

weather
report

74°

noon
Thursday

Today

• Sunset, 7:08 p.m.

Saturday

• Sunrise, 6:22 a.m.

• Sunset, 7:07 p.m.

Midday Conditions

- Soil temperature 66 degrees
- Humidity 53 percent
- Sky mostly sunny
- Winds south at 17 mph
- Barometer 30.07 inches and falling
- Record High today 100° (1931)
- Record Low today 38° (1962)

Last 24 Hours*

High Wednesday 77°
Low Thursday 51°
Precipitation —
This month .33
Year to date 18.53
Above Normal .05 of an inch

The Topside Forecast

Today: A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy, high near 77, low near 53.

Extended Forecast

Saturday: A 40 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, high near 70, low near 53.
Sunday: Partly cloudy, high near 77, low near 53.
Monday: Partly cloudy, high near 80, low near 52.
Tuesday: Mostly sunny, high near 80 and low near 53.

(National Weather Service)
Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.
* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

End near on brick project



Clouds of dust swirled Wednesday as workers sawed bricks at the edge of the west side of the intersection at 12th and Main. The crew from Stonescapes of Wichita is near the end of a five-intersection project they began the first week of August. Thursday, they were laying bricks on the second half of the 12th Street intersection. They plan to move to 10th and Main next week.

. Photo By Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Weeds, dogs
budget busters

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Sherman County commissioners are trying to fit the cost of spraying weeds along county ditches and controlling prairie dogs into a budget for next year that threatens to swell by nearly one third.

Commissioners agreed some departments requests would have to be cut. They will meet at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, and plan to discuss the budget before the sales tax bond sale at 11 a.m.

The commissioners and County Clerk Janet Rumpel spent three hours Wednesday evening going over a draft of the budget, looking for ways to keep it from ballooning.

With all the requests from the county departments, the draft would raise the property tax levy by about 5 mills, about a 10.5 percent increase over this year. It would raise the total levy from 51.59 mills to about 57 mills, Rumpel estimated.

The total county budget for 2005 was \$7,340,944 with a levy of 56.176 mills and the estimate for this year is \$7,088,509 with a levy of 51.599. With all the requests, spending for next year would be \$9,140,697, an increase of about 28 percent, with a levy of 54.373, plus another 3 mills for the prairie dogs and weeds.

Commission Chairman Kevin Rasure said he thinks they need to get the tax hike back down below 10 percent. He said they would have to look at the largest requests for ways to trim.

Commissioners Mitch Tiede and Chuck Thomas agreed that 10 per-

cent was too high, and suggested talking to Curt Way, public works manager, Sheriff Kevin Butts and Daryl West, weed control superintendent.

Thomas said they need to work on the weed problem in the western part of the county. He said spraying them would help control the amaranth, or pig weed, that seems to be worse in that part of the county.

Tiede agreed, but said that would be more of a road and bridge function because amaranth is not officially a noxious weed, just an "obnoxious weed."

Farmers have approached the commissioners about the prairie dog problems, mostly in the north, and are asking for some help with the cost of the bait.

The commissioners looked at what they have spent over the past three years on prairie dogs, and it has averaged about \$45,000 per year.

The sheriff and county attorney have been talking about adding an investigator to help with big cases, and the sheriff included money for the new person and a new vehicle in his budget. The total sheriff's budget would be about \$150,000 higher as proposed.

The road and bridge budget would be an increase of \$317,000, and commissioners are not sure why there is such an increase except for the fuel costs.

The commissioners will meet Tuesday with Way and West to talk about the weeds, prairie dogs and equipment needs, and then with Sheriff Butts to talk about the investigator and vehicle.

Commission to hear trashy complaints

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

Frustration by the city with having to go to district court to handling nuisance violations led to a new process approved Tuesday setting up a hearing before the City Commission to speed things along.

City Manager Wayne Hill said the three ordinances would change the process for handling a nuisance complaint and add an environmental code, giving the city power to clean up areas that might be breeding grounds for disease, dangerous or unsightly.

The ordinances give the city a way to remove things like abandoned refrigerators and trash on a private lot, vacant or occupied. Other targets could include a run-down building, dilapidated fence or furniture left in the alley or on a porch where it might be a health hazard.

In the past, the ordinances required the city to go through the district court to remove dangerous or unsightly buildings and dilapidated equipment. The process could take months, even years.

Officials said little has been accomplished because the court keeps extending the time property owners have to clean up a problem. In one case, the city got permission to clean up a lot with dilapidated farm equipment, but the court limited the city

Manager gets praise, raise for the year

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

The city commission gave City Manager Wayne Hill a pat on the back for his first year on the job Tuesday — and a \$2,000 raise.

Mayor Rick Billinger said Hill has done a good job.

"I think Wayne has done good things for us," Billinger said. "We have given him opportunities and he has come up with solutions."

