

Parade marks beginning of fair week



The fair parade on Saturday evening marked the beginning of the Northwest Kansas District Free Fair which runs until Saturday. A wagon pulled by four draft horses was part of the parade as well as floats, fancy cars, farm machinery as well as fire trucks, Sherman County Sheriff's vehicles and City of Goodland police cars. Cindy Bowman passed out small American Flags for the kids to wave at the parade. The sheep and goat show is today starting at 1 p.m. Starting at 6 p.m. is the Kids Pedal Tractor Pull. It is also carnival wristband night where kids can ride all night for the cost of a wristband. There will also be free ice cream on the midway. Wednesday night is the Professional Bull Riders. The Texaco Country Showdown Talent Show is Thursday night and the modified tractor pull is Friday night. Starting at 1 p.m. is the Tri-State Royal of Champions.

Photos by Pat Schiefen and Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News

County commissioners reviewed agreement

By Tom Betz
nt.betz@nwkansan.com

Sherman County commissioners reviewed a proposed agreement with Goodland Regional Medical Center to operate the ambulance service, and felt it was time for the county to request the new Medicare and Medicaid numbers to be able to operate in January.

The commissioners reviewed the proposed agreement with County Attorney Bonnie Selby, and she felt a number of things in the proposal needed to be revised.

Bruce Gleason, ambulance service director met with the commissioners and asked about the numbers for Medicare and the state.

Commissioner Larry Enfield asked Gleason if he could apply for the needed numbers and if there was time to get them before the county takes over in January.

Gleason said he could make the application and phone calls to get the process started. He said he has downloaded the form for Medicare. He said it might take 90 days to get the numbers.

Gleason said he has talked to a company about a program to do the billing.

"We do have to get the billing set up," he said. "The company will do some on site training. We have to have this in place by January or we can't bill for the ambulance."

"We are going to be taking over the ambulance," Enfield said, "we don't seem to have a choice."

Gleason said the county will need separate tax identification numbers and separate Medicare numbers, and there is a fee for the Medicaid number.

Enfield asked if the county needs to give Gleason permission to acquire the number and pay the fees.

Commissioner Cynthia Strnad said she would make such a motion, and Enfield said he would second it.

County Attorney Bonnie Selby asked under what authority was

Gleason going to be doing this as the hospital continues to operate the ambulance service for the next several months.

Strnad said the county had a letter from the hospital saying they are not going to continue to operate the ambulance service.

Gleason asked if the county has to do a resolution to make it official.

Enfield said the current contract ends in August, and the hospital has said they would operate until the end of the year and then bow out.

Selby asked what the proposed agreement was about if the county was going to take over the ambulance service.

Enfield said he had met with the hospital administration and told them the county did not want to take the ambulance service over, but felt even if we go with the agreement the county has to get these numbers in place by January.

Selby said she had a question about taking official action saying the county is getting the ambulance service back and proceeding to make application for permits and numbers.

Enfield said he is hoping the county and hospital can work something out.

Selby asked Gleason if he can

corrections

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apply for the certificates and numbers without having some official action.

Gleason said he did not know, but he would call and let the commissioners and Selby know.

Strnad said with the letter in hand from the hospital she felt the county had the basis to move forward.

Pointing to the proposed agreement Selby said it appeared the hospital was proposing to continue to operate the ambulance service.

Commissioner Max Linin said he felt Gleason ought to check it out and the commissioners would look at the answers at the next meeting.

Strnad said the proposed agreement says the county will be the operator of the service, and says the county has to do the billing and we need to have the numbers. She says the proposal says the service will keep the same name Northwest Kansas EMS, but need different permit numbers.

Gleason said he thought some of the numbers might be able to be transferred to the county, but knew the Medicaid and Medicare numbers will not transfer.

"We have been told twice we need to get new numbers," Strnad said.

Gleason said one takes about 30

days and the other can take up to 90 days.

"We need to meet with the hospital board and get this ironed out," Enfield said.

Strnad said it appeared Selby had lots of little notes on her copy of the proposed agreement from the hospital.

Selby said she had several things that needed to be revised, and felt there were some things in the agreement that did not belong.

Enfield asked Selby if she could draft an agreement and bring it back to the commissioners at their next meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 9.

Selby said she would work on that.

She said part of the problem was the draft agreement did not include all the additional pieces such as a management agreement and what that fee would be to the county. The proposed agreement says the county would own the ambulance service, but the hospital would operate it through a management agreement, but that was not spelled out.

The proposed agreement says the ambulance service would be operated as a department of the county and the county would be responsible for paying all costs associated with

furnishing the service.

"Sherman County shall procure all licenses, permits and registrations necessary to provide the ambulance service..."

"Sherman County shall employ or otherwise contact with all personnel necessary to furnish the ambulance service including emergency medical technicians and the director."

The agreement says the county cannot appoint a director without hospital prior written approval, "which the hospital may grant or withhold in its sole and absolute discretion."

The hospital would lease the ambulance space to Sherman County, and the county "shall procure and pay all necessary utilities for the premises."

Another section says "Sherman County shall provide or arrange for all necessary billing and collecting for the ambulance service."

The proposed agreement does include a bill of sale transferring all the ambulances and current equip-

ment to the county.

The commissioners agreed to let Selby work on the agreement and hope to work out a meeting with the hospital board.

In other business the commissioners:

- Held a 15 minute closed door session with their attorney from Wichita, Bud Cowan and with Selby. At this point Linin had not arrived, but did arrive and joined the session about five minutes after it started.

When the meeting reopened Strnad made a motion to hire the Denver law firm of Wheeler, Trigg, O'Donnell to assist in the legal matters dealing with Rocky Mountain Chip Seal. Linin seconded and it passed 3-0.

- Approved two neighborhood revitalization applications. One for a garage for Shad Sheldon and a garage for Enfield. The applications were approved by Strnad and Linin with Enfield abstaining because of a conflict of interest.

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