goodland **Gulick Park to get upgrade** with new playground grant

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News Playground equipment at Gulick Park will get a new look if a grant request approved by the City Commission last Monday night is approved by GameTime through their Healthy Kids Grant Initiative.

Jason Hixson, head of the city recreation department, presented a plan to City Manager Ron Pickman for a new set of playground equipment for the park. The total cost would be \$18,862, with the Healthy Kids Grant paying half.

The playground equipment is from GameTime of Fort Payne, Ala., a unit of PlayCore Co. of Chattanooga, Tenn. Pickman said the Healthy Kids Grant is Game-Time's way of helping schools, cities and commercial customers purchase their equipment.

The playground equipment would be a PowerScape Plus Model, with two slides and other play activities that would take up an area of 35 feet by 32 feet. Pickman said it would replace the existing slide and some other older equipment. He said the swings would remain,



The PowerScape Plus Model of playground equipment from GameTime of Fort Payne, Ala., will be replacing some of the existing equipment at Goodland's Gulick Park.

but they would be improved.

PowerScape Plus system, he said, ment program the city is using to and the deadline for the offer is Nov. 19, with the equipment to be ship- Main Avenue. ped by the end of this year. Pickman said the cost will come out of liquor tax tee the city will get the money, but money used for park improvements. they will continue to apply for these A grant application was approved as long as there is a chance.

by the commission for a continua-The grant is specifically for the tion of the transportation enhancereplace the brick intersections on

Pickman said there is no guaran-

The city has replaced the intersections at Sixth, Seventh and Eighth on Main, and hopes to rebuild those of 11th and 12th on Main next year. Last Monday, the commission approved a request to replace the intersections at Ninth, 10th and 13th on Main.

The total project cost is estimated at \$718,692, with the city paying \$363,301.

Pickman said if the grant is approved, it will probably be two years before these three intersections are replaced.

A plan to build an atrium addition at High Plains Museum hit a snag when the bids came in higher than anticipated.

Pickman said the plan was to build an entrance on the museum to help reduce heat loss, and to protect the front entrance from snow that drops onto the sidewalk in front of the doors.

The commission took no action on the bids, and Pickman said he is looking for a less expensive alternative. Rhoads Construction bid \$23,810 and Ralph Brighton of Goodland bid \$24,176.

City updates employee manual

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News The city commission last Monday approved nine pages of changes to the city employee manual, commending the staff for expanding the sick leave policy.

City Commissioner Jim Mull said the change was fair to employees and their families. It will allow city employees to use sick leave for themselves or their immediate family, including parents, spouses and children.

"I want to commend you for putting this in," Mull said. "I believe it is right to recognize the family's importance to the employee and allow them to respond in emergencies."

Other policy changes included removing reference to having a new employee have their picture taken for an identification card; removing the word "minimum" where it said the new employee shall have a mini- been removed. mum of six months training period; and added a new pay plan section keep track of the compensatory mission approved the pay plan for and revised the section for salary increases.

to approval by the governing body through the adoption of an annual pay plan...'

"Annual cost-of-living increases may be given as approved by the governing body.

"It is the City of Goodland's policy to reward employees with pay increases for dedication in their work, extra effort and exemplary performance. Merit increases will be determined by the city manager as recommended by the department head under guidelines established by the governing body.'

Pickman said the changes were reviewed and approved by the employee committee, and the staff decided to review the whole manual ployee do their jobs efficiently and and make the changes that were productively. needed.

with compensatory time off had communications or files employees share of the work completed on the

routine or automatic and are subject "Compensation for authorized overtime work shall be at the rate of one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay."

There was a change to the section about personal use of city vehicles. The new wording says that city personnel, except police and fire, must keep a daily log of actual mileage from the work place to their home. This log has to be turned into the city clerk in December. "The vehicle expense will be a deduction to the employee's wages each year on the last payroll of the year."

