."

"I am learning a lot about the technical part of this and finding out what some of what I thought was a problem was incorrect. Some of this is misleading until you understand the details."

"The change would keep the 911 system up and make it possible to reroute incoming calls to the sheriff's office or Colby, and possibly even to the National Weather Service location for the emergency command center."

"S&T can do this too?" Thomas asked.

"Yes they can," Conger said. "I am talking to them."

"This is a good time to be working on this," Tiede said, asking Conger to keep the commissioners informed.

Conger told the commissioners she had reviewed the dispatch agreement with the rural fire departments and was having it looked at by the county's rural fire board.

center would be blamed if one of the city on-call people who were called about a power or water problem did not respond.

County Commissioner Mitch Tiede and City Commissioner Josh Dechant, who both were at the June meeting, reached an apparent agreement to have the city provide cell phone numbers to dispatch for the on-call power and water people. At the time,

Conger said she would be willing to try that system for a month.

Thinking the situation had been resolved, Hill said, the city purchased two cell phones for the on-call people and provided the numbers to dispatch along with a list of back up numbers.

During a conference phone call with the county commissioners on June 29, Conger

said she had asked County Attorney Bonnie Selby to draft an agreement and had delivered it to the city. She said the city administration did not like the agreement and turned it over to City Attorney Jeff Mason.

The commissioners did not know anything about any agreement, but asked Conger to get the problem solved.

Tuesday, the county commissioners re-

ceived a new draft agreement from Selby, and Conger, Hill, Power Plant Superintendent Rod Blake and Mason came to discuss it.

"I am not comfortable with this system," Conger said. "I don't like the cell phone thing. I want to have a land line in case the cell phones go down."

"Our understanding was that the cell phone was not a problem," Mason replied. "We have already got the cell phones."

"I want to have the supervisor numbers to give us some land-line options in case the cell phones are down," Conger said.

Tiede asked if the supervisors could provide the landline numbers. Blake said he had provided home phone numbers for the city supervisors, and he could only think of one electric employee who only had a cell phone.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure said the agreement calls for the city to provide at least two numbers, but he was sure the city could provide more. Hill said they had provided the two cell phone numbers and a list of other backup numbers.

Conger asked Mason if the agreement could be modified to add the fact that the calls will be recorded logged. She asked to have the system reviewed after six months to see how things are going. Hill and Mason agreed.

The commissioners unanimously approved the revised agreement, and Commissioner Chuck Thomas said he could sign it if Mason could get it back while the commissioners were meeting. Mason brought the agreement back within an hour.

Virginia high school students tour elevator

TOUR, from Page 1a

ness. Grain may be sold 10 to 15 times before it reaches its final destination. Wheat is sold to brokers or flour mills, he said, but 95 percent of the corn is sold 120 to 140 miles south of here, to feed lots in the Garden City and Dodge City areas.

Hoelting told students that they try to pay farmers as much as they can but they have to set their purchase price from the national market price.

Asked if farmers could go on

strike for better prices, he told students that if they don't like the price here, they can either sell their grain to someone else or store it on the farm and wait for a better price.

Teachers asked about the population of the area. Hoelting told them that the population is static to losing 5 to 10 percent. It is difficult to keep younger people here, he said.

"We have been in a drought cycle for seven years and the economy is tied to agriculture," said Hoelting. "There will always be someone to farm the ground. Without family

ties, though, it is very, very difficult to start farming."

When asked about global warming, Hoelting said he was not sure what is happening, since the climate changes very slowly.

"It is in the best interest of the producers to be the best stewards of the land that they can be," he added.

The students, from the Eastern Mennonite School in Harrisonburg, Va., are selected by the facility for an annual trip to different places, said Blosser, science department chairman at the school. He has the

help of six other instructors on this year's trip, called "Discovery 2007. Creating a Land Ethic."

The students will be exposed to different land uses and how it affects the climate and the future for the people that live there.

The group planned to be on the road starting Monday through Tuesday, July 31, with stops in Missouri, Salina, and in Colorado, Utah, Oregon, Washington, California, Montana and Wyoming. The group is traveling in a bus and camping in city, state and national parks.

