

Consultant firm changes on grant project

Sherman County has received a grant to help plan an emergency response program, and Friday commissioners were told there had been a change in the consulting firm.

Mary Messamore, head of central dispatch and emergency management, told commissioners the first consulting firm from Lawrence had withdrawn their contract, and she had been able to find a replacement from Missouri.

She was to meet with a representative later Friday. Messamore said there were things in the proposed contract that County Attorney Bonnie Selby did not like, and several the state wanted changed.

She said the \$26,865 state grant is to help the county do an analysis to develop emergency plans, and there is no matching money from the county.

The problem is the work is supposed to be completed by June 30. Messamore asked for permission to negotiate with the con-

sultant to get changes in the contract to satisfy both the state and the county attorney.

She said the changes are mostly in phrases in the contract which need to be clarified. She said the representative told her his firm was willing to work with her to get the contract signed and the work underway.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure made a motion to approve the contract on the basis it will be changed, and it passed unanimously.

Messamore said all three post offices in the county had refused to buy storm radios to help with the "StormReady" project.

"Looks like this is a pass-the-buck type deal," Commissioner Tiede said.

"I would think since it is federal, they would take care of this," Rasure said.

"The postmasters said they do not have money for this," Messamore said, "and they said the postal employees and customers

are Sherman County residents."

The commissioners agreed to give her permission to purchase the three storm radios for the post offices. This is one of requirements for getting Sherman County designated as StormReady.

Messamore then asked for a closed session to discuss employee evaluations. It lasted five minutes.

At the end of the meeting, the commissioners made a motion to raise dispatcher Jason Showalter's hourly wage from \$7.50 to \$9.23, and dispatcher Crissy Conger from \$9 to \$9.45. Conger has returned from maternity leave.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Discussed a proposal for two new trash trailers from Wilkens Truck and Trailer to replace the two being used to haul trash to the landfill. The commissioners said they would make a decision on this at the meeting on Tuesday. Art Wilkens suggested the

county look at buying 50- or 53-foot trailers to replace the 45-foot and 48-foot one they now have. These are walking floor trailers, he said. Curt Way, public works manager, was asked if the larger trailers would fit in the transfer station. He said when they use the 48-foot trailer, they can't close the door now. He said the 50-foot trailer would fit but he wasn't sure about the 53 footer, and they would check this out before the next meeting.

- Approved an adjustment to property taxes for Westside Apartments for \$6,100 for the year 2002. The commissioners signed the change under protest. Last year, Assessor Terry Ballard said he had been told he overvalued the apartment complex when his decision was appealed to the state. The state dropped the value from over \$1 million to about \$300,000, he said.
- Talked about bids for a new fire truck for Kanorado. Rasure said Jay Pettibone,

Kanorado fire chief, had given him the papers on one bid and one financing option, but that there was at least one more bid. The commissioners said they would table this until they could review all the bids and financing options. Rasure said the low bid on the cab and chassis was from Dan Brenner Ford, and that the financing was with a local bank. The item was to be put on the agenda for Tuesday.

- Approved a contract for the Sunflower Spinners to use the fairgrounds for a special tractor pull.
- Approved a special emergency agreement with the Good Samaritan Center to provide a county water truck in an emergency situation to provide non-drinking water for the center. This is a stand-by agreement to provide water to the Good Samaritan Center in case of an emergency to handle a need for anything other than drinking.

Women enjoy building a career

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try something new."

As carpenters, Pelster and Frasier stand out — they are the only two women in a class of 15 — but they don't stand out as much now as they did in the beginning, when the 13 men in the class had to test out a new situation.

"They had to feel out the waters," Frasier said, "but they're used to us now."

Frasier said the way she dressed the first day didn't convince anyone she belonged in the program.

"The first day I wasn't exactly in carpentry clothes," she said. "They thought I was in the wrong class."

Both women have settled in as part of the class, but for Pelster, it wasn't an entirely new situation.

Having grown up on a cattle ranch near Ordway, Colo., Pelster, who worked alongside her father and brothers, was not new to a mostly male environment. And she doesn't put limits on herself as a woman.

"There was never a time when I didn't feel like I was capable of doing something because I was a female," she said on the scholarship application, "and I still don't."

Pelster said she helped her dad take care of the buildings on the ranch, worked at a lumber yard when she was in high school and spent a summer remodeling.

But when she went to college, Pelster took her career in a different direction, majoring in health promotions and minoring in leadership at the University of Southern Colorado in Pueblo.

