

**weather  
report**

**74°**



**noon Thursday**

**Today**  
• Sunset, 7:18 p.m.

**Saturday**  
• Sunrise, 6:17 a.m.  
• Sunset, 7:16 p.m.

**Midday Conditions**  
• Soil temperature 68 degrees  
• Humidity 41 percent  
• Sky partly cloudy  
• Winds Southeast 11 mph  
• Barometer 30.10 inches and falling

• Record High today 105° (1939)  
• Record Low today 38° (1974)

**Last 24 Hours\***  
High Wednesday 74°  
Low Wednesday 46°  
Precipitation Trace  
Year to date 12.52  
Below normal 3.90

**The Topside Forecast**  
Today: Partly cloudy, 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. High mid 80s. Friday night, partly cloudy, low upper 50s. Winds south 10-15, gust to 30 in the evening.

**Extended Forecast**  
Saturday: Mostly sunny, high around 90. Low around 60. Winds south, 10-15, gusts to 30. Sunday: Partly cloudy, high lower 90s, low upper 50s. Monday and Tuesday: Partly cloudy, 30 percent chance of thunderstorm in evening. High lower 90s. Increased clouds, low mid 50s (National Weather Service)  
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.  
\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

**local  
markets**

**Noon**

Wheat — \$3.12 bushel  
Posted county price — \$3.03  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢  
Corn — \$1.77 bushel  
Posted county price — \$1.61  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 00¢  
Milo — \$1.44 bushel  
Soybeans — \$5.33 bushel  
Posted county price — \$5.34  
Loan deficiency pmt. — 00¢  
Millet — \$6.50 hundredweight  
Sunflowers  
Oil current crop — \$9.80 cwt.  
NuSun sunflowers — \$10.20  
Confection — call.  
Pinto beans — \$20 (new crop)  
(Markets by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

**inside  
today**

More local news and views from your Goodland Star-News



**Hoxie here for opener**

Jase Herl, playing for the Gold Squad, tackled Tyler Hillmer of the Black Squad near the goal line during last Friday's Soap Scrimmage at Cowboys Stadium. Goodland opens its season at 6 p.m. tonight at home against the Hoxie Indians. Story, photo on Page 12.

## City to vote on one-cent sales tax

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Construction on the joint city-county road project could begin in the spring if Goodland voters approve a one-cent sales tax on Oct. 18.

Sherman County commissioners and Goodland city commissioners met in a special joint session Wednesday morning to plan the next move to finance the rebuilding of the main arteries through the county and into the city.

Both boards agreed it's urgent to move the road project forward, and going with the city sales tax is the quickest way to get it moving.

Mayor Rick Billinger said he thought the best plan was to use a countywide sales tax.

County Commissioner Kevin Rasure said the original plan was to

use a countywide tax, but there were two problems with that.

"We would have to go to the state Legislature to get special permission," Rasure said, "and we would not have it in place until next fall."

A city tax can be set under existing state law, members said, speeding up the process while bringing in almost as much money.

"There are not that many businesses outside the city," said City Commissioner Dave Daniels.

"All of our information makes it more sensible to go with a citywide sales tax," Rasure said. "If we wait for the Legislature, we would lose a year of the road project. With approval by the city, we could get started on the roads this fall and begin some construction next year."

Darin Neufeld, the engineer from Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Asso-

ciates who has done a lot of work for the city, said work on the city streets could begin as quickly as they can get the drawings out to the contractors. He said they would not face the extra delay of going through the state Department of Transportation for design approval.

Billinger said it would be good to be started next spring while an asphalt plant is set up in Goodland to handle the K-27 project south of town.

Curt Way, county public works director, said it would be good to get started because the cost of oil seems to continue to go up, and waiting a year could drive the total cost above the estimated \$11 million.

"I agree it would be good if we have the sales tax in place," Billinger said. "With the construction and expansion of the city, we might

pay the bonds off early."

County Clerk Janet Rumpel said the best date for a sales tax election would be in October, and suggested Tuesday, Oct. 18. She said if it is a city election the cost would have to be paid by the city, but she said with a single issue, the ballots could be hand counted and printed locally.

She said the election has to be held 45 days after the city meets the requirements, and the first publication has to be 21 days before the election. "I think the best is to do it simple and call it good," Rumpel said. "If the voters approve the sales tax, it could be in place by January."

