

Rotary to light VanGogh

*Club thinks effort
will bring people in*

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News
The Goodland Rotary Club wants to shed a little light on the giant Van Gogh painting on the town's south side.

The club asked the city commission Monday for approval and support of a special "century project" which would light the big painting to make it more visible to people driving through at night.

Larry Keirns, retired president of the Northwest Kansas Technical College and a Rotary member, asked the commission to consider providing the electricity.

Keirns said Rotary, founded in 1904 in Chicago, has grown to be an international organization with clubs around the world now celebrating the 100th year.

"Our club has been looking for a special service project for this year," Keirns said.

He said they had contacted B and B Electric about designing the project and they had contacted an engineer from Salina.

The design would put a single light on a 10-foot pole about 40 feet south from the base of the easel. He said Cindy Bowman, the office person at Bowman's Heating and Air Conditioning, is sort of the unofficial counter of the people who stop to look at the painting. She said there are usually several each day, but sometimes it is bus loads.

"We felt lighting the painting in the evening would catch more of the people driving through," Keirns said.

The first question from the commission was whether the proposed location of the light was within an easement the city had granted the sunflower group for the painting.

Most of the commissioners agreed it was a good idea. Commissioner Dean Blume questioned the plan.

"I think it is a good idea," Blume said, "but I wonder about the city accepting the cost of the light. I know it is not a lot of money each month."

Later, Darin Neufeld of Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Associates, was asked about the project and he said he believed it was a good project, but was not sure the design would be the right answer. Neufeld does engineering work for the city and also worked on the painting project.

Neufeld said he thought maybe having two lights rather than one in the middle of the area might be better and be less obtrusive.

"I don't really want to put a single pole right in the middle," Neufeld said. "We just got all the trees and lines out of the line of sight."

The commission asked Neufeld to look at the easement question and make a recommendation at the next meeting.

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.



Ready for the big hunt

There were plenty of eggs to hunt in Goodland this week. More than 100 children (above), accompanied by their parents, prepared to hunt eggs Saturday morning in the Goodland Activities Center, where the Lions Club moved its Easter Egg Hunt indoors due to weather. Two first-graders (right) from West Elementary had fun gathering eggs at a hunt in Phillips Park last Thursday. One of the smaller hunters (below) at Saturday's hunt in the activities center filled her basket. Ethan Rice (left), son of Randy and Sara Rice of Goodland, hugged his new friend Friday afternoon at the Good Samaritan Center. The bunny was given to Ethan by state Sen. Stan Clark.

Photos by Tom Betz, Sharon Corcoran and Greg Stover
The Goodland Star-News



Billinger re-elected as mayor; Daniels is vice mayor

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Rick Billinger was re-elected as mayor by the Goodland City Commissioners on Monday and Dave Daniels was chosen to be vice-mayor for the next year.

Commissioner John Garcia nominated Billinger and was seconded by Daniels. The vote was unanimously.

Garcia nominated Daniels for vice-mayor and Daniels nominated Commissioner Chuck Lutters. Lutters declined, and Billinger seconded the nomination for Daniels. Again the vote was unanimous.

City Clerk Mary Volk swore in Billinger and Daniels. The commission elects leaders every April.

With the mayor installed, the commission turned to the business of the meeting, and the first item was a letter from Terry E. Marlin, economic development specialist of the state Department of Commerce, regarding a \$200,000 city-

sponsored loan for Aircraft Seal and Gasket Corp.

Marlin said the fact Commissioner Chuck Lutters was an employee of Aircraft Seal and Gasket was considered a conflict of interest under state policy, and the city must request a waiver.

At this point, Lutters excused himself and left the room.

To get the waiver, Marlin said, the city had to publicly disclose the conflict, record the disclosures in the official minutes and have an opinion from the city attorney that this is not in conflict with state or local law.

City Manager Ron Pickman said he had an opinion from City Attorney Perry Warren that a conflict would exist if Lutters were present for any discussion by the commission about Aircraft Seal and Gasket.

"It is my opinion," Warren said, "that Lutters should leave the room when any such discussion takes place whether it is on the agenda or

if it occurs during the visitor portion of the commission meeting.

"I believe during the discussion of the bills Lutters be allowed to vote on the total, but specifically abstain from any bill concerning the company.

"If these are followed, then I don't believe Lutters has a conflict of interest under the Community Development Block Grant Conflict of Interest Policy."

In the past four months, Lutters has been absent from the meeting or left the room when any discussion about Aircraft Seal came up.

After the motion passed to request the waiver, Lutters returned for the rest of the meeting.

In other business, commissioners:

- Approved a bid from Restoration and Waterproofing Contractors of Topeka for repairs at the Carnegie Arts Center. Pickman said the city has \$14,186 remaining in a grant, put out requests for seven items, but

got bids on two, repointing the bricks of the entrance and refinishing the front steps. There were two bids, with the Topeka firm being the lowest at \$5,400. Mid Continental Restoration Co. of Fort Scott bid \$6,875. Pickman said the state Historical Society will have to review the bids, but both firms are certified to do this type of work.

- Approved a bid from Altec Industries of St. Joseph, Mo., of \$119,056, with trade-in, for a new digger derrick truck for the electric department. Charlie Bandel, head of the distribution department, said the new truck will replace one which is having safety problems. The other bid was \$137,078 from Terex of Denver. Pickman said there was \$235,000 in the budget for this purchase.

- Approved a bid from Altec of \$41,564 with trade, for an aerial device or "bucket" truck. Bandel said the truck they were replacing

was a 1999, but was having safety issues with the bucket. Other bids were from Equipment Technology of Oklahoma City for \$46,435 and Terex for \$70,030.

- Approved an ordinance amending the solid waste code to take yard waste out of the code and say that the contractor shall provide a solid waste program, and to split the definition of a commercial customer. The ordinance established a Class A commercial customer which includes all businesses, government operations, commercial enterprises, dwellings containing 20 or more units, offices, shops, hotels, churches, schools and institutions.

Class B shall be limited to structures which function primarily as personal storage and are not for rent or lease by others.

- Approved reappointment of Millie Wright and Lloyd Holbrook to three-year terms on the High Plains Museum board.

Notice Street Closing

The City of Goodland will be closing 17th Street between Broadway and Clark Avenues for approximately 2 to 3 weeks beginning Tuesday, April 13th, 2004. The City will be closing these streets for Street Repairs. We appreciate your patience and hope to get these repairs completed as soon as possible. Thank you for your patience.

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