

Plainville firm gets county road design contract

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has worked with Neufeld for over eight years.

"I would like to say from EBH's standpoint, we understand you are under a lot of pressure," Luttrell said. "I used to drive out here from Great Bend twice a month to work with the city.

"Our mission is to build a relationship with the client so we can consult with them on an as-needed basis. We grew from two offices to five, and that is why we opened the office here. We like the people in western Kansas.

"We want our customers to call Darin up and bounce ideas off him. We don't go out and chase work. We don't respond to a lot of requests for qualifications or requests for proposals. Instead of spending money on that, we work to build the relationships. We want to develop a relationship with Sherman County. "We have seven engineers on staff, the latest equipment and our people are experts in drainage, sewage treatment and highway and street improvements.

"We have the expertise and resources that you are looking for. We want to do more than just your work. Darin is right here, and you can call him when you need him.

"The city saw the benefit. We worked out an agreement so we could open an office at the airport. We have built other relationships in this area.

"We are approaching the tipping point here. We are looking to expand manpower out in this area. We are getting almost to the level of needing another person."

A person in the audience said the number of projects in the area is a concern. He said he is worried that Neufeld will be pulled away from the county projects.

"That is our commitment," Luttrell said, "to have people on site. We will do what it takes to have the manpower on scene."

Neufeld said there were a lot of projects going on, and a lot scheduled.

"I have told the city staff that Goodland is my No. 1 project," he said, "and I put all the effort into this because I live here."

Rasure said it he was glad they have a local firm, and that they have brought kids to the schools. He was thankful to Neufeld for going out

and getting an \$800,000 economic development grant for the county.

"We decided months ago to do a joint city and county project to get the whole thing done," Rasure said. "I feel we lose that by having more than one firm involved.

"Our No. 1 priority is to the taxpayers, to get the best job done possible. I believe that is the best way, and I will make a motion to go with the local firm EBH."

There was silence from the other two commissioners.

"Darin is about as local a man as you can get," said John Golden, former city and county commissioner and a farmer. "He is involved in projects not related to engineering, and is an outstanding community person. They (EBH) are a great firm. Al, we met a few years ago, and he made the initial commitment to open the office."

Rasure asked Tiede and Thomas why they did not want to choose EBH.

"I would say you (Penco and EBH) are the top two firms," Tiede said. "I have talked and listened over the past two weeks. People told me, 'Mitch, we elected you to represent us. You need to go with whatever you feel is right for the county.' "I believe Penco will do the best job."

"Why," Rasure asked.

"Their experience, with this type of county road project" Tiede said. "I believe they are the best because they know our roads.

"I have the most to lose. If I back down and do not do what I really feel is right, I cannot be an effective commissioner, and I might as well step down. I have thought of that in the past two weeks.

"That is the opinion I get from the people who talked to me and ones I called."

"You believe going with Penco is going to save the county money?" Rasure asked.

"I think in some instances, I believe it will," Tiede said. "We have everything stirred up. I have a bad feeling that people out there are going to complain that Darin is spending too much time on the city projects."

Rasure asked about the potential savings by bidding all the city and county jobs as a total project.

Tiede said he did not believe it would save money, and did not think it could be done all at once.

"I got the same calls as Mitch," Thomas said.

"You can't admit that you are wrong," said Gary Ginther, a retired Technical College instructor. "It is tough to be in public office. Nobody has come to see me or to call me. I talked to Chuck. I thought Mr. Tiede would want to keep it local. He likes to do city and county work."

One group had been passing petitions, asking people to sign for one firm or another. While dozens signed for Evans, Bierly, no one signed the Penco petition, they said, adding that some people said they supported one firm or another, but didn't want to get involved.

"I worked on those petitions," said Koren Dechant said. "We begged people to sign either one of the petitions. We could not find anyone who would sign the petition for Penco."

"It is about to eat me alive," Tiede said. "I have to go with the majority of the people and how I feel."

"Where are they," a person asked of the Penco supporters.

