

Contract awarded for replacing brick intersections

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News
 Construction crews will descend on five downtown intersections beginning in April to replace the bricks and surrounding curb and gutter.
 Monday the City commission awarded the contract to Miller Construction for \$1,067,617 for all five intersections.
 Darin Neufeld engineer for Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Associates, who is handling the project said the bids were opened on Feb. 23, and there were two bids. Neufeld said his estimate for the project was \$1,006,496, but the lowest bid was Miller at \$1,067,617 and the

high bid was Bryant and Bryant at \$1,228,131.
 Comparing the bids to his estimate Neufeld felt the difference could be the price of the bricks went up. He said both bids met the specifications.
 Saying the bid was \$61,000 higher than his estimate Neufeld said the question was if the city could afford the total cost.
 "Can we afford the \$60,000 over," he said. "I believe we can with the contingency in the quantities, and believe it will be less than the low bid."
 "These are the maximum, and the city share will be \$608,000. The city budget has \$589,000 available, and

that means we are about \$20,000 over on the city share.
 "I think we can make that up. I am sure the amount of construction engineering \$123,000 in the contract is an amount we will not reach. Miller is the apparent low bidder and our recommendation. We have worked with him, and believe we can come in under the total cost."
 Mayor Rick Billinger asked if Neufeld was saying they could make up the shortfall.
 "Yes, we will," Neufeld said.
 City Commissioner Josh Dechant asked what the time frame was for the work to begin.
 Miller said they will wait for the Kansas Department of Transporta-

tion approval and it will take about 30 days to get the water lines on order.
 Neufeld agreed that the KDOT approval is next, but felt that could be done by the end of the week. He said they could do a preconstruction meeting possibly next week.
 Miller brought up the question of having the intersections torn up during the alumni reunion in August.
 The plan is to do the intersections at Ninth, 11th and 13th at the same time, and then come back and do the ones at 10th and 12th. He said they could take a break between the first three and the last two if it was getting close to the reunion date.
 Neufeld said if they took a break for the reunion an allowance could

be made in the contract.
 Rich Simon, city public works manager, said he would rather see where they are once the three are completed.
 Dechant asked if there would be enough time between the reunion and Flatlander Festival to get the intersections completed.
 Commissioner Dave Daniels said that would give Miller about seven weeks to get the other two intersections completed.
 Miller said that is probably doable, and said it depends on the subcontractor.
 Neufeld said the first three intersections will be torn up at the same time, and then do the other two.

Billinger said he felt it would be something Miller would have to work out with Neufeld and City Manager Wayne Hill
 Neufeld said it should take about 90 days, and felt construction could be started by April.
 Miller said it will take a few days to tear the three intersections out, and the one at Ninth will be the quickest because there is no storm drain there.
 Billinger said Hill and Neufeld should keep the commission updated on the progress.
 Dechant made the motion to award the bid to Miller Construction. The motion was approved unanimously.

Cable company asks to bury fiber optic line in right of way

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News
 Eagle Cable is planning to upgrade their signal, and Tuesday asked Sherman County Commissioners permission to bury about six miles of fiber optic cable along the county right of way.
 Dennis Peterson of Eagle Cable said the plan is to bury about six miles of cable from their facility south of the city to upgrade their cable and Internet services. He said they wanted permission to bury the line along County Road 63 in the county right of way and bring it east to County Road 20, and then up to Caldwell. He said it will come into

the city and he was working with the city to get it buried along the streets.
 Commissioner Mitch Tiede said Peterson needed to talk to Curt Way, public works director.
 Peterson said he had talked to the public works director, and was told he needed to start with the commissioners.
 He said Dave Horinek of H & H Sprinklers would be burying the cable and it would be a minimum of 36 inches or deeper in critical areas.
 "We want to use the north side of Road 63 to avoid driveways as much as possible," Peterson said.
 Tiede asked about crossing I-70.
 Peterson said he had his permits

from the Kansas Department of Transportation, and would be getting the city permits
 He said once the cable is up to Business U.S. 24 it would go along there up to Cherry.
 He said Horinek will probably trench the cable in. He said they thought about using a cable plow, but don't think it will go deep enough to meet the 36 inch depth.
 Commissioner Chuck Thomas asked what was in the right of way now.
 Peterson said they would call everyone to see what is out there, and have them come out and mark their lines.

"We will work with everybody to make it as easy as possible," he said.
 Tiede said he did not see any problems and both Thomas and Commissioner Kevin Rasure agreed.
 Tiede said Peterson had to get an excavation permit and to talk to

Way about that.
 Peterson said the plan is to get things rolling as soon as possible, and the first part will be to get some of the bores done this spring. He said it will probably be 60-90 days to get the cable installed.
 The commissioners agreed to participate in the Big Brothers, Big Sisters Vowling for Kids to be held on Saturday, April 1. Thomas will be the team captain, and Tide, Rasure and Way will be the other team members. The commissioners agreed to contribute \$50 for each team member.

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Co-op merger plan fails on close vote

MERGER, from Page 1a
 drought, low grain volumes and operating losses. St. Francis also has at least five years to pay off three new grain elevator tubes.
 Frontier Equity bought fertilizer facilities and made money in the last year. The Frontier board of directors supported the merger.
 At least one St. Francis Equity

Board Member, Dale Rath, was opposed to the merger. He wanted the board to check out other options.
 The Frontier Equity directors are Brent Linin, Tim Livengood, Albert Rall, Theron Culwell, John Deeds, Kenneth Davis and Alan Townsend. The St. Francis directors are Ronald Zwegyardt, Alex Peterson, Ted Zielke, Spencer Schlepp and Rath. Tim Burr, manager of the St.

Francis Equity, has said the board will go on from there whatever the vote is.
 "Frontier is still interested in merging so it may go to another vote," said Zwegyardt, president of St. Francis Equity.
 "We're disappointed the merger didn't pass" said Linin, president of board of directors of Frontier Equity Exchange.

Power plant air permit OK'd

PLANT, from Page 1a
 said. "But that won't stop us from getting everything ready to go. Then we can begin the real work of building the plant."
 The plant will primarily burn coal, but the permit allows them to substitute up to 30 percent with sunflower hulls. Pickman said the sunflower hulls can come from the Archer Daniels Midland plant located at Caruso, or from another source.
 Once the plant has been assembled and they are ready to fire up the boiler and turbine generator the state will have to be notified. Once the plant is fired up there are a series of tests and requirements that have to be met within 60-90 days to get

the certificate of operation from the state health department.
 Pickman said this was good timing, and that the construction of the energy center should be at full speed by the beginning of summer.
 Mark Justus, head of ReNewable Energy Resources, said once the construction begins on the power plant it will take about a year to complete.
 He said it will take a crew of about 210 to assemble the power plant using three shifts around the clock.
 While many of the construction workers will be skilled in specific areas Justus expects about half to come from the surrounding area. He said the boiler workers will be coming from overseas.

"There are a lot of people here who travel for construction," Justus said. "I was surprised at how many are here and we may have as many as 100 from the local area."
 Pickman, as the former city manager, was involved in the early discussions on the joint road improvement project and using a sales tax to pay for the streets and roads. The special sales tax election will be held Tuesday, March 28.
 "This is one time I wish I could still vote here," he said. "With all the construction of our plants and the highways there will be lots of people here to help pay the sales tax. I am pleased to see the city and county moving ahead with the sales tax to rebuild the roads."

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