

City to install pitching machine outlet

Softballs will be flying at Phillips Park, thanks to city commission approval Monday for installing an electric outlet there.

The girls fast-pitch team had requested the outlet to allow them to use a pitching machine when they practice at the park.

Charles Bandel of the city electric crew estimated it would cost about \$80 to install. City Manager Ron Pickman said there had been an electric outlet at Phillips before, but that it had been removed because it had been smashed more than once.

The commission approved installing the outlet, but said that if it is damaged it will not be replaced by the city.

The City/County Recreation Commission recommended that birthday parties at Steever Water

Park would be \$40 for two hours for 10 people. If there were more than 10, they would be charged regular admission. The \$40 would include the use of the meeting room for two hours.

Commissioner Dave Daniels asked Jason Hickson, head of the recreation department, if he had checked with the motels to see if this was in competition with them.

Hickson said he had contacted Buffalo Inn and they no longer were doing birthday parties because of insurance liability. Hickson said a Comfort Inn spokesperson was unsure whether that business would continue to have birthday parties.

Rates for the water park birthday parties passed without a ripple.

In other business the commis-

Received a letter from the state Department of Commerce saying the request for a waiver of the conflict of interest issue involving Commissioner Chuck Lutters and Aircraft Seal and Gasket has been approved, with the understanding that Lutters would continue to leave the meeting anytime there is a discussion involving Aircraft Seal and Gasket. Lutters is plant manager for the firm.

Read a proclamation designating the first week of May as Elks Youth Week and commending the Goodland Elks Lodge for their efforts to serve and encourage the youth of the community. The Elks provide scholarships, the annual Hoop Shoot competition, sponsor youth teams in soccer, basketball and softball, donate to the Boy and

Girl Scouts, do drug-free events at the Elks, and sponsor drug awareness projects, including a poster contest which awards \$50 savings bonds to the winners.

Listened as Pickman said he and Jerry Fairbanks from First National Bank met in Denver to begin the mediation process for problems at Steever Water Park, and were working with a construction engineering firm and a forensic engineer. He said this is the first step in determining liability, and that it may take more than a year before this is decided. He said the two firms will investigate the condition of the water park facilities and make an assessment about what is wrong so fault can be determined. This process is expensive, he said, and it is possible the costs may be granted as

part of the mediation settlement, but not guaranteed.

Approved having Rich Simon get bids to replace a 1985 pickup for the water department that was damaged in a wreck in front of the city offices, and to replace the transmission in a 1990 water department truck. The city had planned to replace one truck last year, but the decision was delayed.

Discussed participating in a Kansas Municipal Utilities safety training program. Pickman said the plan is to join with 11 other cities in northern Kansas to provide hands-on safety training one day a month over the next year. The estimated cost is \$8,192, and he said the first part would be to do a certification training session between October and December. Commissioner

Dean Blume said he thought it would be money well spent, and that it might lower the workers compensation rates for those who have this training. This will be on the next agenda.

Commissioner Dave Daniels suggested the city look at a 10 percent local preference for purchases to help keep more money in the city. Mayor Rick Billinger said he felt the city had done that in the past, and that the city employees do a good job of buying locally.

The commission held a 10-minute closed session on a personnel matter. The meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m. The next meeting will be 5 p.m. on Monday, May 17, in the commission room on the second floor of the City Administration Building at 204 W. 11th.

Citizen wants lower rate

WATER, from Page 1

called the League of Kansas Municipalities to confirm the city has the right to charge more for the delivery of services outside the city limits.

"They told me under state law the city can charge more for the service because those outside the city limits have the option to take the service," Pickman said.

State law says the city has the right to sell utilities to anyone outside the city within a three mile radius, he said.

He said there are a number of houses outside the city that have city water and all pay the higher water rates. Some of these are in the Armstrong Addition and there are several on the edge of the city in the same area as Petracich's property.

"The attorney for the League of Kansas Municipalities said the state law is mute on the issue," Pickman said. "And he said that therefore it is allowed, and that most Kansas cities charge higher rates for customers outside the city limits."

Pickman said he had not seen the letter from the attorney general, but

believed it has to do with a letter to cut the water off to Petracich's property after he sent the city a check for \$5.60 and had written on it "Paid in Full."

Pickman said he told the clerk that when this was accepted it meant the city could not turn the water off, but he said the city would not accept a check with that on it in the future.

Volk said she has been receiving letters from Petracich about this since January.

The commission took no action on the complaint and Petracich was not happy.