Tiede said the people told him, "We don't want to get involved in a brawl in there. You do what you need to do."

Linda Charron asked Tiede if he was following proper etiquette for a county commissioner.

"You have done work for the city and the county and Penco," she said. "Do you feel you can vote fairly?"

"I considered that," Tiede said. "I am really too close to this, but it is not really a conflict of interest."

Rasure was asked how many people signed petitions in favor of Evans, Bierly. He said the total was 192 for EBH and none for Penco.

"Why is this a beauty contest?" someone from the audience asked.

Rasure said it was not, but that Tiede and Thomas had said they wanted to hear from the people.

"I am appreciative of the \$800,000 award for the county road," Tiede said. "Darin did a lot of work, and I made time in my position to help get it done."

"I think it was great for him to step out and do that on his own," Thomas said.

"Since my motion died," Rasure said, "I guess it is up to you two to make a motion."

Thomas did, and Tiede seconded the motion.

Before the vote, City Commissioner Josh Dechant recalled that the eight members of the city and

county commissions met about 11 months ago to plan the road project.

"We said, 'Let's get some joint projects going,'" he said. "Roads was the No. 1 issue. Let's keep it joint and show people that Goodland and Sherman County can do things together.

"You cannot say we are going to save money by splitting this up."

"I believe we will see some savings," Tiede said, "and it will be better."

"I respect your position," Neufeld said. "You have said about the county relationship. We have sought county work, and I have talked to Curt (Way, public works director) over the past eight years.

"Last week you mentioned the local selection committee. Who was on the selection committee?"

"I was on that once or twice," Tiede said.

"What about the other four or five?" Neufeld asked.

"I do not know any of that," Tiede said.

Neufeld said the committee reviews the engineering request for qualifications for the county's Kansas Department of Transportation five-year plan projects. He said the state sends the qualification list to the county for review and selection. Make up of the local committee is left up to the county. In Sherman County the committee membership is determined by Way.

"I have been pushing the sales tax for several years," Neufeld said. "With water, you can raise water rates. With sewer, you can raise sewer rates. With roads, there is no way to get money for streets and roads.

"I supported this not just as an engineer, but as a citizen. I want to make Goodland and Sherman County the No. 1 place in Kansas.

"I want us to be the top — not just in elevation, but the best engineering firm in the state. We are not there yet.

"Right after the sales tax passed Kevin and the city manager sat down with some staff to lay out a joint proposal to get the best plan to get the best project possible. We did not want to cram EBH down your throat.

"It was brought up that maybe we should split these projects. I don't know. My best judgment is that you put the information out and see if there is a contractor out there who can handle what we have proposed.

"As elected officials, you rely on the people who you hire to give you

the best information to have you make a decision.

"We have to make the best recommendation. I believe this proposal is the best."

Rasure called for the vote, saying he was voting no.

Tiede and Thomas voted yes.

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 a.m. The commission meets at 8 a.m. today to approve the hiring of Tif-fani Kirk as the new Sherman County Economic Development director.

Ethanol plant permit hearing set for May

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thinks it is less controversial than the power plant permit.

"The sooner the better," he said, "as we have all that equipment out there. We hope people are supportive and send their comments to Topeka."

Ron Pickman, chief operating officer for Goodland Energy Resources, said the air permit for the ethanol plant is similar to the one the coal-fired power plant approved in March, but not as complicated.

Later this year, sections of a biodiesel plant are expected to arrive for assembly on the site.

The three plants will share byproducts, and will take advantage of the Northern Sun sunflower plant south of the new energy center.

The power plant will sell electricity to the city or other power companies.

Mark Justus, head of ReNewable Energy Resources, said they looked at both ethanol and biodiesel because both require the same amount of steam power.

The power plant alone would only be 25 to 27 percent efficient, he said. When the waste products are used, Justus said, that number jumps to 56 to 58 percent efficiency.

The power plant will be mainly coal-fired, he said, but it

will be able to burn up to 40 percent agricultural waste from the ethanol and biodiesel plants.

