

New landfill cell completed, waiting approval

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News
 A new cell is ready at the Sherman County landfill and a baler designed to condense trash, extending the landfill's life, will begin operation as soon as the state OKs the dirt work, commissioners learned last Tuesday.

County Commissioner Mitch Tiede, who also is a dirt contractor, said he finally was done with his part of digging the new cell and installing the liner. He said Mark A. McMullen environmental engineer of Terranext of Lakewood, Colo. had inspected the project, and the county should have approval from the state by the first of July.

"I am done," Tiede said. "I got the final on it last Tuesday, and called Mark on Thursday. Mark thinks it will take 10 days to get the paperwork into the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

"Mark said he thinks there will not be a problem getting the state approval of the new cell.

"It took 37 days of moving dirt and 33 days hauling water. I hauled 717,000 gallons of water. That is more than twice what I had expected.

"I am glad it will be seven to eight years before we have to do another cell."

Curt Way, public works manager, said the baler system is ready to go as soon as the state approves it.

"We are ready to bale," Way said. "We need to get it dry in that area. We are waiting on Mother Nature to help us out a little bit. We won't have a problem once we get the first set of bales in place."

Way said it is pretty evident that dirt works for a liner.

"Water just sits on it," he said.

Way was at the commission meeting to ask for approval to buy

a new motor grader. He said Martin Tractor of Colby had a Model H available at the same price as the one the county got in September. He said the county would trade in the last model G, a 1994 with 10,500 plus hours of operation.

The cost would be \$150,462 with the trade-in valued at \$71,000, Way said.

He said this is a 2005 model, and there would be limited production of the 2006 models because Caterpillar is going to the new M series.

Way said the new models will jump in price by 3 percent, about \$10,000.

He said the model H the county would be buying would have a five-year warranty, and a \$300 deductible on the VIP program, which covers the oil and filters for the first two years.

Larry Enfield, a farmer and Republican candidate for commis-

sioner, was at the meeting and asked if the county has looked at buying the grader through Yost Farm Supply. Enfield said he knew the city had bought a machine from Yost in the past year.

"We are geared up through Cat," Way said. "I think the Cat is better, and the system for buy-back is great. Cat would buy the grader back for \$117,000."

Enfield said the reason he asked was about doing something local and that New Holland had some good equipment.

Way said he looks at the resale value, and it is better on Cat than any other brand.

"We can get into other types for less cost," Way said, "but the repairs and warranty are not as good."

Tiede agreed that Cat has the best warranty in the business.

"For resale down the years, Cat is the best we have found," Way

said. "We can find parts for the older Cat pieces of equipment, and that is not always possible on other brands."

Way said it would be nice to get the motor grader replacement into a rotation that would allow the county to exercise the buy-back option.

"We could let the warranty cover the repairs," Way said. "When a grader has 10,000 hours, that is when you need to replace it, Cat says."

Way said the county machines are always good for resale because the county keeps records on the maintenance and has a good track record with the machines they have traded.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure asked how many graders the county owns?

"We gave nine," Way said. "Would be nice to have 10, but we would need more hours to operate."

The commissioners agreed to accept the bid from Martin Tractor of \$150,462.

There were no other bids presented.

Way said he wanted to pay off the scraper the county bought four years ago and finance back \$100,000 on the grader.

Rasure asked if that would be a three-year turn around?

Way said it would be four years, and it would keep the payment about the same. He said the county should to do something about the loaders. They are out of warranty, he said.

Commissioner Chuck Thomas asked when the grader was available.

Way said it should be delivered within a week, and said he would get lease bids from the banks for the next meeting.

City revises agreement

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News
 It's been a year since the City Commission approved an electric-power purchase agreement with Goodland Energy Resources, and now the base pilings of the coal-fired "cogeneration" plant have been poured.

The target date for having the plant running is July 18, 2007, said City Manager Wayne Hill, who presented an amended power purchase agreement to the commission last Monday.

He told the commission the revised agreement cleans up the language and changes wording in a few spots to make it clearer.

