

Few complaints on fireworks

By Tom Betz
nt.betz@nwkansas.com

Commissioners on Tuesday heard one complaint about the first year experiment of allowing fireworks to be shot off within the city over the July 4 Independence Day holiday.

Don K. McClain, 524 Cherry Ave., said he was not in favor of allowing fireworks, but thought he could go along with it until he found a tail section of what appeared to be a large firework rocket at the edge of his patio.

"Then I got a little upset," he said as he handed the burned out piece to Commissioner Dave Daniels.

"I wondered what might have happened if this had been smoldering on my roof," he said.

Mayor Josh Dechant said this was the first complaint he had heard.

McClain said he had worked for the city years ago and had been a councilman, and said he understood what the commissioners were trying to do. He said in his opinion the city ought to go back to banning fireworks.

City Manager Doug Gerber said this was the first negative comment he had heard about the fireworks.

"I felt the police had a good approach in handling calls," he said. "The officers gave verbal warnings and said they would not write a ticket unless they had to come back. In most cases the people quit shooting off their fireworks."

Daniels said he had one call about fireworks. Commissioner John Garcia said had a call about fireworks.

Dechant said he had not heard any complaints and with all the fireworks being set off he said the sales must have been good.

Chief Ray Smee said Friday the verbal warnings seemed to work. He said the officers were called to several places on Saturday after the 10 p.m. cutoff time, and the rain helped cut them off about 11 p.m. on Sunday.

He said there were a few calls during the week, and the officers went to the addresses and found young kids shooting off fireworks. The officers talked to the kids and their parents. He said the parents told the officers they did not know the kids had the fireworks.

Smee said the ordinance allows people to shoot off fireworks from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on July 3 and 4. It allows the police to write tickets for shooting off fireworks out side of these hours that would go to the municipal court and can receive a fine of up to \$500.

Gerber said he was sure the rocket found by McClain was not allowed under the definition in the city ordinance. He said he feels it was not bad for the first year, and knows the city will have to do more education next year to make sure people know what is allowed and what is not allowed under the city ordinance.

He said the ordinance does allow a citizen to apply for a permit to hold a larger fireworks display, and in such a case requires the fire chief to inspect the place and equipment to be used to set off the fireworks display.

"I think it went well for the first year," Gerber said.

In other business the commissioner:

- Public Works Director Rich Simon introduced Kenton Keith, a new employee for the parks department.

- Read a proclamation for Jay Cotter who will be playing in the 37th Annual All-Star Shrine Bowl

Game in Pittsburg on Saturday, July 31. The proclamation signed by Dechant declares July 31 as "Jay Cotter" Kansas All-Star Football Shrine Bowl Day.

- Held two closed door sessions — 20 minutes and 10 minutes — to discuss attorney-client matters with the four commissioners, city manager and attorney by phone. No action was taken when the commission returned to open session.

- Heard good news from Charlie Krull, representative from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas, that because of a reduction in claims over the past year by city employees the city received a refund check of \$116,637.

"I like to deliver good news," Krull said. "When I was here back in March for the renewal I brought back \$59,907 refund for last year."

"This was an even better year and I get to give the city a check for refund of \$116,637."

Krull said part of the decrease in cost was a reduction in contracts from 55 to 51 the last year.

He said as long as the city has more than 50 contracts Blue Cross Blue Shield will honor the guaranteed retention, but if it drops below 50 the city would go into the small group pool and lose the guaranteed retention.

"It is always a thrill to refund 21 percent of your premium," he said.

Dechant said the city employees working safe has saved money and they deserve to be complimented for their efforts.

- Gerber said the Kansas Department of Transportation has changed their mind and will allow the bids for the third phase of the K-27 project to be let in August.

"I want to thank Commissioner John Garcia and Mayor Dechant for making phone calls," Gerber said, "they did make a difference."

The hope is that Smoky Hill of Hays that is doing phase one and two would have a good chance of winning the bid for phase three because they are already on scene.

- Heard an update from Don Holler of Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Associates, on the water project. Holler said the treatment plant is moving ahead, and said he found they had to reroute a pipe because he had two pipes running through a pier and had to move them over.

Mike Miller of Miller Construction Services, said he is planning to put up the building and pour the floor later. He said this could save about 20 days.

- Simon reported the water line project is going well, and is all done on Caldwell Ave. He said the crew has a couple of crossings to do with six inch line, and hopes to do pressure testing. He said once the pressure testing is done then service connections are coming to move to the new lines.

Commissioner Annette Fairbanks asked about the yards that are being torn up.

Darin Neufeld, engineer from EBH, said reseeding the lawns is part of the contract, and they have not done that because they have to back and dig up the yards to make the service connections.

- Held two closed sessions — one 5 minutes and one for 15 minutes — to discuss personnel matters. The first session was the four commissioners, and Gerber was asked to be part of the second session. No action was taken when the commission returned.



The Goodland Energy Resources power plant north of Caruso will be sold at sheriff's sale at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, July 27, to give the

banks clear title to the land and equipment.

Photo by Ava Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Energy plant, land being sold to give banks clear title for buyer

By Tom Betz
nt.betz@nwkansas.com

A legal notice running in The Goodland Star-News says lot 6 of the Goodland Energy Center north of Caruso is to be sold at a sheriff's sale at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, July 27 at the Sherman County Courthouse.