The state Department of Health and Environment is taking public comments on the planned development of the ethanol plant until noon Monday, May 22.

All comments should be sent to Jennifer Burgdorfer, Bureau of Air and Radiation, 1000 SW Jackson, Suite 310, Topeka, Kan. 66612-1366.

Anyone who wants to speak at the public hearing should write to Sherry Walker at the same address, with the letter to arrive in Topeka by noon on May 22.

If no requests to speak are received by that time, Roderick Bremby, health department secretary said, the public hearing will be canceled.

A copy of the proposed permit, permit application, supporting documents and information used during the permit review process are available for review from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the state office in Topeka until the hearing date. A copy of the proposed permit can be reviewed at the Department's Northwest District Office, 2301 E. 13th, Hays.

Contact Burgdorfer at (785) 296-1581 about reviewing all the documents in Topeka or Rick Robinson at (785) 625-5663 at the Hays office to review the permit.

Hero's memorial planned

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ment in the Kansas Army national Guard.

He was buried May 12 in Ransom. A memorial service was held earlier that day at Max Jones Fieldhouse. Lt. Col. Larry Parish, an Army chaplain who was part of that service, will speak at next week's dedication. Varney said some of the pallbearers from the funeral will serve in the color guard.

High school juniors Michael Smith and Jena McCall will sing the National Anthem. Smith also will later sing "I Can Only Imagine." Rusty Renner of Goodland, who works for KBSL-TV, will sing "God Bless the USA." Lisa Scarborough will sing "On Eagle's Wings."

The service includes an "open mike" during which people will be invited to speak. Following the dedication, there will a "get together

with refreshments in the armory.

Part of the service will recognize and honor Goodland soldiers who have returned from duty in Iraq and those about to report.

"Please come out and support our local heroes," said Varney.

She said her husband, Specialist Bryan Varney, will report for his second tour of duty to Iraq next month with the 714th Maintenance Company out of Topeka. Varney is a machinist with Detachment 1 who deployed with Lutters last year.

The dedication service is part of a full day of activity at the armory on May 6 which starts at 9 a.m. with "Operation U-Can," a recruiting drive designed to show off some of the Guard's equipment and training devices to potential applicants.

The program will be followed by a public lunch from 11:45 to 12:45, with the dedication service beginning 15 minutes later.

State corrects report, no mumps cases found in Sherman County

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Wabaunsee and Wyandotte counties.

Iowa health officials have reported 975 cases of mumps as of April 20.

Mumps was reported in Denver on Wednesday. A girl who had visited Iowa came down with them.

Mumps has an incubation period of 14 days, when the infected person can spread the virus before symptoms show, say health officials. The disease is highly contagious and spread when people sneeze, cough or share utensils.

"This is the largest outbreak of mumps that we have seen in this country in more than 20 years," said Dr. Julie Gerberding, director of the Centers for Disease Control.

Mumps, caused by a virus, can cause swollen, painful salivary glands, headaches, fever and sore throat and can lead to other problems. The disease goes away on its own in about two weeks. In a few rare cases it can lead to encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) and meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and the spinal cord). In teenage boys, it can lead to orchitis, an inflammation of the testicles which causes pain and swelling. Teenage girls can have pain and tenderness in the abdomen.

Mumps can be prevented through vaccination in the mumps, measles and rubella series. Children should get their first dose around their first birthday and a second dose at age 4 to 6. If a child did not get a second dose, they should get it by the age of 11 to 12. Older teens should get the shot if they haven't had two doses of the vaccine except for women who are pregnant or may become pregnant within three months.

The state says that people born before 1957 run little risk as they have probably had the mumps or are

immune to them. Students, especially college students, run a higher risk of catching them because some students do not get their shots and live in close quarters with lots of other people.

Dorendo Harrel, administrator of Sherman County Health Department gave the following tips. "Good hand washing always helps, use a tissue when coughing and sneezing to control the spread of the virus and dispose of tissues properly. Stay at home if you are sick and if you have symptoms go to the doctor."

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