

# City reviews incentives policy

**By Tom Betz**  
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City commissioners have been talking for years about developing an economic development incentive policy and last Monday the commissioners reviewed a draft presented by City Manager Doug Gerber.

Gerber said he had been working on the draft for a couple of months, and did some research about what other are doing and the policy reflects some of what other cities are doing.

"I hope I was able to mesh together the ideas into something specific for Goodland," he said.

The general statement says the policy will provide the commission and staff with direction and guidelines for evaluating economic development proposals, and it would provide the public with information on the tools the city may utilize to assist economic development. The guidelines would help the public understand how a proposal would be analyzed and the review process for those who might request economic development assistance.

Gerber said the policy talks about a case by case basis and gives a list of things the city might do without tying the city's hands on specific things.

He said he thought it was a comprehensive list, and the policy does create a management review committee of the mayor, one other commissioner, city manager and

other city staff as needed.

He said the review committee would handle requests that come to the city and the committee would represent the city commission when talking to a prospective business. He said the final decision on the incentives would be with the commission, but with the review committee the commission would have input on what the city could do in each case.

"It is a starting point," said Mayor Josh Dechant. "I think a few of the items are things we have already done such as industrial revenue bonds, micro loans, remodeling city owned property and special benefit districts."

Gerber said some of the things the city have done in the past, but as you get further down the list are things the city has not done.

Commissioner John Garcia said he could see some of the things have been done like what the city did with the Wolak Building.

Commissioner Rick Billinger said he had a question about gifting land or buildings.

Gerber said that could be separated from the building remodeling portion.

He said he was looking at a plan where the city would do things based on the number of jobs created, but decided that was too complicated at this point.

Billinger said the city did about \$400,000 to help Northern Sun

locate at Caruso.

Commissioner Dave Daniels said the city did about \$500,000 to remodel the Wolak Building.

Gerber asked about the option to help pay for a feasibility study if requested.

Billinger said that would be something to look at on a case by case basis.

He asked about the option about crediting a utility bill and how that might work.

Gerber said one of the things he had found in his research was offering to pay to help relocate employees for the new company. He said he knows that St. Francis has done that in the past to help bring a business to the area.

The policy would allow the city to waive all or a portion of various city permit fees, inspection fees or utility connection fees.

The policy would allow for extending city utilities to the property line or a location on the property. Dechant said that was similar to what the city did for the power to Frontier Ag's new grain storage facility.

Under the evaluation criteria Gerber said the city will consider granting incentives on a clear showing of positive economic benefit to the city.

The policy says the city will not consider applications that would amount to a bidding war with a nearby city in the state.

Another point says the city will consider any competitive advantage that might be created by an incentive over an existing business in the city.

Dechant said that would be similar to the approval of the industrial revenue bonds for the Holiday Inn Express, and the reaction from the other motels in the city. He said the total effect of the new motel has been positive.

City Commissioner Annette Fairbanks asked about a proposed application fee of \$100.

Daniels said he would rather not have a dollar amount.

Billinger said he would rather not see any application fee. He said he felt the policy was broad enough and think that is good.

Garcia said he agreed and felt a lot of the pieces are in place.

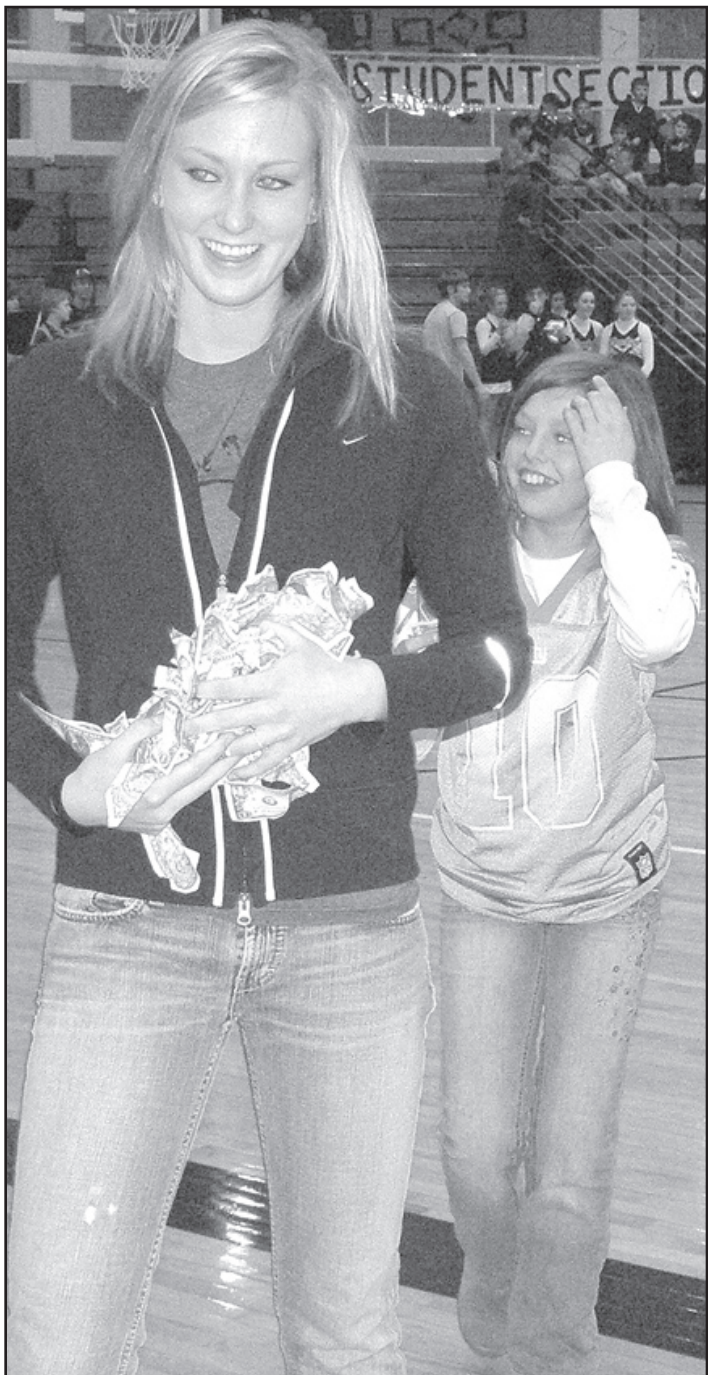
Dechant said the problem was the details were not written down.

