

City, county may get money to pay blizzard costs

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News
Goodland and Sherman County may get money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help pay some of the overtime bills run up during the November blizzard, commissioners were told. Gary Rogers, regional emergency management director, and his assistant Crissy Conger, Sherman County central dispatch director, met with the commissioners on Feb. 7, to get their approval on a preliminary disaster assessment report for FEMA.

Rogers said the city and county will get separate checks, and the county may get some money to pay for overtime in dispatch and for sheriff's deputies.

He said there will probably not be much for road and bridge because the crew did not go beyond their normal hours.

"I expect more on the city side," Rogers said, "because of the power outage, the fire department and police."

He said the food for stranded travelers has been taken care of by the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. Commissioner Mitch Tiede asked what the county could do with the money.

Rogers said the county can do what it wants, but it will go into the general fund.

County Clerk Janet Rumpel said she could set up a separate line item

Sherman County part of northwest security council

Homeland Security is the name of the big game these days, and a conference was held in Wichita to organize Kansas into regions.

Gary Rogers, regional emergency management director, told the Sherman County commissioners Feb. 7, he had been at the meeting in Wichita with Kevin Sanderson, manager of Helena Chemical here, who is the Sherman County representative to the regional council. Rogers said he represents Cheyenne County on the council.

Sanderson Tuesday gave the commissioners an update on what happened at the workshop in Wichita in January.

"The state is broken into regions," he said. "We are part of the northwest region made up 18 counties. The main thing ... is to look at the capabilities from a regional standpoint and a statewide standpoint.

"When we see what our shortfalls are, we will look at what we need on a regional basis. The plan is to spread the money out, but keep

the majority for a pool to buy the bigger pieces of equipment.

"I see Sherman County being a larger part of the puzzle because we are on I-70. One think we lack is mass rail transportation. That is something more north and south of us."

He said there will be a threat assessment of each area, and that it will probably be 18 months before there is any visible effect. He said the money for this year is set, and the planning and changes will be for the upcoming years.

He said there are 16 representatives on the northwest council, with representatives from emergency medical and ambulance services, fire chiefs and two from county government, and he thought they were a good group with lots of experience.

The chair is Deb Hays of Smith Center, who is representing Phillipsburg. The vice chair is Steve Hirsh of Oberlin representing Decatur County. The region has its own budget,

Sanderson said.

He showed the commissioners a set of maps listing potential bioterrorism response and hospitals, county health department and other existing emergency services.

Sanderson said bioterrorism is one small piece of the threat, but one area where there is no present coverage for the western half of the state is the lack of a bomb squad.

"There are no bomb squads in the western part of the state," Sanderson said. "There are eight in the northeast. A third of our state does not have any capability; the closest is Wichita. "Adjacent General Tod Bunting made mention that this is the biggest risk in the state."

Sanderson said there was a suggestion to tie bomb disposal to the regional hazardous material teams.

He said the first regional meeting will be April 4 at the fire station in Hoxie, and that the council will meet quarterly.

Tuesday," Thomas said.

Rogers said that might not work because the next two Tuesdays he will have to be in Goodland.

Rasure said he had talked to District Judge Jack Burr, who said they could use the law library. Rasure said there is a phone and computer connection there, and it is quiet.

The commissioners recessed and went with Rogers and Conger to check out the library on the third floor. Rasure got the key from the district court and led the way around corners and down a hall.

Rogers said it looked like the space would work, but that he would need a place for a filing cabinet.

Rasure said he would work out the details with the judge.

"The library is used for legal research," Rasure said, "but Judge Burr said it is not used as much as in the past because more of the legal documents are on computer."

When the meeting resumed, Rumpel said if the library doesn't work, Sheriff Kevin Butts said there was a room with a phone and Internet access that Rogers might use at the jail.

Conger told the commissioners she has hired a new dispatcher, Barb Disney, who had been a jailer. Conger said this will give her a full staff, and that Disney has dispatching experience when she was in Wyoming.

City, county to meet jointly Tuesday morning

AGENDA, from Page 1

Resolution requesting April be designated a Cleanup Month.

City Manager Wayne Hill will recognize Corporal William Fulcher and Officer Cary Amos for their actions in saving Florence Meissinger's life, when she suffered a heart attack in her car at

Frontier Equity on Feb. 1. She was given cardiopulmonary resuscitation by the police officers on the scene, was taken to Goodland Regional Medical Center and flown to a hospital in Denver.

Following the joint meeting, the county commissioners will return to the Sherman County Courthouse to finish their agenda.

Fifth grade puts on Ritz to entertain audience

MUSIC, from Page 1

Gage Owens, Connor Gray, Cy Paxton, Andrew Dautel and Brandon Sissel tried their hand at groveling to Brianna Salinas, Paige Ford, Gloria Bustillos, Kimber Linnell and Reilly Flodin during "I Will Survive."

David Rascon, Tanner Jones, Nathaniel Smith and Alex Nelson donned long, unruly wigs for "You Should Be Dancin'."

The program closed with Cooper Slough, Stetson Johnson, Morgan Hand, Jacob Schnabel and Jed Gray in costume as the Village People for "YMCA."

Other students in the choir were Jacob Becvar, Kaleb Zwick, Adam Rust, Victoria Steggall, C.J. VanWermer, Sheldon Nelson and Derek Matthews.

Students in the fifth-grade band: Flutes, Sydni Callahan, Tiffany

Charron, Chantel Coates, Rachel Hageman, Stephanie Lee, Shayley Miller and Ashlee Roeder.

Alto saxophones, Connor Gray, Brooke Lockhart, Taylor Milke, Tyler Raby and Josh Whisnant.

French horn, Sabra Carver.

Clarinets, Sadie Avila, Lacie Cowan, Reilly Flodin, Amy Floyd, Chloe Goodwin, Belen Ledesma, Carly McCracken, Micheal Mosher, Paige Phillips, Victoria Steggall and Holly Wilkening.

Percussion, Connor Gray and Dylan McLemore.

Trumpets, Thern Bagley, Andrew Dautel, Jed Gray, Jeffrey House, Michaela Langley, Jordan McCombs and Cooper Slough.

Trombones, Alex Nelson, Jacob Schnabel, Brandon Sissel and Ray West.

Baritones, Mario Flores and Trace Waugh.

Armstrong mailboxes may not be moved

MAILBOXES, from Page 1

Sheldon said she had gone out to look at the area last week, and if the boxes have to be moved, she would recommend a place between Porterfields' and Russells' on the public right of way. She said there was an old driveway that might allow people to be off Caldwell, she said.

"This is the only area off the county road and is safe for

people," Sheldon said. "There is no putting up individual boxes. I have been told that from the people in Omaha."

"She would give us the right of way?" Rasure asked. "Why not give it to the post office?"

"That is unheard of," Sheldon said. "They won't consider that."

Sheldon said that as far as snow removal, everyone has the responsibility to clear the snow away from their mail box.

"It has been always been that way," she said, "for everyone's mail box.

"If I leave snow in front of my mail box the mailman will drive right on by."

Thomas said the problem is the cluster boxes are on private land.

"She is willing to give the easement to the county," Sheldon said.

"The mailboxes are safer where they are now, and the easement would give her peace of mind

about the question of liability."

Thomas asked Curt Way, county public works director what his feeling was. Way said if the county doesn't have to do maintenance, it doesn't make any difference to him.

Later in the meeting, the commissioners talked to County Attorney Bonnie Selby.

She agreed to draft a new easement, with a statement the county would not maintain the area.

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