A new section on Internet policy was added. The policy says the city's computer and Internet systems are in place to help the em-

"The city may intercept, monitor, Pickman said the section dealing copy, review and download any create or maintain on the system.

"We felt as a staff it was harder to In a related action, the city com-

In other business, the commission:

• Approved a payment to Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Associates \$5,555 for work on the Kansas Department of Transportation part of the new runway lighting project at Renner Field, and \$2,762 for the Federal Aviation Administration part

 Approved payment to Strukel Electric of Girard of \$38,964 for work completed on the airport runway lighting project. Pickman said the project is about 85 percent done, and they have been working on the crosswind runway, which has not had lights before. He said the main runway lights will be replaced in the spring.

 Approved request for reimbursement from the Federal AviationAdministration of \$9,006 for its airport runway lighting project and \$30,599 from the state.

Park contract finallyapproved

Goodland Star-News / Tuesday, November 9, 2004

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News The long delayed project to en-

Goodland on Cherry Ave. --known as Pioneer Park — moved ahead last Monday when the city commission approved a contract for construction administration.

With the contract with Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Associates approved, the next step is to send out a request for bids. Construction could begin as early as February, said project engineer Darin Neufeld.

Neufeld said the engineering fee is set by formula because the park is a transportation enhancement programs paid for with federal money and overseen by the state Department of Transportation. The net fee for the construction portion is \$9,406, with a maximum of \$75,000.

We do not expect the total fee to get close to the \$75,000 level," he added.

City Manager Ron Pickman said plans for the park started in 1998 because the city needed to do something with runoff water which was created by the south extension of Cherry Avenue. The city applied for a grant to build a holding pond, and the idea of a park on city land west of the new street grew from there.

The Department of Transporplans, which have been approved by the Kansas Department of Parks and Wildlife, the Division of Water Resources of the Kansas Department of Agriculture and the Kansas State Historical Society. Federal approval came from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

30 days to get bids, after which city officials will review them with Neufeld.

Neufeld said construction could begin days after the contract is awarded, but it's difficult to give specific date. He said he expects the work to begin in the spring.

The park will include about 4 1/2 acres on the northwest corner said. "We would liked to have of the intersection of Cherry Avenue done it a long time ago." and Business U.S. 24, across Cherry from the Van Gogh painting. Pickman said the project was proposed in 1998 as a water runoff pool combined with a hike lected, will be used for add-ons.

and bike trail and about a year later expanded into plans for a park.

The city asked people what hance the entrance to downtown they wanted in the park and came up with a list that was nearly twice what was in the project fund, \$200,000 from the state and \$100,000 in city money. City officials said it could take years to get enoughmoney to finish all the ideas.

> The park, which has been up to a \$600,000 project, was scaled back to the base project, Pickman said, but is designed so features can be added later. The project estimate is \$300,000, he said, of which the federal government will pay \$210,000, and the city \$90,000.

> The park will feature a pavilion, information kiosk, phone booth, benches, and lights. There will be a walking trail about a quarter mile long following the outline of the park. The trail will lead to 18th Street, joining a sidewalk which will lead to Steever Park, offering a total walking trail of about a half mile.

> The Goodland Crime Stoppers is paying for a security fence along the west boundary of the park, the city manager said. The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks has pledged \$10,000, and the Goodland Kiwanis Club \$5,000, he said, to pay for a 24foot gazebo...

Sunflowers USA Board memtation was the last hurdle for the ber Marcia Golden said two years ago the organization has an easement on a small piece of land around the easel and plans to do some brick work in that area. That has to wait until the city's project is done, she said.

"Our project is in the middle of theirs," Golden said.

The city owns the property around the easel, and will use the dirt removed from the new pond Pickman saidit will take about to fill and landscape the area around the big painting. Once that landscaping is done Sunflowers USA can move forward with their plans for improving the area around the easel.

The city manager said he had hoped to have the park finished last vear.

