

## Snow covers roadways, sidewalks



Bundled up in a coat, hat and snow boots, Marsha Smith cleared her sidewalk with a snowblower Wednesday at 611 Main. The white stuff piled up on sidewalks, streetways and cars over the 3-day storm. Smith's said her daughter bought the snowblower to prevent her from having to scoop the snow.  
Photo by Kathryn Burke/The Goodland Star-News

# Personal reasons drive surgeon from hospital

The search is on for an interim surgeon. Two area hospitals need one to fill in until fall.

Dr. Gregory Kim, who started Sept. 13 as a surgeon shared between Goodland Regional Medical Center and Citizens Medical Center in Colby, had planned to leave this week.

Jay Jolly, administrator at the Goodland hospital, said Kim cited personal reasons for his departure; his last day was to be Thursday.

The Goodland hospital is looking



Kim

into options, Jolly said, but does have C-section coverage, the main thing the hospital is worried about. Dr. David Younger will handle that, Jolly said.

The hospital is looking into availability, Jolly said, anyone who could be here for a few months.

The surgeon could come from near or far.

Janice McCart, chief executive officer at the Colby hospital, said in an interview with a reporter from *The Colby Free Press* that the hospital hasn't ruled out bringing a surgeon from Hays or

Garden City, adding they are still going over options.

Jolly said the substitute could come from anywhere. Dr. Kim came from the east coast, the administrator said, so it will just depend on who's available. It will have to be someone who's in position, he said.

The hospitals expect to share Dr. Vincent Narciso starting in September after he finishes his surgical residency in Wichita. Narciso visited the Goodland hospital in December, and the hospital's tax-exempt foundation began a fund-raising drive to pay for new surgical equipment to prepare for his arrival.

## Bonuses cause controversy

A gesture of good-will by the hospital has met with criticism.

Goodland Regional Medical Center gave its employees Christmas bonuses and was criticized in an e-mail to *The Goodland Star-News* for not giving everyone the same amount and for spending so much on bonuses when it is reported to be having financial difficulties.

The e-mail said, "We have all heard the stories about our hospital going broke, but yet they disbursed \$500 to full time employees for their Xmas bonus and \$100 to part time employees."

The writer said employees of the

hospital were angry they were not all treated fairly in receiving the same amounts for being full time and that the hospital has been losing registered nurses right and left because they are not paid for their worth.

The bonuses varied for full time, Hospital Administrator Jay Jolly said, depending on different factors, mostly merit.

In years past, he said, the hospital had a practice of giving annual cost-of-living raises, a practice that was discontinued in 2000.

Things have been done with wages and salaries, he said, depending on what the market is doing, es-

pecially with regard to skilled persons.

The hospital has had trouble recruiting people for some positions, he said, including nurses.

Across the board cost-of-living increases have not been possible, Jolly said; the bonuses were to try to make some of that up to the employees.

The hospital had a good year, he said, with money coming in and decided to share that with the employees.

Bonuses are not a fixed expense, he said, and aren't in the budget for next year, since the hospital is not guaranteed a good year.

# Applications still available for seats on city commission

By Tom Betz

*The Goodland Star-News*

The city election isn't until April 5, but the deadline for candidates to file is less than three weeks away at noon on Monday, Jan. 25.

City Clerk Mary Volk said her office has the paperwork for anyone interested in filing for a city com-

mission position can come to her office.

She said once the forms are filled out the candidate needs to pay a \$5 filing fee.

There are three seats up for election this year with Jim Mull filling the unexpired term of Chuck Lutters who resigned in July to be-

come the city public works director.

The terms of John Garcia of Garcia's Furniture and Appliance and Dean Blume retired lawn and garden service owner, are up.

Volk said that if there are more than six candidates for the three positions there will have to be a primary to be held on March 1. The

general election will be on April 5.

Mull has said he would not consider running.

He was appointed in August to fill Lutter's term, and had been on the commission previously.

"No, I am not going to run," Mull said. "I would really like to see some of the people who have gone

through the Leadership Sherman County step forward and other interested citizens.

"I think 10 years is long enough. I agreed to be considered for the unexpired term to help with some consistency, but I am not going to run."

Neither Blume or Garcia have

indicated if they will seek reelection. Garcia is completing his first term and Blume is completing his second term.

"I have not made up my mind," Garcia said when contacted Wednesday.

"I have no intention to run at this time," Blume said Wednesday.

# City approves trash rate raise on 4-1 vote, prices go up in February

By Tom Betz

*The Goodland Star-News*

Trash rates will go up in February with the approval of an ordinance which passed on a 4-1 vote at Monday's commission meeting.

Commissioner Jim Mull made the motion to approve the ordinance raising the residential rate from \$13.25 to \$14 per month, and raising commercial rates from \$12 per container to \$13.

Commissioner Dean Blume seconded the motion.

Mayor Rick Billinger, who voted against the ordinance, said he did not like being forced into passing the ordinance, and said he did not believe the rates needed to be raised.

He suggested that the city might want to consider paying the penalty and take the trash collection system

back from the county.

Commissioner Dave Daniels, who is the city representative on the county Solid Waste Committee, said he had talked to Chuck Redlin who operates In the Can, and he had said he would provide a profit and loss to let the committee see how the operation is doing.

Commissioner John Garcia said it was his understanding that under the contract with the county the city has no choice but to implement the raises approved by the county commissioners.

City Manager Ron Pickman said that the contract says the city commission "shall" approve the rates as approved by the county commissioners after they have been reviewed by the solid waste committee.

Daniels said he had talked to

County Commissioner Kevin Rasure who had checked the rates of surrounding communities and that Hays pays \$15 per month for trash collection, Colby pays \$16 per month, Sharon Springs pays \$14 and Hill City pays \$24.

Billinger said he was upset that the county had not taken any bids on the contract after the city gave them the trash collection system.

Several members of the commission and from the audience said the county had taken bids and that there were four proposals presented before In the Can was selected.

Under the contract the solid waste committee is to review the rates on an annual basis and presented recommendations to the county commission.

The county commission reviews the committee recommendations

and can approve or modify them before sending them on to the city commission.

In other business the commission approved:

- Voting yes on the ballot from the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency to allow them to establish a lease/purchase program in cooperation with the Kansas Municipal Gas Agency and the Kansas Rural Water Finance Authority.

Pickman said the staff recommended the commission approve the program.

He said it will not cost the city anything to get the program established, and would be another alternative in the future if the city desired to use the program to lease a piece of equipment.

- Discussed the question of the type of vehicles that can be used to

remove snow from city sidewalks. Daniels said he had been told that vehicles are not permitted to remove snow from city sidewalks. Pickman said that means vehicles like tractors or trucks cannot be used to remove the snow. He said walk behind snow blowers or shovels are permitted.

- The commission held a closed door session for 10 minutes on the acquisition of property.

Pickman announced a change in procedure where the audience

would remain in the commission room and the commissioners would go down to the conference room. When the commissioners returned after 10 minutes Mull made a motion to allow the city manager to continue negotiations on the proposed acquisition of property.

The meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m. The next city meeting will be at 5 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 17 in the commission room on the second floor of the city building 204 W. 11th.

## corrections

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