

County to take over ambulance service

AMBULANCE, from Page 1

A question was raised about keeping the ambulances at the hospital if the county took over ownership.

Precht said that would have to be worked out based on the square feet the ambulance was using, but it would be less than the present costs.

Thomas said the bottom line is it would be better if the ambulance

service was not hospital based.

Thomas asked Eckhardt about the board's opinion of the ambulance situation.

She said the board went into detail at their meeting on Monday about the ambulance service being hospital run versus the county handling the operation.

Commissioner Max Linin asked if the county took over the ambu-

lance service would a county operates service receive more money from medicare.

Precht said it would not receive any more money, but the county could keep more of the federal dollars that are being offset through the hospital.

"The end result is how do we keep those federal dollars and not take the property taxes," he said.

The commissioners asked Jolly and Precht to research other business models that are operated through counties to give them some information to review.

Precht said he would probably ask Gleason for help on that.

The commissioners agreed to work on a plan to take over the ambulance service by the end of the year.

Board member McCants said the hospital is losing money operating the ambulance, and they need to find money or change how they are doing business.

"The board's concern is we are in the red by operating through the hospital," she said.

She asked if the county could provide more money to help buy the ambulance.

Strnad said she did not believe the county had any more money to give at this time.

Thomas agreed with not having money, but said it was a no brainer to look at having the county take over the ambulance service.

"We have the intention of providing excellent care," Eckhardt said, "but finding a way to do it better with less cost."

Kansas second best state for wind energy resources

A study of the winds at a height common for turbine blades by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory study has ranked Kansas the second best state in the nation for wind energy resources. Kansas was second only to Texas in its wind energy resources.

The study, which measured winds at 80 meters (270 feet), found Kansas could generate 3.6 million gigawatt hours of electricity from wind — more than tripling the 1 million gigawatt hours previously estimated. This is the first com-

prehensive update of states' wind energy potential since 1993.

The winds in Kansas were again proven to be among the best on Earth for producing wind energy.

That doesn't surprise wind project developer Rob Freeman, chief executive officer of Lenexa based TradeWind Energy. The firm developed the state's largest wind project, the Smoky Hills Wind Farm, one of the highest producing wind energy sites in the central United States.

The Smoky Hills Wind Farm generates nearly 250 megawatts

(MW) of power — enough to power 75,000 homes.

"The wind resource in Kansas is abundant and it results in electricity costs to the consumer that are lower and more predictable than any other form of electric generation," says Freeman. "Kansas is clearly one of the nation's marquee locations for producing wind and has incredible potential to supply itself and other states with cost effective, clean, sustainable energy for generations to come."

In addition, Freeman — whose

TradeWind Energy was awarded the 2009 Kansas Governor's Energy Achievement Award — said wind energy development has the potential to bring unrivaled economic benefits to Kansas.

"Wind project development represents an unprecedented opportunity for economic development in the state's rural areas," Freeman says. "Over 20 years, the economic impact of the Smoky Hills Wind Farm alone is expected to be more than \$100 million."

Among the project's financial

benefits are royalty payments collected by 120 landowners and the creation of more than 250 construction jobs and 25 permanent well-paying jobs.

Located west of Salina, the wind project takes less than 2 percent of land out of use for its 155 wind turbines spread over 20,000 acres.

For more information about the National Renewable Energy Laboratory's study findings, visit http://www.windpoweringamerica.gov/filter_detail.asp?itemid=2542. For more information about TradeWind Energy, visit www.tradewindenenergy.com.

Kiwanis flag project now numbers 400 plus

The U.S. Flag project the Goodland Kiwanis Club started two years has climbed to over 400, said a project co-chairman and the project is seeking more places to put new flags and get renewals from the ones who participated last year.

Ray Smee, project co-chairman, said Wednesday the club members are looking to put out more flag sleeves in yards and build more flag poles to keep up with the project.

He said so far the total is more than 400, and he said there is plenty of time to get signed up before the flags are put out for Memorial Day,

May 31. "Last year we put flags sleeves out on Memorial Day," he said, "and I am sure we would try to get one put in if someone is interested."

The Kiwanis U.S. Flag project puts a flag sleeve in the person's lawn and then on five main holidays puts the flags out and takes them down and maintains the flags between holidays. The Kiwanis Club puts out American flags on Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, Labor Day and Veterans Day.

The cost of the program is \$30, and Smee said those who have

participated should have received a gold renewal mail-in envelope. Smee said more than 200 renewals have been received so far for this year's flag project.

Smee said Kiwanis added Sept. 11, commemorating the attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and those who fought to stop the fourth plane that crashed in Pennsylvania. He said this one is at no additional cost, and said the idea was that if there is an early snow it might be hard to get the flags out for Veterans Day, Nov. 11.

The money this project gener-

ates goes to many Kiwanis local projects, he said, including Toys for Tots, Turkey Hoop Shoot, Freedom Fest fireworks, Little League boys and girls teams and scholarships for local students.

Anyone wishing to join the U.S. Flag project may contact any Kiwanis member to get a sign up form or contact Steve Sitton, project co-chairman, at (785) 890-2943, Smee at (785) 890-2472, Kevin Rasure (785) 890-7020 or 890-7149, and Dr. Richard Whitmore (785) 890-2617.

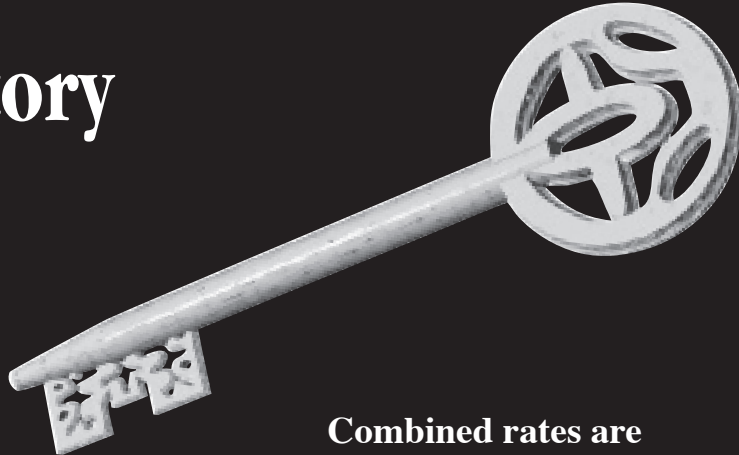
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