

City to vote on sales tax to pay for joint road project

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economic development grant from the state Department of Commerce to help rebuild a one-mile stretch of County Road 14 from old U.S. 24 north to County Road 65, or Eighth Street. He said the estimated cost is \$2 million, and if the city or county could get the state grant, it would require a 25 percent match.

The commissions decided to have the county apply for the grant. Dechant said the sales tax issue should be worded similarly to how it was done for the county to repair old U.S. 24. He said it should say that the sales tax would continue until the projects are paid for.

Rasure said the county had talked to Kevin Cowan, a bond attorney from Gilmore and Bell of Wichita, about doing the bond issue, and they would like to be part of the process to write the ballot proposal and help with the whole process.

"How the wording is done on the ballot is important," Rasure said. Billinger said the city would have to put the sales tax on the agenda for the next meeting on Tuesday. He said it might be short notice to have the bond counsel at the city meeting and the two boards might have to hold another special meeting to work out the details.

Volk asked what the last day for setting the special election would be. Rumpel said it has to be approved by Sept. 12 to hold it on Oct. 18.

City Manager Wayne Hill was asked for his opinion.

"I knew somebody would ask," Hill said. "I honestly have to say I don't know at this time. I am learning right now."

Dechant asked if Hill had ever taken something to the people while city manager in Guymon.

"Yes," Hill said. "The best thing is to keep the media informed and get information out to the people."

You have to get the information about the project out, and that will help with the vote."

Dechant said the city and county had held one open forum on the project, and could hold another.

Rasure said both boards need to understand the cost of the bond company and the wording of the ballot to be able to answer questions.

Rasure said the next step is to get the bond attorney together with the city to get the paperwork started.

Billinger said he would like to have a meeting set up with the bond counsel, and possibly have the city and county clerks and the city manager and Rasure have a preliminary meeting with him so the major part of the work is ready for a special city meeting.

Hill said they need to get the city attorney involved, too.

The two boards agreed to plan a meeting as soon as the details can be worked out.

Staff questions future of city plant when new power plant comes on line

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

If the city starts buying its power from a new plant west of town, will the old city power plant be shut down?

And if it is, will the city be at the mercy of a Hays-based cooperative, Sunflower Electric, for backup power?

Rod Blake, power plant superintendent, asked what the city would do for power next summer before the new plant is up and running, since its contract with Sunflower expires in May.

ees," Blake said. "Will they be allowed to find other jobs in the city. They have been offered an option to work at the new power plant, but what will we do if all the city people move to the new power plant."

"Is it the intent to shut down the city power plant? If so, in what time frame?"

Mayor Rick Billinger said the future of the city power plant is up in the air.

"We do not know," he said. "That would be something for the commission to decide in the future."

Hill said the decision might depend on the way the commission would decide to maintain the diesel-fired plant, and if it could be used as a backup.

It costs the city about \$90 per megawatt hour to produce power at the diesel plant, though that will go up with the spiraling price of oil.

The city buys four megawatts of firm power now from Sunflower for \$32, but that too is expected to go up to nearly twice what the contract price has been.

Goodland Energy Resources has offered power from its plant for \$47 to \$49, and the city expects to buy most of its power from the new firm.

"I can see a phase down of the plant after Goodland Energy is up and running," Hill said. "That is down the road at this time. We know there is a goal, but we won't be ready to shut things down until later. We don't know what period of time

we will continue to run the city plant."

"We don't want to sit in the dark," Billinger said. "We will have options before we do anything. We need to keep the city plant up to snuff."

"We won't shut down the city plant until we are comfortable with the delivery of power," Hill said.

"The only thing that has changed is you have another power supplier," Pickman said. "Now you have options, but Sunflower still controls the main transmission line through Kansas."

Blake said there will not be a contract for firm power like the city now has with Sunflower. He said the city is having to run its plant a lot more this summer and Sunflower says it is because of availability.

"This could drag out further if the project is not ready on schedule," Blake said. "We need to be aware we are at the mercy of Sunflower through this. They can't gouge us with price, but we can't prove availability, and will not have the firm power to use as a cushion."

He said they have had to pay more than \$138 a megawatt hour to Sunflower for power this summer and the city is generating for about \$90.

"We might need to call people and tell them to shut their air conditioners off," Billinger said jokingly.

"What do you mean we," Blake responded.

"We have a meeting on Sept. 14 with Bob Johnson, a representative from Sunflower," Blake said. "We may know more after that. It would be great if (the new plant) is going to get the backup turbine installed first."

"An agreement with Goodland Energy Resources for the power load next summer would give us some options."

Larry McCants, president of First National Bank, said he had been at a meeting recently with the president of Sunflower Electric, and was told the co-op, owned by area rural electric cooperatives, would work with the city. McCants said the president told him they would not try to take advantage of the situation.

Blake asked about the future of the old power plant and the city employees who run it.

"What about the city employ-

ment would decide to maintain the diesel-fired plant, and if it could be used as a backup.