"It's been too long now," he Very little money was collected from a donation drive over two years ago, Pickman said, but there are some pledges which, if col-

The new pay increase section as required." says that "Pay increases shall not be

time off," he said, "and that we were next year, which implements the 75 not always able to get them the time cents per hour cost-of-living in-

The new policy on overtime says, proved as part of the budget process. 204 W. 11th.

crease the commission had ap-

an inconspicuous building sur-

The next commission meeting will be at 5 p.m. Monday in the commission room on the second floor of the City Administration Building,

New counselor aims to help couples, families corrections

By Kathryn Burke

The Goodland Star-News Stress reduction, conflict management, working through trauma and grief and coping with divorce are just a few of the issues that the new Heartland Rural Counseling Services office will help Goodland couples and families address.

"We felt like this would be another resource for families," said Elaine Ptacek, a licensed clinical professional counselor and registered play therapist for Heartland. Joni Pearce, a licensed marriage and family counselor, will be helping couples and families address problems, and also offer enrichment programs. She said she specializes in family and marriage counseling, but she offers individual therapy viewed in a family context.

"You don't have to be a family," she said, adding she has worked with children, adolescents, teens and adults.

Pearce said her approach to therapy includes a straightforward mix of psychological theories. She expects her clients to come up with



Ptacek Pearce

their own goals and she will help them towards success.

"I'm pretty practical," she said. The office can help people cope with tragedy, physical, emotional and sexual abuse, rape, depression also help people through more everyday problems.

"Really it's about guidance," Ptacek said.

Therapy can have a negative stigma, but Pearce said it is really about helping people learn life skills. "We're an objective person,"

Pearce said. "We help people look at their problems from a different perspective."

The office at 111 W. 12th St. is in



For more information contact Judy Stroup 785-673-4756

Pearce said people may still be constudies. cerned about coming in. "I think it takes courage," she said, "but you can park around the

corner." Pearce said she earned a bachelor's degree in Family Studies and Human Services from Kansas State University and a graduate degree in Marriage and Family Counseling from Friend's University in Wichita. She lives in the Sharon Springs-Wallace area, where her husband Nathan farms mostly wheat and corn.

Although new to Goodland, and eating disorders, but they will Heartland opened its first office in Colby in 1997. They have two offices in Colby, and Pearce can refer clients for a full battery of diagnostic tests. The Colby office offers in-

patient referrals, child custody rounded by other businesses, but evaluations and adoption and home

> The Goodland office opened on Oct. 1, but so far they haven't signed on any clients. Pearce said she has been busy, however, letting people know they're in town.

'It's a slow process," Ptacek said, 'but we're open, we're open for business."

Right now Heartland is taking clients only by appointment, but Pearce said soon she will be in the office Monday through Friday and some evenings.

The service accepts most health insurance and charges on a sliding scale. Clients can call the office at 785-821-0781 and through e-mail at joni@jonipearcemft.com, or ask for a referral through their doctor.

You are cordially invited to a "Fixed Income Seminar" Thursday, November 11th at 3 p.m.

We will be discussing options that you my have in this very low interest rate environment. To be held at the office of American Financial Group located at 1109 Main in Goodland We hope to see you there!

Please R.S.V.P. to Sheryl Davis at 785-890-6942

Refreshments will be served American Financial Group associated with Polar Investment Counsel, Inc. Member NASD, SIPC, NFA, MSRB

A story about the Goodland boys basketball coach. This was the School Board on Page 7 of the Nov. 2 issue of The Goodland Star-News said the board voted 6-1 to hire Char Avila as the assistant seventh-grade rectanymistake or misunderstanding girls basketball coach, She was in a news story. Please call our office hired as assistant seventh-grade at (785) 899-2338 to report errors.

reporter's error.

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The Goodland Star-News will cor-



Photographer Hours: 10am-7pm Photographer will be available these 5 days only: Thursday, November 11 through Monday, November 15

2160 Commerce Road Goodland, Kan.

OneWeekOnly!