"If this is a city sales tax, will people outside the city get to vote?" asked City Clerk Mary Volk.

"No," Rumpel said. "Only those who live in the city would vote."

City Commissioner Josh Dechant

asked if the plan was to have the tax go for 10 years and then end. Rasure said he would like to see a cap on the sales tax issue.

"Do you want to do that with the cost of oil?" County Commissioner Mitch Tiede asked. "We have a set amount of roads and an estimate of \$10 to \$11 million."

"I think we can specify roads or set a cap," Rasure said.

The mayor said it might be better to list the projects than cap the amount.

"We need to do what we have set out," Billinger said. "If there are other roads later, we can ask the people again. There are a lot of variables in that. This is what we are going to do, and then it will be over."

Neufeld said they might get an

See SALES TAX, Page 8

## Power line priority for energy center

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

The city needs to build a 6.2 mile power line, costing an estimated \$341,000, to tie into a new power plant west of town, staff members told the city commission at a work session Monday.

The line is a top priority in dealing with the new energy center being built about four miles west of the city, staffers said.

Charlie Bandel, head of the city power distribution department, asked about ownership of the power line out to the site.

"I guess we are going to own it," he said. "We will have to have an engineer and crew to build the line. That is something I cannot do."

Another question was how the city would get backup power if the new plant goes down.

"What about backup power?" Bandel asked. "We have heard rumors about the city power plant closing."

"We are seeing smaller cities lose power plants, and now many are getting smaller engines to keep them going. If we lose power, no one wants to be in the dark."

Mayor Rick Billinger said the power plant question is one the commission would have to address, but that nothing will be done until the

new plant is up and running and the city feels confident in the supply.

"None of us want to sit in the dark," Billinger agreed.

City Manager Wayne Hill asked Mark Justus of Renewable Energy Resources what the voltage on the line would need to be.

Justus said it would be 115 kilovolts going to the city's substation and then it goes to 13,800 volts.

"We would have to have an outside crew work on the line," Bandel said, noting that his crew is not qualified to work on high-voltage transmission lines. "We do not do hot stick work."

Commissioner Dave Daniels asked about the cost.

Billinger said he had been asking, and the estimate was \$55,000 per mile.

Hill said it would be 6.2 miles from the city to the site. He said having the line out to the site would provide the city with a backup to its current supplier, Sunflower Electric.

"In a worse-case scenario, we would have Sunflower as a backup," Hill said.

Daniels asked how long it would take to build the line.

"We need to have a time frame so

See POWER LINE, Page 8

## Change withdrawn for industrial park

Plans to change the zoning of land west of town for the proposed Goodland Energy Center have run into a little roadblock.

In fact, promoters have asked the city to drop their zoning request and deannex the land, turning it back to the county.

It seems the city has no provision for the heavy industrial zoning the plants need, and it would take too long to write and adopt the rules.

Since the county has no zoning, the plants can be built and taken into the city later.

City Manager Wayne Hill said Thursday he had been asked by Ron Pickman, head of the new power plant, to withdraw the zoning change, which was to be on the agenda for Tuesday's city commission meeting.

Hill said he was told there were problems with the present city zon-

ing code that makes it nearly impossible to build the power plant.

Mark Justus, of Renewable Energy Resources, said they had realized that the city zoning code does not have a category for heavy industrial business, and that it would take a minimum of 60 days to get a code in place.

He said the company had spent two days meeting with the city officials, and it became clear they were not going to be able to proceed under the original plans.

"We would be delayed," Justus said, "and we are worried about losing our ability to pour the foundations this winter. There are things that would have to be done, and the city manager told us he would get on developing a new industrial class."

"This will not stop the plant, but

See AGENDA, Page 8

## Labor Day holiday delays paper schedule

Labor Day marks the end of summer with a three-day weekend, and all government offices, banks and financial institutions and many stores will be closed on Monday.

There will be no mail service on

Monday.

The Goodland Star-News will be closed on Monday, and the Midweek issue will be printed on Tuesday and delivered in the mail on Wednesday, one day later than usual.



## Police beat each other with baton

Goodland Police officers Jimmy Gillespie (above, left) and Greg Krosky sparred during a baton training session outside of the station Tuesday afternoon. Officers Joni Meyer (left) and Leslie Knitig and Sherman County Under-sheriff Roger Studer help Krosky suit up for another round.

Photos by Kathryn Burke  
The Goodland Star-News

