

More equipment arrives at plant

By Greg Stover
The Goodland Star-News
 Another shipment of equipment for Aircraft Seal and Gasket Corp.'s Goodland plant, 1006 Center Ave., arrived from California last Monday.

This latest load included a forklift, press, lathe, air compressor, a milling machine, a small calendar and an oven for heating raw silicon sheets. Plant manager Chuck Lutters said there will be at least three more shipments before everything tagged for Goodland is moved. Another load is expected later this week.

Lutters said the firm has received more than 300 applications and resumes so far, with more coming in daily. He said he couldn't say when interviews will begin, as the firm wants to get as much groundwork done as possible before the hiring process begins.

Lutters said that although progress has not been at the pace people hoped for, the Goodland plant is a reality and production will start when everything is ready.

He said people need to be patient and understand that the firm, like any other business, is not going to

hire anyone until it is ready to put them to work.

People seeking jobs should call the Colby office of the state Job Service, 485 N. Chickamauga Ave., at (785) 462-6862. An application with a return envelope will be mailed to them.

Lutters emphasized everybody needs to go through job service to apply.

Lutters said they are looking for people with good attitudes who are willing to work, and since only a few, if any, will have experience in this type of work, they must be ready to learn.

Besides Lutters, there are two people working at the plant now. Kendall Cooper, hired in January, is helping Lutters prepare the equipment for production. Andy Laue, who is working part-time for now, was hired in December as the plant's financial officer.

The Goodland plant will do about 80 percent of the manufacturing process. The rest of it will be done in Wichita, where the final products will be inspected and shipped. Roy Dixon, director of special projects for the firm, said operations in Wichita should begin in May.



Kendall Cooper (left) and plant manager Chuck Lutters cleaned up a press so they could reassemble it Monday afternoon. The press was one of several pieces equipment in the latest shipment from California. Photo by Greg Stover/The Goodland Star-News

Development council hears committee reports

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News
 A team has been digging into the records of the Goodland Industrial Park, hoping to mount a marketing effort for the mostly vacant site, the Sherman County Economic Development Council learned Tuesday.

A full board was present at the meeting, at the Western State Bank, and welcomed the newest member, Shelly Thompson from Bankwest, who was appointed to replace Cara Daise as the bank's representative.

Council member Steve West reported the industrial park committee had met with Jerry Fairbanks and Larry McCants of First National Bank about marketing of the land.

West said they went through the old records of the industrial corporation and found the names of the eight board members back in 1990. The bylaws say that the board members are to include a county commissioner, a city commissioner, four from the chamber, the president of the First National Bank and the president of Bankwest.

He said they hope to recreate the board and bring it up to speed to help market the property. Sigo Sun is the only plant that has built in the park since it was organized. The industrial park has 45 acres total.

Council member Dave Daniels said he would like to invite the Goodland High School DECA stu-

dents to the council's public forum in April at Gambino's.

Daniels said he thought it would be a good idea for the council to work with the club on a program to encourage young people to consider staying here after college. He said the students might work with some of the downtown business people with the idea of having their own business or buying an existing one.

"I thought it would be good for us to try to develop a working relationship with the high school students," Daniels said. "We need to work to keep some of our young people and give them an opportunity to consider being a small businessman."

Daniels said working with the

DECA students would be a step beyond the current program. He said Schwasinger told him he had a few students who he felt might be good candidates.

"I was thinking we need a way to retain some of our young people," Daniels said. "It is possible some of the young people could be exposed to the idea of going into business and even coming back after college to help build a new base of business people."

Daniels said he was glad the Chamber had a new director, and he felt the Chamber should be sort of an in-house job service for local businesses. He said the state Job Service Center in Colby has been trying to work with the area busi-

nesses, but this was not enough.

In other committee reports: Harlan House said the agriculture committee was to meet at 11 a.m. Thursday at the Sugar Hills Country Club to discuss ways the council could help agribusiness. He said this would be an informal discussion, and was not sure who would be attending.

Dwane Timm said the business incentives committee had not met, but he had just gotten the current plan to review.

John Garcia, council chairman, said he had talked to City Manager Ron Pickman and Sherman County Commissioner Kevin Rasure about serving on the incentive committee, and both had agreed.

New web site will be recruiting tool

The Sherman County Economic Development Council hopes to build a web site to tie together businesses and government offices and help market the community.

Don Newell, a council member, told the council at a meeting Tuesday that the web site committee had met and discussed how to develop a site.

Newell said the committee discussed selecting a domain name, and members were to bring a list to the next meeting. He said one idea was to have an "eye on Goodland" camera, possibly on top of one of the downtown buildings or a grain elevator.

He said he felt a web site could be a major marketing tool.

Currently the city, school district, county and visitors bureau have web sites, but it felt the economic development council should have a site for those who are looking for information about relocating or opening a new business. Newell said it would be important for there

to be links between the various sites. "I think we need a billboard near the Front Range (of Colorado), where the traffic is heavy," Newell said. "I think this is where we need to be looking to recruit manufacturing firms."

Someone suggested Economic Development Director Carolyn Applegate should find ways to make contacts along the Front Range. She said there was a manufacturers' show in the spring.

"I think the Front Range should be our fishing pond," Applegate said.

Applegate said the landlord of her office, Kyle Gordon, had asked the council to pay \$225 a month in rent. He agreed to house the office the first year for free, she said, but the council pays half of the utilities each month.

Council member Steve West made a motion to pay the \$225 beginning in April and through December.

Someone suggested relocating

the office, but Applegate said it has been good to be where they are and next door to the Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The motion to pay the rent passed unanimously.

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