Plane lands, skids into St. Francis roadside park

By Karen Krien

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Neil McCumber, maintenance man at the roadside park south of St. Francis, looked up to see a plane sitting in the park just before dark Friday.

About 9:10 p.m., he said, the

single-engine plane tried to land at the Cheyenne County Airport to fuel up. He said the pilot landed down wind, which increased his speed.

The plane apparently hit the runway and skid marks showed on the runway and onto the grassy area at

the north end. Photos taken by Dick Rohweder, St. Francis, show where the plane had swerved and ended up in the park after leaving the runway.

"I called the airport operators, but the plane was still in the park the next morning," Mr. McCumber said. The plane later was taken to

Goodland for repairs.

A Kansas Highway Patrol report identified Matthew Whitaker, 25, of Copperas Cove, Texas, as the pilot of the Cessna T210M. Neither he nor his passenger, Ronald Head, 39, Jacksonville, Fla., was injured.

matters of record

District Traffic

The following fines were paid in the Sherman County District Court: **May 30** — Brian J. Dietrich, \$165 for speeding.

Juan H. Gonzalez-Valles, \$138 for speeding.

Harry A. Jordheim, \$144 for speeding.

Willie Nelson Jr., \$165 for speeding.

Lavon K. Powell, \$120 for overweight load.

Rory E. Sturm, \$126 for unlawful acts with vehicle.

Randolph P. Thibodeaux, \$144 for speeding.

Lawrence L. Twombly Jr., \$144 for speeding.

Director lists projects for Good Samaritan

DIRECTOR, from Page 1a

County Attorney Bonnie Selby on the warranty question.

Krueger said the national office of the management agency, the Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society, has an architect looking at the building plans and is working on a coded set of blueprints that will show where everything is. She said a copy of the blueprints would be given to the county.

Krueger said the rooms are full and they have 30 on a waiting list.

Tiede asked if Krueger knew the status of the center's advisory board, appointed by the county, and if the board was shy of any members. Krueger said she thought the board was short three members.

Rasure asked her to check with the people on the board and see if any of the three who have expired terms would like to be re-appointed.

Krueger said the local Alzheimers support group is starting to meet at the center on the second

Tuesday of each month.

Rasure asked if she knew about the county money to help with projects at the center.

"No," she said, "I need to learn about that. Randy Fitzgerald from Colorado wants to meet with the commissioners on July 31 to talk about future projects."

Rasure said the commissioners take projects case by case. Krueger said she was told there was \$20,000 for capital projects.

"We like to earmark money for specific projects," Rasure told her.

"We don't have a board room in the building," Krueger said. "We were thinking about building on a sunroom on the south side of the dining room. That is something to look at in the future."

Tiede asked if there was enough room to add on to the south, and Krueger said she thought there was.

The commissioners said they would put her and Fitzgerald on the agenda for Tuesday, July 31.

Brick Top Cruises to sponsor

Flatlander Festival Rod Run

CARS, from Page 1a

events of the day will remain the same. The number of dash plaques will be cut from 200 to 150. Bob Gittinger said he felt the vehicle classes need to be adjusted based on participation and the group agreed to do that. The T-shirt order may be cut back so the group does not lose money.

Murray said he has a list of owners who had attended in past years and they will receive flyers about

the event. Stoick said Super 8 would help with the mailing and the printing.

The next meeting will be at 6 p.m. Thursday at the Super 8 meeting room. Murray said everyone is invited to attend and join in organizing the run.

Also present for the organizational meeting were Travis Murray, Kevin Zimmerman, Bob Harkins, Danny and Diane Krayca, Maurice Johnson, Blake Saint, Gittinger and Tom and Patti Purvis

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SPORTS TELEVISION SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

9 a.m. 23/29 ESPN2 NASCAR Busch Qualifying Joliet, Ill.

10 a.m. 22/28 ESPN AFL Football Conference Championship Teams TBA

11 a.m. 23/29 ESPN2 Amateur Softball 2007 KFC World Cup Dominican Republic at United States

12 p.m. 30/27 FXSP ATP Tennis Tournament Hall of Fame Semifinal # 1

1 p.m. 4/6 ABC NASCAR Racing Busch Series in Joliet, Ill.

