

City extends S&T phone, cable franchises

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

The Goodland City Commission extended telephone and cable franchise agreements for S&T Communications last Monday to allow time to negotiate a new contract which will pay the city a percentage rather than a fixed fee per line.

City Manager Wayne Hill said he needed to discuss the change from a fee of 75 cents per line to 5 percent of gross billing with the firm. He said this rate would match a contract recently approved for AT&T, formerly SBC and Southwestern Bell.

Hill said he does not know exactly how much more money the percentage might bring the city, but feels the percentage will give the city an increase as the telephone and cable businesses increase rather than being limited to the specific price per line.

Mayor Billinger asked about the status if the Eagle Cable Television franchise, and Hill said Eagle has a five-year franchise that was renewed last summer. Hill said with a new state cable franchise law, he said, Eagle

and in the future S&T will have to choose if they want to switch to a state franchise, which calls for a payment to the city of 5 percent of gross.

The statewide franchise has to go through the Kansas Corporation Commission, Hill said.

In other business, the commission:

- Approved a special-event beer license for the Goodland Alumni Association from 8 to 12 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 11, in the parking lot behind Bankwest. Linda Rumpel, representing the association, said there would be a tent and fence set up for the beer area. Billinger asked if all the bases have been covered with the state and police chief. Mary Volk, city clerk, said they had, and city building inspector Steve Criswell will inspect the premises when they are set up. The motion passed 4-0 with Commissioners Billinger, Dave Daniels, Josh Dechant and John Garcia in favor. Commissioner Annette Fairbanks was absent.

- Approved a new five-year lease with Danny Barker for his hangar property at

Renner Field, which he operates a crop spraying business. Dechant asked if five years is the normal contract. Hill said it is, and that the city is attempting to have all the airport leases renew on July 1. He agreed that might be more difficult on the T-hangers where individual planes are kept, because they are rented month-to-month.

- Approved changing the airport board to six members from five. Hill said the new chairman is Larry Dickey. He said spray operator Barker has been on the board, but declined to be reappointed because he can't make the meetings.

Dickey said the board is suggesting Jim Baker as a replacement person. Billinger said W.J. Trachsel also wants to be one the board.

"We have trouble getting people to be on boards," Billinger said. "We have a guy who wants to serve, and I think we should add a person to make it a six-person board."

Hill said he did not see a problem because the airport board is advisory, and the final decisions are left to the commission. The

commission approved reappointing Dickey to the board and adding Jim Baker and Trachsel. Volk said she would check to see if there needs to be an ordinance changed to add a board member. Billinger said the commission could pass an ordinance, if needed, at the next meeting.

- Approved raising the municipal court costs from \$36 to \$50. Municipal Judge LeAnn Taylor said the state passed a law raising court costs by \$10 to pay for programs. That would bring the total to \$46 including the city costs. Billinger asked what happens to the other \$4? Taylor said it goes into the city's general fund. Dechant asked if these costs are similar to other cities. Taylor said Goodland is usually lower than most of the cities in the area. Billinger asked how many fines the city collects in a year? Taylor said last year it was about 400 cases, but has been as many as 1,600 cases. She said the increase would add about \$1,600 to the general fund.

- Gave a consensus to allow a non conforming use in a commercial zone. Criswell

said the recent sale of an existing residence in a commercial zone has been held up because of insurance problems. He said there are a lot of houses in commercial zones, and wants to change the zoning language to allow an exemption.

He said the existing houses are grandfathered in the commercial zones, but the problem is that if they are damaged beyond 50 percent, the zoning says the houses cannot be rebuilt. That is what is causing the problem for the sale.

Criswell said the zones were redrawn in 2001, and the city tried to get rid of a lot of pocket zoning where there were little commercial zones everywhere there was a home-owned business.

"What do we need to do?" Billinger asked Criswell.

"You tell me you are in support of this," Criswell said. "I can get it published and expedite this change."

"Go ahead," Billinger said. "We are all shaking our heads yes."

Counties added to grazing relief

Drought conditions in western Kansas have prompted the early opening of land in the Conservation Reserve Program for emergency grazing.

Dennis R. Mote, county executive director in Goodland for the U.S. Farm Service Agency, said Sherman and Wallace counties were added Wednesday to a list of 31 counties that had been approved for emergency grazing.

Mote said he was surprised when the list was released and it did not include either Sherman or Wallace.

"I was frustrated," he said, "because we had submitted the information showing the extreme dry conditions. We were told the counties were denied because we had more moisture, but we explained that was an isolated reading and not true for the whole county."