Purchases for county questioned

PURCHASE, from Page 1

county had paid a much higher price than he had bid.

He said he did not know if the equipment had been ordered before he submitted his bid because he had found out about the process late. He showed the commissioners both the bid he submitted and the invoice he found.

"They each have a budget," Commissioner Mitch Tiede said. "And we leave it up to them to do the right thing."

"Yes, but they should go through home," Bentzinger said.

He said he is supposed to handle both the Kanorado fire department and the Brewster rural fire department, but that someone else has been inspecting the Brewster fire extinguishers.

"I am not as concerned about Brewster," he said. "They are in

Thomas County and they should be loyal to their people.

"I have to brag on the Kanorado fire house. They are doing a great job."

"We hope the department heads will use a little common sense," Tiede said, "but I guess that is not that common."

Bentzinger said he knew the county was working on a grant for fire equipment.

"If I don't get a chance to bid, I will be very unhappy," he said.

"We require two to three bids on purchases," Tiede said. "We can't check everything. Some will get through."

"Sometimes there is a personality conflict," Commissioner Chuck Thomas said. "I don't like that guy and I'll bypass him." There has to be some effort from the business people to work with the county.

"Accountability is the answer,"

Bentzinger said. "You wouldn't need to micro manage."

"You have good supervisors and they can do this," he said, adding, "I appreciate your business."

Later in the meeting, the commissioners discussed holding a meeting with the county department heads to discuss the purchasing policy.

Rasure suggested the county develop a short form that would go with any purchase made out of the county that would list the reason the purchase was made. He said it could cover things like "The item was not available in the county," and that "The price was higher by a percentage if purchased locally."

The meeting with the department heads is to be held at the next regular meeting on Tuesday, May 18. The commissioners will meet on Thursday, May 13 to consider the first half of the May bills. They will not meet on Tuesday, May 11.



Kristen Dutton (left), a seventh-grader at Grant Junior High, assisted Daniel Bateman, of the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center, in demonstrating how a space flight from Earth would travel to Mars.

Photo by Greg Stover/The Goodland Star-News

Junior high gets space briefing

By Greg Stover

The Goodland Star-News About 85 seventh-graders at Grant Junior High School were treated to a special briefing last Tuesday by Daniel Bateman, community outreach manager for the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center.

Bateman talked to the students about what was involved in a voyage to Mars. Using a computer program, Bateman showed the students how complex planning a trip is.

He said the trip would take about six months one-way with the propulsion systems in use today.

Using student volunteers, he demonstrated how the orbits of Mars and the Earth relate to each other, and how the trip had to be scheduled to coincide with the time the two planets are closest. He also showed the students how the space ship's destination would be where Mars will be six month

after take off.

"It was a pleasure to be invited back to Goodland," said Bateman. "I hope to be able to do more trips like this one in the future."

Bateman said the goal of the briefings was to keep students interested in science, especially in the space program.

He said the school visits are part of the Cosmosphere's effort to find new ways to serve the public.

The program, which included the display of an actual space suit, lasted about an hour. Bateman conducted the briefing for fifth and sixth-grade students at North Elementary that morning, and at West Elementary later that afternoon.

Information about the Kansas Cosmosphere and the programs it offers, including five-day summer adventures, is available on the Internet at www.cosmo.org.

corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misrepresentation in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors.

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 - 1983 GMC 6.2 Diesel Sierra Classic 1500, auto, air, AM, FM, cruise, 94,400 miles with topper
 - 1981 Chevy Cheyenne 10 pickup 4x4, 4 speed, air, AM, FM, 112,658 miles
 - 1979 Olds Regency 98, 4 dr diesel white w/white vinyl top, spoke wheels, AM, FM, air, cruise, rear defogger, 5.7 engine, power windows, power locks, 68,900 miles
 - 1991 Buick Park Avenue 3.8 cu in motor, 158 K miles
 - 1974 Amerigo 11.5' overhead camper, all self contained, sleeps 6, fold out back, ready to go
- ~ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES - oak secretary, library desk, oak wall mirror w/ shelf, walnut treadle sewing machine, zippo lighters, watches, assorted jewelry
COINS - 1865 3 cent nickel, 1889 Liberty nickel
HOUSEHOLD - appliances, furniture, misc.
SHOP & GARDEN - riding lawn mower, Yard King 42" 12.5 hp riding lawn mower, Quantum power 5 hp weed eater, battery charger, assorted hand tools, band saw

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