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Power line top priority for new energy center

POWER LINE, from Page 1

we know how long it will take when they ask for us to deliver the power," he said.

"We need to get this done as quickly," Billinger said, "to sell power to the plants during construction and help pay for the power lines."

Rod Blake, power plant superintendent, said he knows a man who

might know how to engineer and build the line. He said he will talk to him and get an idea of the time frame and costs.

Billinger asked Ron Pickman, former city manager and head of Goodland Energy Resources, the partnership building the power plant, about an economic development grant to help build the power line.

"The Kansas Department of Commerce has a grant program," Pickman said. "The city needs to contact them to get the paperwork moving."

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Zoning change withdrawn for new industrial park site

AGENDA, from Page 1

we will build it and then annex into the city when it is completed. We will have to meet all the state and federal regulations, and hopefully the city can work with us to develop the zoning code for later when the industrial park is brought into the city."

Justus said the plans for the center are moving forward, but that the zoning issue has been more of a problem than they expected.

"We thought we could do a good job by being in the city," he said, "but the more we looked at it, the more it was not going to work."

Hill said the agenda for Tuesday has been shortened with the dropping of the zoning change.

The city will consider a proposal from S&T Telephone to join the county in switching phone service later in September. The city commission and county commission, in a joint session Wednesday morning, heard a proposal from Don Newell of S&T about switching phone service when the existing contract with SBC is up at the end of October.

The county commission approved the change,

and the city commission is expected to take action Tuesday. The phone numbers for the city and county will not change, but the prefix will change from 899 to 890.

In other business, the city will:

- Discuss a farm lease of ground northeast of the east exit from I-70 where a new museum is to be built.
- Approve a grant agreement for the next phase of the intersection project.
- Approve a bid for used patrol cars.
- Approve payments to Miller Construction for work completed at Pioneer Park; payment to Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Associates for engineering work; a request for reimbursement from the state Department of Transportation for the state share of the project; and payment to Evans, Bierly, Hutchison for engineering on the airport lighting project.

The city commission meets at 5 p.m. in the commission room upstairs at the City Administration Building, 204 W. 11th. Push the button inside the front door to get in.

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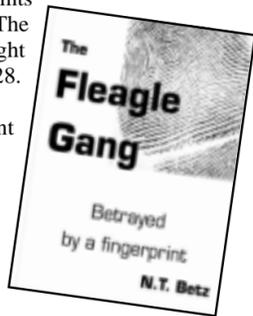
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Kansas' 'Fleagle Gang' Fingerprint ends nationwide '20s manhunt

Today we watch Crime Scene Investigation shows about using fingerprints to find criminals. This is a true crime story from the roaring 20s, "The Fleagle Gang, Betrayed by a fingerprint," begins with a brazen daylight robbery of the First National Bank in Lamar, Colo. on May 23, 1928. Four men are dead, and the robbers escape.

Author Tom (N.T.) Betz, editor of *The Goodland Star-News*, has spent a lifetime in journalism and on the Great Plains.

Check out the on-line five-star review at Amazon.com.
This book would make a great Christmas gift - order now.
Betz will be at the Greeley County Museum in Tribune at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 10; at the Finney County Museum for a picnic from 1-4 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 2; At the El Quartejejo Museum in Scott City on Saturday, Oct. 15; and at the Fick Fossil and History Museum in Oakley on Saturday, Oct. 29.



"The Fleagle Gang" details the robbery/murder case which hinged on a single fingerprint — precursor to today's CSI shows — found on a murdered Dighton, Kan., doctor's car. The fledgling FBI plays a crucial role in turning the fingerprint into solid forensic evidence used to find, arrest and convict members of the Fleagle Gang. The FBI credits the Fleagle case as the first time a single fingerprint was used to identify and convict criminals. The book includes over 100 photos and maps taken from court files and places where the gang robbed banks. The Fleagle family lived near Friend, Kan. in Finney County.

A U.S. Navy journalist and a graduate of the University of Colorado, Betz started his career delivering papers for his family's newspaper (1920-1989) *The Lamar Daily News* in Lamar, Colo., winning the first of numerous journalism awards as a teenager.

The Fleagle Gang robbed banks in Larned, Kinsley, Marysville, Ottawa and McPherson Kan., Lamar, Colo., Eugene, Ore. and countless others of over \$1 million in the 10 years they operated.

"The Fleagle Gang" is available at the **Big Timbers Museum** in Lamar, Colo., the **Lane County Museum** in Dighton, Kan., the **Fick Fossil and History Museum** in Oakley, Kan., the **Finney County Museum** and **Hastings** in Garden City, Kan., and the **High Plains Museum** in Goodland, Kan. It is available on-line from the publisher **Authorhouse.com**, Linda Knott's new web bookstore **knottjustbooks.spreadtheword.com**, Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble and other major stores.

Check out "The Fleagle Gang" web site at: nwkansas.com/home/fleaglegang.

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