The agreement calls for the city to buy all its power from the power plant at a rate of 47 cents per kilowatt hour during the first five years and 49 cents in the second five, with a fuel-cost adjustment after the first five years.

The city has a power contract with Sunflower Electric to provide electricity to the city at a rate of 35 cents per kilowatt hour for part of the power and about 52 cents per kilowatt hour for the remaining needs of the city. That contract is for five years. It allows the city to switch from Sunflower to Goodland Energy Resources once the new plant starts up.

Hill said the amended agreement includes language allowing the city to use Sunflower as backup for five years.

"It took a long time to clean the language up," Hill said, noting that the negotiations started last fall.

He said key changes are in sec-

tion 5.5, which deals with the amount of power the city will buy, and section 12, which covers waivers in the case of default.

"I wanted to be sure the city had a way to purchase power in case the GER plant goes down," Hill said.

Under the amended agreement, the firm would have to reimburse the city for costs of replacement power over the base rate, Hill said, adding that it allows the city to purchase power from Sunflower or generate at its existing power plant.

Commissioner Dave Daniels asked what will happen to surplus power from the new plant.

"At one time we were going to take all their power and sell the extra," Daniels said.

"We don't want to get into the wheeling and federal regulations for that," Hill said. "There is a way that GER can transfer power to Sunflower over our lines. It would be too expensive for the city to try to sell the power outside our certificated area."

Hill said Goodland Energy Resources would build a line from the new plant to the city power plant at Steever Park.

"I don't have that in writing yet," Hill said, "but this will make it easier, and we will have the same contractor and engineer for the whole line."

City Commissioner John Garcia asked Hill how power plant construction is going.

"Will the plant be up and running by the middle of next July?" Garcia asked.

Hill said he did not have specific information, but said Ron Pickman,

chief operating officer for Goodland Energy Resources, has told him they are on schedule.

Hill said under the agreement the city has the exclusive right to extend the start date if the plant is not quite ready next July.

Hill said the agreement has no fuel adjustment in the first five years, but this would kick in on the sixth year. He said the agreement says the firm has to provide the city documentation to support any fuel charges.

Daniels asked about the language added to section 12.