7/11 CBS Golf John Deere Classic

22/28 ESPN AFL Football Conference Championship Teams TBA

23/29 ESPN2 LPGA Tournament Jamie Farr Owens Corning Classic: Second Round

2 p.m. 30/27 FXSP ATP Tennis Tournament Hall of Fame Semifinal # 2

8/8 NBC Golf American Century Championship

4 p.m. 23/29 ESPN2 Women's Soccer International Match Norway vs United States

5 p.m. 30/27 FXSP MLB Baseball Colorado Rockies at Milwaukee Brewers

5:30 p.m. 22/28 ESPN Indy Car Series Firestone Indy 200

6 p.m. 23/29 ESPN2 Amateur Softball 2007 KFC World Cup Japan at United States from Oklahoma City, Okla.

7 p.m. 5/HBO World Championship Boxing Antonio Margarito vs. Paul Williams; Gatti vs. Gomez; Cintron vs. Matt-hysee

SUNDAY

11 a.m. 22/28 ESPN Amateur Softball 2007 KFC World

Cup Canada at United States 25/38 IND MLB Baseball Pittsburgh Pirates at Atlanta Braves

12 p.m. 30/27 FXSP ATP Tennis Tournament Hall of Fame Finals

12:10 p.m. 99/39 WGN MLB Baseball Houston Astros at Chicago Cubs

1 p.m. 7/11 CBS Golf John Deere Classic

23/29 ESPN2 LPGA Tournament Jamie Farr Owens Corning Classic

8/8 NBC Golf American Century Championship

1:30 p.m. 4/6 ABC WNBA All-Star Game From Washington, D.C.

2 p.m. 28/40 TNT NASCAR Nextel Cup USG Sheetrock 400

3 p.m. 23/29 ESPN2 NTRA Horse Racing Delaware Handicap

60/79 UNIV Copa AmÈrica La gran final Equipos por anunciar

4 p.m. 22/28 ESPN MLB Baseball St. Louis Cardinals vs Philadelphia Phillies

MONDAY

5 p.m. 22/28 ESPN MLB Baseball San Francisco Giants vs Chicago Cubs

30/27 FXSP MLB Baseball Colorado Rockies at Pittsburgh Pirates

7 p.m. 23/29 ESPN2 Amateur Softball 2007 KFC World Cup Championship Teams TBA

20/37 USA WWE Monday Night RAW WWE Monday Night RAW

TUESDAY

5 p.m. 30/27 FXSP MLB Baseball Colorado Rockies at Pittsburgh Pirates

5:30 p.m. 23/29 ESPN2 WNBA Basketball Minnesota Lynx

at Connecticut Sun 11 p.m. 22/28 ESPN SportsCenter

WEDNESDAY

12:10 p.m. 99/39 WGN MLB Baseball San Francisco Giants at Chicago Cubs

5 p.m. 22/28 ESPN MLB Baseball Teams TBA

7 p.m. 23/29 ESPN2 Wednesday Night Fights Mike Oliver vs Cruz Carabahal

5 a.m. 28/40 TNT PGA Tournament British Open: First Round

THURSDAY

5 p.m. 23/29 ESPN2 MLL Lacrosse Rochester Rattlers at Boston Cannons

30/27 FXSP MLB Baseball Colorado Rockies at Washington Nationals from RFK Stadium

7 p.m. 23/29 ESPN2 MLS Soccer 2007 Sierra Mist All-Star Game.

5 a.m. 28/40 TNT PGA Tournament British Open: Second Round

FRIDAY

12:10 p.m. 99/39 WGN MLB Baseball Arizona Diamondbacks at Chicago Cubs

1 p.m. 28/40 TNT PGA Tournament British Open: Second Round

2:30 p.m. 23/29 ESPN2 U.S. Open Series Tennis Countrywide Classic: Quarterfinal

3 p.m. 28/40 TNT PGA Tournament British Open: Second Round

5 p.m. 23/29 ESPN2 NASCAR Busch Practice Madison, Ill.

30/27 FXSP MLB Baseball Colorado Rockies at Washington Nationals

7 p.m. 23/29 ESPN2 Friday Night Fights Elisier Castillo vs Fres Oquendo

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