Based on the legal description the property being sold is the unfinished coal-fired power plant on the south portion of the energy center.

In the legal First National Bank is listed as the plaintiff and a large list of people who were stockholders in the Goodland Energy Resources, a limited liability corporation, are listed as the defendants.

Jerry Fairbanks, attorney for First National Bank said the sheriff's sale is another step in the process to get clear title to the land and equipment to be able to find a buyer for the power plant who would come in and complete the project to get it up and running.

He said the lawsuit was filed some time ago with all the banks involved, but the First National Bank is the lead bank and the only one listed.

He said the two sides agreed to go to mediation in March and all assembled at the Sherman County courthouse where an agreement was worked out.

At that time GER and all the banks

had agreed to try to sell the power plant to MAS, a company that had indicated an interest in the project, and as part of the agreement MAS would pay \$1.5 million to the contractors to settle their claims. MAS had 60 days to complete the deal, but Fairbanks said they decided on the 58th day not to go ahead.

Fairbanks said another part of the mediation agreement was if the sale to MAS did not go through the banks could go to a sheriff's sale to get good title and then it would be up to the banks to try to sell the power plant.

He said the banks are hoping to find another company willing to

come in and buy the existing plant and to settle with the contractors. The contractors are owed about \$2.5 million, he said, but the mediation agreement was to pay them off with \$1.5 million.

Fairbanks said he believes the power plant can be sold and a deal made with the contractors once the sheriff's sale is completed.

He said a group interested in the ethanol plant was visiting this week and expressed interest in seeing the power plant completed to provide the steam to enhance the ethanol plant.

matters of record

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

Alvin Keith Baker and Evelyn P. Baker to Crissy Livengood, Lot 7 in Block 2 of Eastridge Subdivision of the Academy Addition to the City of Goodland.

Douglas E. Hall and April J. Hall convey and warrant to Austin Ray Spreser and Abbi Spreser, Lots 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24 in Block 11 of the Town of Ruleton; Lots 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20,

21, 22, 23 and 24 in Block 12 of the Town of Ruleton; All of Block 17 except Lots 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25 of the Town of Ruleton; all of Block 18 of the Town of Ruleton; a tract of land in SE/4 of Sec. 22, T8S, R41W, except a tract.

James S. McBride and Pamila McBride convey and warrant to Don Williams and Helen Williams, the N/2 of Sec. 30; N/2 of Sec. 29; SW/4 of Sec. 20; NW/4 of Sec. 28; SE/4 of Sec. 28, all in T10S, R39W.

Deutsche Bank National Trust Company to Bart Larson, attorney-

in-fact for Saxon Mortgage Services, Inc., Lots 14 and 15, S20' of Lot 16 in Block 4 of CK&N Addition to the City of Goodland.

Verneita Sellman conveys and warrants to Denny L. Windell, the W/2 of Sec. 24, T8S, R42W, save and expect a tract of land in SE/4 of Sec. 24, T8S, R42W; AND SE/4 of Sec. 13, T8S, R42W.

Clarence E. Sellman Trust UTD 3/28/1990, Marcalee Carroll, successor trustee, to Denny L. Windell, the W/2 of Sec. 13, T8S, R42W.

Dennis Stegman to Dave Horinek

and Kim Horinek, a tract of land in NW/4 of Sec. 30, T8S, R39W, containing 1.78 acres +/-.

Jodeen Stegman to David L. Horinek and Kimberly Ann Horinek, a tract of land in NW/4 of Sec. 30, T8S, R39W, containing 1.78 acres +/-.

corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

PEOPLE WHO READ NEWSPAPERS ARE

BETTER PREACHERS AND TEACHERS

It all starts with Newspapers

Got News?
899-2338

Sherman County Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Saturday, July 17, 2010
7 a.m. to 11 a.m. Mountain time
HHW Facility
1820 Cherry Street, Goodland
For more information,
please contact **Kenny Griffith at 821-1024.**

No early drop-offs or no drop-offs without personnel present.
There will be no USED OIL collected at this time.

FOR SHERMAN COUNTY RESIDENTS ONLY!

Relay For Life Guitar Chance Drawing

\$5 for 1 ticket • \$10 for 3 tickets

Enter for a chance to win a one of a kind Relay For Life Guitar.
All proceeds benefit Relay For Life.

See the guitar on display at:
S&T Communications: 6/28-7/2
Smitty's Sports/Mann's Jewelry: 7/5-7/9
Bankwest of Kansas: 7/12-7/16
Western State Bank: 7/19-7/23
Madd Hatters Music Emporium: 7/26-7/30

Tickets can be purchased at the above businesses when the guitar is being displayed, or by calling Aaron Thompson (785) 821-4222, Amy Thompson (785) 821-2700, or Ashley Kear (785) 821-2412

Canned Goods For Relay For Life 2010

Please donate canned goods to the following locations for this years Relay for Life so that we may use them to keep our luminaries in place. There are collection bins at the following locations:

Gleason's Chiropractic
First National Bank
Prairie Rose Floral Co.
Jacque's Hallmark Store
The Goodland Star-News

The canned goods that are donated will be given to the Genesis Program here in Goodland following the conclusion of Relay for Life. Please help in collecting canned goods not only for one cause but two.