"We gathered additional information and resubmitted it to the state showing we had a 40 percent shortage of rainfall for the past four months."

Thomas, Cheyenne, Decatur, Gove, Logan, Rawlins and Trego counties were among the 31 in the state where emergency grazing has been approved earlier. The rest of the counties are in north central and southwest Kansas.

"This provides relief for many livestock producers who have suffered through severe drought conditions during the past six years,"

said Mote. "The drought has depleted hay supplies and affected the growth of hay and pasture in Sherman County. Many livestock producers cannot maintain their current herds without the emergency grazing."

The U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook indicates the drought will persist or intensify through August in these counties, Mote said. Grazing is allowed until Sept. 11.

"Emergency grazing on conservation reserve land under a grazing plan should not harm the permanent grass stand or be a detriment to the nesting season," he said.

Cattlemen who apply now for the emergency grazing will have to give up 25 percent of their annual rental payment, Sloan said.

They must come up with a resource management plan, which the Natural Resources Conservation Service will complete.

Landowners in the program have a 10- to 15-year contract to take environmentally sensitive land out of production. For that, they receive an annual lease payment.

They are required to plant the land to grass, usually a native species, or trees, which is good for wildlife.

To apply, Mote said, farmers can call or come by the Farm Service Agency office at 210 W. 10th. The phone number is (785) 899-3070.

matters of record

Real Estate

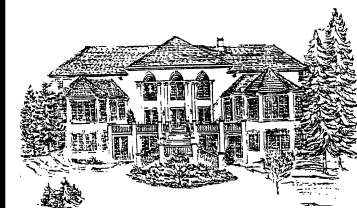
The following real estate transactions were reported by the Sherman County Register of Deeds:

Three Corners LLC, a Kansas Limited Liability Company, by and through James W. Baker to Christopher D. and Aimee L. Stoffel, Lots 9 and 10, Block 31, Academy to the Town of Goodland.

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 you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

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William H. Jenkins, as Trustee of the William H. Jenkins Trust No. 1 to Jenkins Inc., a Kansas Corporation, E/2 Lots 1 and 2, Block 23, Beahm's Addition to the City of Goodland.

Federal National Mortgage Association to Travis W. Gattshall and Colleen E. Gattshall, all of Lots 1 through 32, the vacated alley between said lots and 1/2 of the vacated adjacent Thomas Avenue, Block 10, Original Town of Ruleton.

William D. Davis a/k/a William D. Davis, III a/k/a W. Duncan

Davis, M.D. to JMC Land Co., LLC, a tract of land in N/2 SE/4 Sec. 21, T8S R40W.

Helen M. Schoonover by and through her attorney in fact, J. Ronald Vignery and Janice Kay Cook to Cesar and Starla Miller, Lots 1 and 2, Block 88, Original Town of Goodland.

Robert A. Middleton and Ann M. Middleton to J. Kendall Cooper and Jacque S. Cooper, W60" Lots 1, 2, 3 and 4, Block 20, Third Addition to the City of Goodland.

Mark Peden and Marci Peden to Gordon M. Peden, W/2 Sec. 15, T7

R40; S/2 Sec. 16, T7 R40; S/2 Sec. 10, T7 R40; and NE/4 Sec. 16, T7 R40 less a tract of land.

Keith W. Cook and Dottie Cook to Brent Cook and Debra G. Cook, SW/4 Sec. 1, T7S R38W and SE/4 Sec. 2, T7W R38W.

Thomas L. Spring mineral deed to EMK, LLC, SW/4 Sec. 27, T6S R38W; NW/4 Sec. 34, T6S R38W; and NE/4, S/2NW/4, S/2 Sec. 7, T6S R40W.

Blanche M. Hallagin quit claim to Gregory J. Hallagin, SW/4 Sec. 10, T6S R38W and NW/4 Sec. 15, T6S R38W.

Bricks go a flyin'



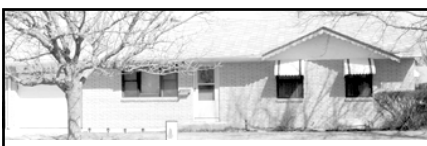
Miller Construction employee Efrain Aguirre used a small loader to remove bricks from the intersection of 13th and Main on Friday. Workers moved up the street after finishing the intersection at 12th, which is waiting for paving bricks. Work at Ninth Street should be finished shortly after the Fourth of July, workers said, and the crew is about three weeks ahead of schedule.

Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

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