

Positive news in economic development report

By Tom Betz

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News was positive about the grocery store and several other projects when the economic development report was presented to the city commissioners on Monday.

Michael Solomon, economic development director said he did not add any new contacts this month, but was looking at projects he believes will happen at some point. He said many of the other contacts do not make the report.

He said the City Commission offered incentives to Village Markets Inc. more than a year ago to put a store in Goodland to be located in the Wolak Building at 1006 Center Street. After many months of negotiations, a building lease was signed. The owner of the store, Sam Mancini, is changing all of his store names to Bella's Market and has set an opening date for the spring. He has had

contractors here looking at the building. Mancini has contacted the city last week and plans to start work within a month.

A company with a Goodland facility is in the process of building an addition to their existing facility, Solomon said. The company decision makers were in town and have had some preliminary plans drawn up.

This is a 9,600 square foot building expansion, he said. This project has been approved with the company leadership and is on schedule to be completed by December or January. We took them the applications for neighborhood revitalization and they filled them out.

"We are working towards annexing them into the city limits," he said.

Solomon said a national company with an existing facility in Goodland has contacted economic development about a possible expansion. The expansion would be a

manufacturing plant, and would be brings an additional 30 jobs to Goodland.

At the company's request, Solomon said he contacted the State of Kansas and they offered the company an incentive package. The decision on whether or not the expansion will happen is being made by their corporate board.

The Company has had a Phase I environmental study done and they are working on the site plan. He said the company asked the city to look at what money might be available for a rail spur. We spoke with KDOT and they suggested a grant program they have available. We are in the process of filling out that grant paperwork.

Met with KDOT officials to see what grants are available for this company as well as the Industrial park and the City. The Company inquired about air quality and water quality standards. The project

continues to move forward, he said.

He said Cowboy Corner Express is open and doing well, and Casey's Corner should be up and going in October.

Northwest Tech and Goodland are being featured in a documentary about the Apple iPad. The film crew came to Goodland in early September. The video will be featured on Apple's web site, and thinks this will be up by November. This will be a wonderful way to get the word out about our community, Solomon said.

The College applied for a grant to remodel the old telephone building on Main, and expects to know in October if the grant is awarded.

He said the Rural Opportunity Zone project of Gov. Brownback continues to be a hot topic, and he said a lot of discussion is about how to market the program. He said one idea is to hit out of state job fairs and

he will be attending an upcoming one at Fort Carson where the U.S. Army will be downsizing by 4,000 soldiers.

On the request to house state offices, Solomon said he has not heard from the governor's office since the information was sent to Topeka.

Mayor John Garcia asked if the governor would be making the decisions about which state offices might be relocated.

Solomon said he thinks it will be a department by department basis.

"I am sure some that will be based on cost," he said, "but I am not sure who is going to make the final decisions."

In other business the commission held a closed door session for 25 minutes with City Attorney Jerry Fairbanks on attorney and client matters. When the commissioners came back into open session they adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

Commissioners to end leases at 17th Street Building

By Tom Betz

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The annual lease for Sew What and the 17th Street Barbershop ends in December, and Tuesday the Sherman County commissioners authorized the county attorney to send a letter to the two businesses advising the county would not be renewing the lease.

Deputy County Attorney Brock Abbey said he had been looking for an executed copy of the lease, and had talked to Marilyn Bohl's lawyer asking for a copy of the signed lease.

Attorney Bonnie Selby said she has not seen an executed copy, and all she has is an e-mail from Bohl's attorney about the situation at the time the county asked her to evacuate the storage area.

Apparently Marilyn Bohl had complained twice to the state health department about the location of the household hazardous waste in the back of the building, Selby said, and she is behind in paying her rent.

She said the state has been out to

inspect the building and has found nothing and the two reports are filed as unsubstantiated complaints.

Selby said Kenny Griffith, county road and bridge employee in charge of the household hazardous waste, said Black Hills Energy and the city building inspector have checked the building and found nothing wrong.

William McKnight said Black Hills Energy did find two very small gas leaks, and those have been fixed.

Commissioner Larry Enfield said the two leaks were so small they could not be found without the sniffer the gas company has.

Selby said she and Abbey have talked about this situation and have a suggestion.

Abbey said the term of the lease was for one year and got renewed for this year.

"I would suggest we send her a notice the county is not going to renew the lease, and want the rent paid up," Abbey said. "They would have to be out at the end of the year."

Commissioner Cynthia Strnad

said she never did understand the lease.

Abbey said he thought Marilyn might fight the rent, and suggested the county follow up with a second letter in November about the end of the lease to be sure there is no question.

"We cannot afford to have renters who are costing us more than we are getting in rent," Strnad said.

A motion was made to send letters to Marilyn and Cindy Bohl that the county will be ending the year to year contract effective the end of December. Enfield and Strnad voted in favor. Commissioner Max Linin was not at the meeting.

Selby said the letters would be sent by Thursday.

In other business the commissioners:

- Held a closed door session on personnel for 10 minutes.

- Made a motion to seek applications for a person with an engineering background to be the public works director. The commissioners asked about places to get an applica-

tion form, and County Clerk Janet Rumpel said she would contact the Kansas Association of Counties to see what they might have.

- Approved three Neighborhood Revitalization Projects for Scott and Tanya Jarrett, for a garage; COG Marketers for a \$1.5 million storage tank expansion at the Agro Cluture Liquid Fertilizer; and Floyd and Kelly McLroy for an addition.

- Tabled approval of emergency vehicle designations to the next meeting on Friday, Sept. 30. Strnad said she continues to vote against these on principle and said they will have to wait for Linin to be present.

- Approved a deal with the elevator repair company for them to do three months of unpaid maintenance because they had missed three months of preventive inspections.

- Received a letter saying the motion to dismiss the lawsuit in Colorado filed by Rocky Mountain Chipseal had been presented to the Federal District Court on Monday. The Chipseal side will have 21 days

to respond before the court makes a decision on the motion.

- Attorney Selby said she was preparing a letter about the cesspool issue at the request of Rep. Rick Billinger.

- The commissioners said they are looking for interested people to serve on the High Plains Mental

Health board and the Goodland Regional Medical Center board.

Those interested should contact the county clerk's office and submit an application by Thursday, Sept. 29.

The commissioners intend to fill the positions on both boards at their meeting on Friday, Sept. 30.

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