"I graduated in 2001, then went to a four-year university and didn't like it," she said, "so I came here."

She said she knew about the hands-on learning environment at the Goodland college because her brother took the engineering pro-

gram 10 years ago. Carpentry seems to be a good fit for her.

"I like it," Pelster said. "It's very enjoyable. The people have been great. It's a good experience."

Frasier started on a different career path as well. She was interested in graphic arts but decided she wanted something more active.

"I was really interested in architecture in high school," she said. "I was in graphic arts, but decided I didn't want to be in a chair all day. I decided I could do this side and get the same effect. I like to use my hands."

Originally from Sharon Springs, she said she lived in Manhattan for a year and Texas for two before choosing the carpentry program.

She said the program has been a fun experience and she has enjoyed the class project.

"I'm really excited to see the end result," she added.

The house, a unique creation for Goodland with its round walls, will be shown at an open house Sunday, July 18, and will be sold at auction Saturday, July 24. Frasier and Pelster said the students each put in their own ideas for the house, and Instructor Robert Woodrow put the ideas together to come up with a plan.

Pelster plans to move to southeast Colorado when she completes the program in July and to work for one of the contractors from her home town for a couple of years to get some experience. After that, she would like to work in kitchen and bath design for the company that gave her her first job in their lumber yard when she was 16.

Frasier plans to get married in July, a plan she made before she realized she had scheduled the ceremony on her graduation day. She said her fiancé is from Oakley and they will live there after the wedding.

Bonds approved

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sales, would be paid from.

Precht said it would come out of the cost of issuance account, and the other checks would be paid out of the project fund.

Precht said if the remaining bonds are not sold, the current financial arrangement with Bankwest will be taken off the list. The hospital owes \$178,639 to

Bankwest for leased equipment. Precht said the hospital will be able to meet this obligation if the bonds are not sold, but he said it would be better if they were able to sell the full \$1.9 million.

The commissioners made a motion to approve the several resolutions dealing with the bonds, and gave Chairman Mitch Tiede approval to sign the final papers when they arrived Friday afternoon.

'Remember Pearl Harbor'



High school freshman Michael Smith sang a patriotic song during Sunday's musical tribute to America's effort in World War II at the Wheat Ridge Acres Retirement Community. About 90 people enjoyed the program. Photo by Greg Stover/The Star-News

Questions raised about county purchases

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said. "Last year, the county spent \$67,000 out of the area for office supplies. I know it all can't be done here, but I wonder if we are being

corrections

A story in the April 20 edition of *The Goodland Star-News* incorrectly said that the house where a St. Francis man, Roger Curry, shot himself was occupied by his former girlfriend. The shooting occurred at the rural Sherman County home where the victim lived. This was an editing error.

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cavalier with our money.

"We need to be more conscious about spending money in our Main Street businesses. I am here because they keep coming to me about this issue, and do not want to come here because they are afraid they will be blackballed for complaining."

"We are available if they have a problem," Tiede said.

"Can't get some things here that are needed, and they have to get them shipped in," Commissioner Chuck Thomas said.

"I am not asking that every penny be spent here, but it would be good for economic development if we could recapture even one third," Applegate said. "That would mean at least \$100,000 more dollars in the county."

"She's right," Rasure said. "We need to make sure our departments

are doing what they can to buy in our local businesses."

"This is a question of holding onto jobs," Applegate said. "I would ask the county to establish a 5 percent preference for local vendors."

"We don't micro manage each department," Rasure said, "but we need to make them know this is our policy."

"We have stressed this in the past with the department heads."

"This is as important as anything that we can do to help keep jobs in our county," Applegate said.

"We need to give the local businesses a chance. I am afraid a lot of this is habit buying, and that it has been done this way for years. We need to check every time rather than just reorder from the same place as before."

"I understand that," Way said, "but it is not an open checkbook because it is the county either. We need to talk to the vendors if they will work with us. We want to buy local as much as possible, but not at any price."

"There are some personality conflicts with some of the vendors," Tiede said. "We need to find a way to work together."

"All I am asking is for you to ask them," Applegate said.

"We agree, and we will send out a memorandum about buying locally and especially in quantity buying," Tiede said. Rasure and Thomas echoed their agreement.

There was no agreement about a specific local preference level. Applegate said she thought 5 percent was sufficient and applauded Way for his 10 percent local policy.

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