

City pay plan modified to allow for merit raises

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News
City employees could receive a merit raise of up to 5 percent under a pay plan approved at last Monday's City Commission meeting.
City Manager Wayne Hill proposed a change in the employee pay plan to allow more flexibility, including merit raises to 5 or 6 percent for employees who have reached the maximum under the present plan.
"I looked at last year's resolution," Hill said. "The city has three levels, entry, probation and maximum. We have six who are maxed out on this plan."
"They would not be eligible for any salary increases. Looking at

past resolutions, there was a way to do a merit raise based on an evaluation."
"Charlie (Bandel, head of the city power line crews), who has been here 33 years, would be capped. I am trying to take care of the people who have served a long time. This is my proposal. I had to start somewhere."
Hill proposed having department heads evaluate their people and then he would sit down and go over the recommendations.
"I will evaluate the supervisors," Hill said. "These are the ones I have worked with in the time I have been here."
"We need to do something to give us more flexibility," Mayor Rick

Billinger agreed.
City Clerk Mary Volk said with the proposal, the only raises will be based on the merit evaluations.
"I like this better than giving an across-the-board raise," Commissioner Josh Dechant said. "I think it is fairer."
"I want to take care of the ones who have reached the maximum," Hill said.
"You are recommending increases on merit of up to 5 percent for employees?" Commissioner John Garcia asked.
"Yes, and up to 2.5 percent on the five or six who are maxed," Hill said.
Hill said with the percentage method, raises depend how much

you are making, and the amount is larger if you have a bigger base to begin with.
"The city is fortunate where we can give raises," Hill said. "I know others that cannot because of constraints."
"I think you have done a lot of work," Commissioner Annette Fairbanks said, "and based on what they did last week (during the blizzard), they deserve to be compensated. I know many of them went above and beyond during the recent weather."
"This would give you the option to help those on the bottom of the totem pole," Billinger said. "I have a problem with percentages. Those with higher wages get more for the

amount of the raise."
"That is why I want to go to the performance evaluation," Hill said. "It would be more of an incentive for the hard workers on the city crews."
Dechant asked about the part-time people and volunteer firemen.
Hill and Volk said they are not under the employee pay plan, which is for full-time employees.
Dechant asked if this is the same as it has been in the past.
"We have done it both ways," Billinger said. "I like this a little better than the percentage based. At one time, our police were so underpaid it was hard to keep good officers. We tried to get the wages up so we can keep good people."

"The city did a merit raise two years ago," Hill said.
"The 75 cents last year was to help the lower paid people," Billinger said. "We will never have enough to pay them what they are worth."
He asked about the cost of the health insurance benefits.
Volk said she had called on that and was told health insurance would go down about 2 percent next year. She said it had gone down 1 percent this year, and the employees are working hard to keep it down.
Fairbanks made a motion to approve the pay plan resolution as presented by Hill. Dechant seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

City, activity center close to agreement on recreation program

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News
A few details remain to be worked out before the city and the Goodland Activity Center can combine recreation programs, the City Commission heard last Monday.
Rod Kling, chairman of the center's board, told the commission it was a great opportunity for the center to enter into an agreement with the city, and that the board is "100 percent" behind the program.
"I want to thank (City Manager) Wayne (Hill) and (Public Works Director) Rich (Simon) for working on the minor details," Kling said. "I think it will be a great marriage between the city and the activity center."
Hill said he was glad the activity center has been willing to help get the agreement together.
The manager said he had talked to the city's insurance company about liability coverage on the pickup the recreation department has been using. The city had planned to lease the pickup to the center, which would maintain the pickup.
"I think the best option is to donate the pickup to the activity center," Hill said. "That way, we get out from it entirely, and we would not have to worry about liability."
Mayor Rick Billinger said that seemed like a good answer, and the other commissioners said they agreed.

pay the center \$30,000 at the first of the year to run the former city programs to give them some flexibility.
Billinger said that should save the city \$10,000 to \$20,000 right off the top. He asked if the city was going to have a representative on the activity center board.
Simon said they plan to keep the City/County Recreation Commission for at least the first two years.
Kling said the center board would like to get the members of the recreation commission involved in their meetings. He said it would be good to have more people involved in the recreation planning.
Commissioner John Garcia said the more open communications the groups have, the better things will be.
The next city commission meeting will be 5 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 19, at the City Administration Building, 204 W. 11th.

Santa stops by Topside Tip-Off



Santa Claus talked to kids about what they wanted for Christmas and handed out candy as he made a special appearance at the Topside Tip-Off during the halftime of girls championship

game Saturday. Photos and stories about the tournament are on Pages 9a and 10a.

Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Sherman County Racing Association adds date for next year

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News
Ten dates for racing at the Sherman County Speedway next year were approved at Tuesday's county commission meeting.
Alex West of the Sherman County Racing Association told the commissioners that the races had gone pretty well this year, and the association had come out of the season in good financial shape.
West said the first weekend of racing will be April 15, which will be a fun day to allow the drivers to practice and test their cars.
There is little real practice time available during the season West said. He said this is a new date, and it will depend on the interest of the drivers to see if they like it.

corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate your calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

The regular racing season will begin in May with races scheduled for Saturday, May 6 and 20, June 3 and 17 and July 8 and 22. The Bill Grey Memorial will be on Aug. 19, and the season finishes with races on Sept. 2 and Sept. 22-24 for the Flatlander Fall Festival.
Commission Chairman Mitch Tiede asked if there were any changes in the contract for the upcoming year. West said none that he knew of.
Mary Ann Snethen, deputy county clerk, said the association had paid all the bills, and when the season was finished the county gave back \$360. The association is being charged \$500 per race, she said.
William McKnight, county grounds supervisor, said there were very few problems. One thing McKnight mentioned was that the young kids had been running around and vandalizing the restrooms. He said they were

throwing toilet paper around and stuffing the toilets.
"I don't know what we can do to keep the kids from running around," McKnight said. "I know Alex (West) did his best to get on them."
West said he had gotten on the public address system and suggested the kids leave the restrooms alone.
"It goes right back to the parents," Tiede said.
Harold Snethen, former owner of Picnic in the Park, has been handling the concessions in the pit area and asked the commissioners to consider upgrading the power line.
"We need a new power line," Snethen said. "The voltage is not

good enough to handle the load in the pit area."
Tiede asked what had been done out there.
Snethen said a line was extended for the lights when the pit area was moved to the north end instead of in the middle of the arena.
"When the pit was moved to the north, the line only ran the pit lights," McKnight said. "Then the concessions were moved into the trailer."
Tiede asked if they need a separate line.
McKnight said a heavier line would probably do. He said when the Good SAMS camping club came to the city a few years ago, they had to call the city to have a

power connection put out in the pit area. He said the Good SAMS are expected to come back to Goodland in a few years.
Tiede asked how long the power line would have to be, and McKnight said it would probably be about 600 feet.
Tiede told McKnight to get a price and bring it back to the commissioners.
McKnight said all the racing dates had been compared with the extension calendar to make sure there are no conflicts.
Commissioner Kevin Rasure said he did not see anything in the contract that needed to be changed, and made a motion to approve it. The motion passed unanimously.

ESTATE SALE

For the Estate of Mrs. C.J. Deckman & Others

Date: Saturday, December 17, 2005
Time: 10 a.m. CT (Doors open at 8 a.m. day of sale)
Auction Location: T-N-T & Jones Auction Facility, 200 N. Franklin, Colby, Kan.
Preview sale items between 5-7 p.m. CT Friday, December 16, 2005.

ANTIQUES/COLLECTIBLES: Early American Gossip Bench - 1950s Oak 3 pc. Bedroom Set - Maple Early American 6' Drop Leaf Coffee Table - Pine 1950s Hexagon Dinette Table & 4 Captains Chairs - USA Brown & White Pitcher - Gissons Tea Pot, made in England - 6 Pic. Pottery Nesting Bowls - Crock Mixing Bowls - Pyrex Nesting Bowls - Jars of Jewelry - 1930s Walnut Cedar Chest - 1940s Cedar Chest - Solid Maple Early American Dining Room Set (Drop Leaf Table w/4 leafs & 6 chairs, Open Front China Hutch) - 2-5 gal. Water Crock - Assorted Crock Jugs - Records - Brass Fire Extinguisher Floor Lamp - Set of Johnson Bros. China "Strawberry Fair" pattern - Copper Kettles - 1920s Universal Coffee Urn-Selve Service - Assorted Silver Pieces - Crystal Punch Bowl - Brass #23 Aladdin Kerosene Lamp - Community Silverware - Art Glass - Hull Pottery 4 3/4 14-A - Assorted cut & Pressed Glass - Masons Ironstone China Set w/extra pieces, made in England - Teapots - Crystal Wine Decanters - Complete Set of Willow Ware China by Royal China - Currier & Ives Dishes - Fenton Hobnail Cranberry Bowl - Assorted Depression Glass - Fancywork - Tulip Appliqued Quilt - Indian Blanket - Bow

back chairs - Cast iron 3-legged bean pot w/lid - Crock Bowls - Oak Palor table - Walnut 5-Shelf corner stand - Walnut small, l table with drawer **HOUSEHOLD** - Oak Glider Rocker - Microwave Cart - RCA Console Color TV w/Remote - Electric Lift Chair-sea foam green - Card Tables - Metal Shelves - Multi Blue Sofa w/Oak Trim - Floral Swivel Chair - Assorted Pots & Pans - Cookbooks - Cooking Utensils - 4 Drawer Metal File Cabinet - 9 Drawer Pine Dresser - Table Lamps - Oak & Glass Dinette Table & 4 Chairs - Blue & White Striped Sofa w/Oak Trim - Oak hex end table w/matching square end table - Assorted Books - Area Rugs - Maple Fern Stand - GE Dishwasher - Amana Radar Range Microwave Oven - Assorted Brass Knick-Knacks - Assorted Bedding - Twin Mattress & Box Springs - Blue Recliner - 1/2 moon dole painted table/cabinet - 1950s double pedestal desk - Assorted pictures - Bedding - Blue wing back chair - Brass table lamp - Floor lamp - High back office chair - Metal door storage cabinet - Oak Computer Desk - Sanyo Color TV - Stereo - Upholstered armchair - Waterfall chest of drawers - White cabinet base - Wire 3-shelf rack

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