"I move we give him a raise of \$2,000 for next year."

The commission approved the raise, retroactive to Hill's contract date of Aug. 15. With the raise, the manager will be paid \$67,000 a year plus benefits.

Hill thanked the commissioners, saying he has learned a lot over the past year. He said he thinks the city has accomplished some things, and there will

be more success in the coming year.

The motion to approve the raise came after two 10-minute closed sessions, the first without Hill. He was asked to be in the second session.

The raise totals 7.7 percent, while the city budgeted merit raises averaging 5 percent for all employees in the budget for next year.

In other business, the commission:

- Approved the low bid on three siren controllers, \$8,350 from Nextech of Lenora.
- Prairie State Communications of Imperial, Neb., bid \$9,480, said Bandel, but Larry's Professional 2-Way of Goodland did not bid.

Charlie Bandel, superintendent of electrical distribution system, said three of the old controllers that cannot be repaired. He said the city has nine sirens

See PRAISE, Page 9a

clean up or remove the nuisance. The city officials can grant extensions if the owner shows they are working on the problem.

Once the notice has been delivered, the owner has 10 days to request a hearing.

Criswell said if the owner does not remove the nuisance or request a hearing, the city can file a complaint in municipal court. If convicted, the person can face a fine of \$100 or possibly 30 days in jail. Each day the violation continues after the notice has been served is a separate offense.

If the person doesn't request a hearing, and does not remove the nuisance, the city official can ask the commission to pass a resolution allowing the staff to remove the nuisance and charge the cost to the owner.

Criswell said if a hearing is held, the owner and the city will present their evidence and the commission will make findings in a resolution.

Criswell said this ordinance does not directly deal with abandoned couches, but it does include ice-boxes.

"Would the person be able to find out who was signing the complaint?" Commissioner Josh Dechant asked.

See HEARING, Page 9a

Three new teachers are high school coaches

By Pat Schiefen

The Goodland Star-News

The Goodland School District has 14 new faces in the teaching staff this year. The first three are new faces at Goodland High School who also happen to be coaches.

Several of the new teachers grew up here and two were student teachers here.

The new librarian for the high school is Aimee Stoffel, daughter of Jerry and Linda McKee, who grew up here. She said her husband, a pilot, flies out of Denver for Met Jets Aviation.

The couple has three children, Mikayla, a first grader; Jordan, 1 1/2; and Jared, 3 1/2. The family



Dansel



Sramek

moved here from Richmond, Wis.

Stoffel said she graduated from Fort Hays State University with a Bachelor of Science in elementary education in Hays. She got her master's in library science from Georgia College and State University in Milledgeville.

She has been teaching for 10 years. Her first year, she said, she taught classes for at-risk kindergartners, first and second graders. She has been a media specialist in the library since.

Stoffel is joining the coaching staff for the Cowgirl volleyball team coached by Jerry McKee.

"I would like to make the library a positive place for students to learn technology and literature," Stoffel said.

The new head football coach and at-risk teacher for Goodland High School is Jonathan Dansel. He graduated in 1999 from Jetmore High School, where he played football and basketball and was a member of the

Longhorns' track and field team.

Dansel said he played football for two seasons for the Broncbusters of Garden City Community College, first as a fullback, then as tight end. He went on to play two seasons at Kansas State University as a backup linebacker and special-teams player.

The coach graduated from K-State in May 2004 with a Bachelor of Science in secondary education and joined the faculty at El Dorado High School that fall.

Dansel's wife, Kimberly, is the daughter of Stan and Tonia Townsend of Weskan and a granddaughter of Richard Townsend of Goodland. A 2000 graduate of Wes-

kan High, she received a Bachelor of Science in life sciences two years ago. She graduated from the physician assistant program at Wichita State University last spring and works in Wallace and Greeley counties.

Dansel and his wife live in Weskan.

Joe Sramek, a student teacher in Goodland last year, is going to teach math in Goodland High School, be assistant football coach and head wrestling coach. He was an assistant wrestling coach last year under Randy Bahe.

Sramek grew up in Atwood and received his teaching degree from Fort Hays State University.

local
markets

Noon

Wheat — \$4.18 bushel
Posted county price — \$4.31
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Corn — \$2.21 bushel
Posted county price — \$2.01
Loan deficiency pmt. — 0¢
Milo — \$1.80 bushel
Soybeans — \$4.62 bushel
Posted county price — \$4.53
Loan deficiency pmt. — 16¢
Millet — \$6.50 hundredweight
Sunflowers
NuSun crop — \$11.50
Pinto beans — \$15.50 (new crop)
(Markets by Mueller Grain, Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and 21st Century Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

inside
today

More local
news and
views from
your
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Cowgirls
second, third

Sammie Raymer chipped onto the green Tuesday at Sugar Hills. The Cowgirls' teams took second and third, and Raymer won the seventh place medal. See photo, story on Page 11a.