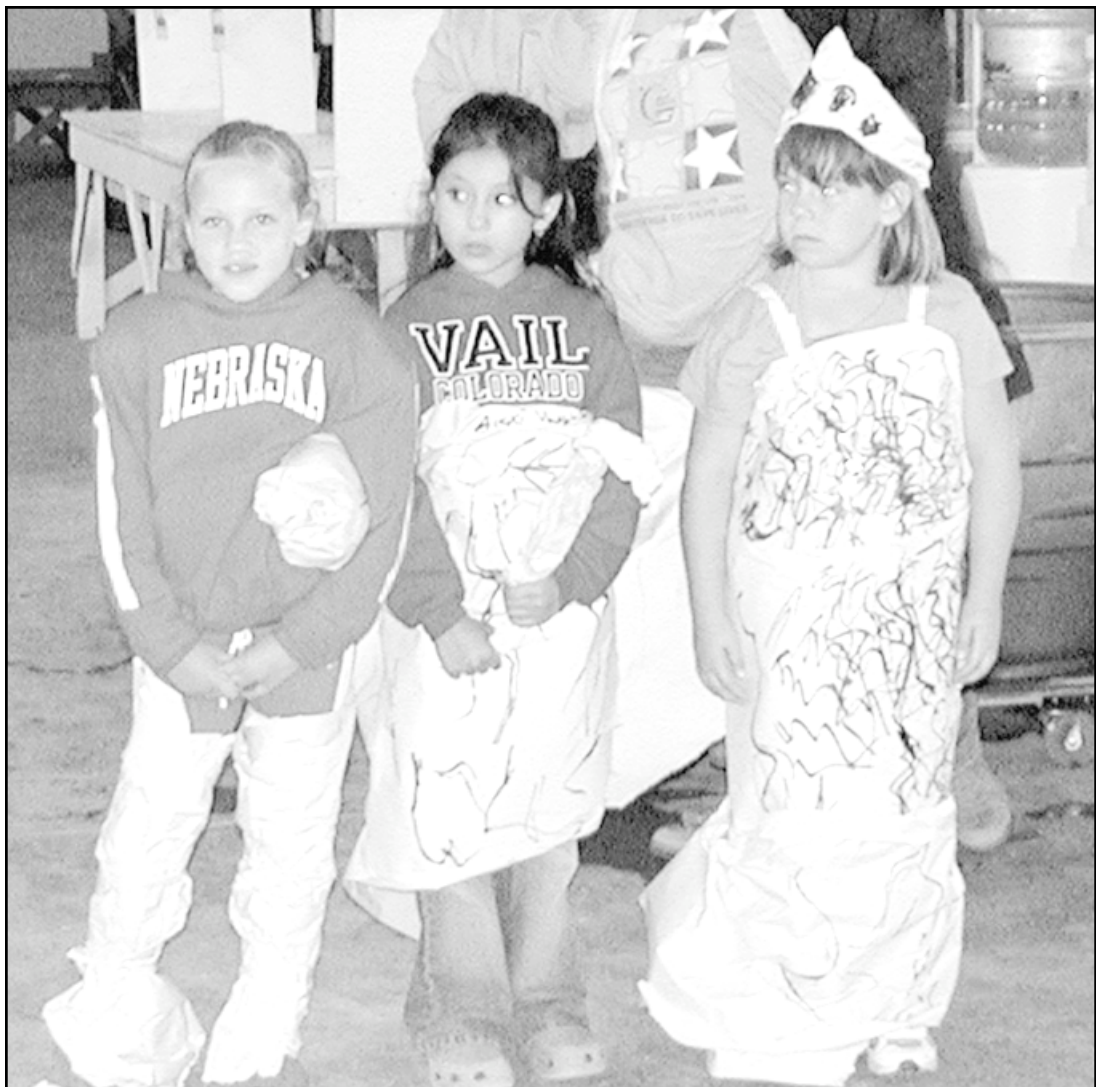
Hill said the language about waivers was what City Attorney Jeff Mason wanted, adding that it was contract wording from the banks.

Hill said its allows the city to terminate the agreement if the firm is forced to file a voluntary or involuntary bankruptcy. The added section 12.2 says the city will give 30 days written notice specifying violations of the agreement, and if the firm has not remedied the default, the termination of the contract will be complete.

Garcia made the motion to approve the revised agreement, seconded by Daniels. The vote was 4-0 with Commissioner Josh Dechant voting in favor along with Daniels, Garcia and Billinger. Commissioner Annette Fairbanks was absent.

Billinger is an investor in the power plant and the alcohol plant being built at the Goodland Energy Center north of Caruso, about five miles west of the city.

Lots of imagination



Three of the contestants in the newspaper costume contest at the Sherman County Relay for Life on Friday night included a football player, an angel and a princess. People walked and played games to raise money for cancer research. This year's relay raised over \$31,000. Other activities included a luminary ceremony, "kiss the donkey" contest winner, basket auction, bingo, scavenger hunt, shoe race, bubble gum contest, tacky queen contest, obstacle race and water balloon volleyball. The Bankwest of Kansas team collected the most money.

Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

“You have a compression fracture in the lower back.”

BoB Templeton, Retired Broadcaster and Chamber Executive

Ten days into his Florida vacation, BoB Templeton woke up one morning and couldn't move. He was in so much pain, he couldn't roll over. He couldn't sit. He almost crawled to the door jam to pull himself up. It was several painful, excruciating days before he could get in to see a doctor.

"You have a compression fracture in the lower back", he was told.

Templeton called his personal physician in Hays, who recommended Kyphoplasty, a new type of minimally invasive back surgery now offered through The Spine Center at Hays Medical Center.

The procedure involves elevating the vertebrae with a balloon and injecting a cementing compound to hold them in place.

The surgery was performed upon his return to Hays. "I was happy to be able to come home and get it done here," he said.

Templeton described his level of pain at a "10" before surgery. "Kyphoplasty was instant relief for me. When I woke up from surgery, it was gone. That's pretty phenomenal!" he said.

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"Kyphoplasty was instant relief for me!"