Fairbanks said looking at things on a case by case basis would be good in case the city gets a request and the commission realizes something might have been missed.

Dechant asked Gerber to revise the few questions and bring the policy back to the next city meeting for formal adoption.

The city commission will meet at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 16, because the city will be closed on Monday for President's Day.

## FCCLA money winner



FCCLA member Alexis Bateman (left) helped Sianna Miller (right) with the dollar bills she grabbed in the annual Monday Grab on Friday. Miller grabbed \$49 in one minute. Audrey Titus was the other winner who collected \$38 dollars.  
Foto by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-news

# Verdict in: Found guilty on all five charges

**VERDICT, from Page 1**

had been deposited on a surface.

Late Thursday morning the defendant, Steven Moyer, took the stand. He testified he was an employee of Bursch Trucking and agreed he was frequently late in getting to work. He did not graduate from high school, but attended Boulder Valley Technical College in Colorado, studying computers and robotics and had lots of computer games and computer software in the home office which was located in the master bedroom of his Goodland residence.

He had many different employers over the years, he testified, and his work experience included three years working in computers, a year as a technician supplying breathing apparatus to clients, three and a half years as a long haul trucker and a period of self employment as an apartment manager among other jobs.

He met his wife when she was 16 and he was 24. He is currently 40 years old. He testified their marriage started deteriorating when he was gone for weeks at a time as a truck driver. Issues in their marriage were that he did not spend enough time with the children and their deteriorating financial situation, he said.

As a result of his wife's demands that he spend more time with the children he started talking to their oldest child, then played games with her, he said.

As a landlord he would use voice recorders to document transactions with his tenants, he testified. He also secretly taped the children to catch them misbehaving and to record their singing, he said.

He related their move to Goodland took a number of trips during August 2008 and that his long distance trucking job ended around that

time when he was laid off.

After a lunch break Moyer's testimony continued. After the move to Goodland the subject of divorce came up again, he said, with his wife complaining he only spent time with their oldest child and not with the other children.

Going specifically to the information on a tape recording played for the jury Wednesday, Moyer said he and his oldest daughter had gone out to the shed to look for the remote to a television. It was a cold October night and the door to the shed would not stay closed. They brought a light from the house out to the shed and plugged it in, and he used screws and a bracket to fasten the door closed from the inside. His daughter pulled math homework from a backpack to work on while they talked. The references to numbers one through five heard on the tape were in reference to math problems, he said. He denied the recorder used to record the encounter was his.

Earlier in the trial the victim had testified the numbers were a code referring to specific types of sex acts. She testified she had taken the recorder from his bedroom and hidden it in the shed to make the recording.

A birthday list which had been introduced as evidence earlier was brought up. Moyer denied seeing the list that was entered into evidence, but said because the two oldest daughters had birthdays close together, he asked each of them to draw up a list of what they wanted for their birthday and said he would take each of them to Walmart to compare prices and look at what was on their list. He said he had taken the girls in separate trips on the same day to Walmart to look at the things they wanted.

Earlier the victim had identified the list and testified the visit to Wal-

mart had been followed by sex acts performed in the family vehicle to earn her birthday presents. The defendant denied this had happened.

Asked what type of family environment was in his home, the defendant said he believed in "telling it like it is," and spoke his mind. He said they frequently had family meetings and the purpose of the meetings was to resolve small problems before they became big. The children didn't enjoy the meetings, he said, "because I'm wordy." He said some meetings lasted two hours because he was capable of taking a brief item and talking at length about it.

He testified that a piece of paper that had been identified earlier in the trial as a contract regarding sex acts was a piece of scratch paper he used to explain how a computer worked. He said the three signatures which the victim testified he had her place on the contract were not there when he had seen the paper. He went through the document for the jury, giving his interpretation of what the numbers and symbols on the document meant.

At the conclusion of his testimony he denied any sexual contact between himself and the victim. On cross examination he also denied the obsession his wife had accused him in her journal of having with their oldest daughter.

After answering further questions from the prosecuting attorney and from his attorney, Moyer left the stand and his attorney requested a recess. Following that, the defense rested.

Friday, following instructions to the jury from District Judge Scott Showalter, Ladner gave closing argument for the prosecution. She reviewed how much physical evidence had been brought forward to prove the allegations against the

defendant in the case despite threats, secrecy and control mechanisms he had used against the victim.

She praised the victim for having the intelligence to gather the proof. She asked the jurors to use their common sense in evaluating the consistency of the testimony and the evidence and compare it with the case made by the defense. She repeated parts of the recording to make the argument that the conversation was not about math homework. Ladner called the amount of physical evidence available "remarkable" and recounted for the jury how it confirmed the testimony by the victim.

Mason, giving the closing argument for the defense, urged the jury not to look at the volume of evidence, but to consider the weight of each piece of evidence. He said there were inconsistencies in the story. "They change all the time," he said. The arguments in the marriage took place in front of the children, he said, and there was plenty of time to concoct the charges against his client.

He argued that law enforcement was not objective in looking at the evidence — they presumed his client guilty "from the get-go." He said the evidence was not consistent with the testimony and if the testimony was true, there should have been more evidence. His wife wanting a divorce and his daughter being resentful of his discipline were the elements that had led to the accusations in this case, according to Mason.

Following a brief response from the prosecution, the two alternate jurors were released and the jury went into deliberation, emerging at 3:17 p.m. with the verdict of guilty on all counts.

Showalter said sentencing will be held in April.

## More good news for movie going crowd

**THEATRE, from Page 1**

and trimmed with hammered copper, the focus of the lobby. That was a big deal for the community.

In 1990, when Branda became owner of the theatre, a new heating, air conditioning and analog stereo sound system was installed.

In 1994 the front, marquee and lobby were again remodeled, and in March of 1999, Dolby Sound was installed.

Now, Branda is climbing one more step in his ownership — in-

stalling digital and all it provides for the entertainment of his movie goers.

The installation will occur Monday through Thursday, March 1-4, Branda said.

The Sherman Theatre will again take its place among the finest such theaters in the region.

Branda has six part time employees.

And on a final note, Branda added that old trailers from the Sherman and the Goodland Drive In, will be a part of the pre show for this last month of film.

## matters of record

The following real estate transactions have been reported by the Sherman County register of deeds:

Abel Zarate and Zoila Zarate convey and warrant to Judith Mojica, as custodian for Isreal Mojica, and Judith Mojica, as custodian of Samantha Mojica, Lot 16, Block 12 in Sharp's Addition to the City of Goodland.

Terry Puentes quit claims to Oscar E. Lopez Armenta and/or Sonia

Ramiez Alvarado, Lots 26, 27 and 28 in Block 18, Rules First Addition to the City of Kanorado.

Justin D. Bentzinger conveys and warrants to Leon A. Kelly and Susan

J. Kelly the E65' of Lots 21, 22, 23 and 24; Block 66 in Original Town of Goodland.

Marietta L. Whalen and B.E. Whalen, Trustees of the Marietta L.

Whalen Trust to Leon A. Kelly and Susan J. Kelly the S1' of Lot 1, all of Lots 2 and 3 in Block 66 of Original Town of Goodland.

## ACCEPTING SEALED BIDS

**The Sherman County Commissioners will be taking sealed bids for roof repairs on the fairgrounds 4-H building and the house at the fairgrounds. 4-H building repairs will include replacement of screws and application of roof coating. House repairs will include tear off, replace shingles, rain gutters, east siding and screens. Pick up complete description at Sherman County Courthouse or call William McKnight at (785) 890-4801. Bids will be accepted until 3 p.m. on February 22, 2010.**

## IMPROVEMENT GRANTS Available

The Sherman County Economic Development Office is offering grants for Sherman County residents and businesses for exterior improvements to properties. **If you are interested in this program, please stop by the office at 104 E. 10th St., Goodland, to pick up the requirements and application. The deadline for returning applications is February 19, 2010, at 4 p.m..**

## American Cancer Society

# Daffodil Sale

**\$10 Bundle/Daffodils**  
**\$15 Vase/Daffodils**  
**\$25 Boyd's Bear and A Bundle**



Order by February 21st; Delivery March 10-12  
**Contact: Sherida Shoff**  
**(785) 899-5047**

## 2nd Annual NW Kansas Beginners Pheasant Hunt

**February 26 and 27, beginning at 4 p.m. MT**



*Hunter Education course and Pheasant hunt at Kuhrt Ranch*  
[www.kuhrtranch.com](http://www.kuhrtranch.com) (for directions)

**Pre-registration and application is required.**  
Class room limit: 25

Call Brent Flanders at (785) 899-5306 or Mike Hopper at (785) 899-5199

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