

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News

Sherman County commissioners, trying to avoid a tax increase, spent about two hours last Tuesday reviewing key department budgets to see if they could be trimmed.

Sheriff Kevin Butts came with Undersheriff Roger Studer and County Attorney Bonnie Selby to talk about a proposal to add an investigator.

Butts said he knew there was concern about the new position, but he and the county attorney agree it's needed to get cases ready for trial. Commissioners asked whether there would be problems working with the city police.

"The improvement in efficiency will astound you," Selby said.

Butts asked if there was a specific dollar number the commissioners were thinking the budget needs to get down to. The sheriff asked for a budget of \$657,000, up \$185,000 from this year.

"Or is it just the new position?" Selby asked.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure

asked if the salary line with the undersheriff was where the extra job was added in.

"I have two extra positions I am trying to fill," Butts said. "One is in the jail. The other is the detective-investigator."

"The jailer is a part-time position?" Rasure asked.

"No, it is a full-time position," Butts said. "I have all the slots filled, but that only works if no one is sick or no one is on vacation."

"Does the \$165,000, (which includes the addition of \$30,000 for the investigator) give you enough to hire someone and pay the benefits?" Rasure asked.

"Yes, I think it would work," Butts said.

Butts said jail expenses are higher in the new budget because he is trying to add another jailer, but he said care of outside prisoners and civil process fees bring about \$33,000 back into the general fund.

The commissioners asked about the three new vehicles included in the budget. Butts said every four years they replace two vehicles, and

he included one for the investigator.

Rasure asked Selby to explain the jobs.

"The perception is that any report that comes in from the city or sheriff would go to his desk first," Selby said. "We waste time (trying to track down details) while the officers are on shifts. I would say that 10 percent of the cases get cold and you will not ever solve those."

"The investigator can pick up and move on with the case. It would help my girls because when I see a report, I say we need this, this and this. They spend time trying to find the officer."

"I want the cases to get more than being a report," Butts said. "I think we owe the citizens more than that."

"We have two cases from both jurisdictions that are in that situation," Selby said.

Rasure asked if the city police would turn their cases over to the investigator.

"We are not going out to do investigations for the city," Butts said.

"I have talked to the city about this," Selby said. "I told them I had

a concern and would be following up. I don't think the city will be a problem."

"Since you have been sheriff, you have seen an increase in cases?" Commissioner Chuck Thomas asked.

Butts said he had seen an increase in the past two years.

"We have had an increase in the number of child in need of care cases," Selby said.

"Our process business has been really large this year," Butts said. "We are getting up to 100 pieces from the hospital every month. I only have one deputy on duty to take care of this."

Rasure asked if the investigator would be in the sheriff's department or under the county attorney.

"He would be under my department," Butts said, "but he would have a desk in the attorney's office."

Selby said they thought that made the most sense, but said she has not remodeled the office area yet.

"I am pushing for this," Butts said, "but if it won't work, I won't have hard feelings. We will try it

again next year."

"I think it is a good idea," Rasure said, "but we feel we need to have the city involved."

"We have been watching this in other counties," Selby said, "and planning it out to avoid some pitfalls."

Thomas asked if the investigator would need a new car or if he could drive a used vehicle.

Butts said he thought the investigator could use a less expensive vehicle, but he would need radio equipment.

"It would be a plain car?" Thomas asked.

"I think it would be better if he was in a plain car," Selby said. "I am sure after a time everyone would know his car."

"I don't see how to cut much out if we go with the new position," Tiede said. "Do you have a slush fund we can pull money out of to help pay for the investigator?"

"I don't have a slush fund," Selby said. "I do have a fund that could pay for the equipment he might need, the radios and such."

Repairs of the jail roof were an-

other concern, and the commissioners felt that cost could be higher, so another \$10,000 was put in to cover that expense over the \$6,000 that Butts had asked for.

The commissioners asked Butts to cut his budget by \$25,000, but added \$10,000 to the salary line bringing it to \$175,000 to be sure there was enough money to allow him to hire the investigator.

Butts adjusted his estimated costs for this year by \$21,000 to provide more carryover money to fund the budget increase for next year.

The sheriff's budget includes money to purchase three vehicles next year with replacing two of the current and possibly a used vehicle for the investigator.

The commissioners cuts and adjustments to the road and bridge budget and the capital reserve will keep the property tax level within .224 of a mill (about \$13,000) of what it was this year. The average homeowner will see an increase of a few cents on their property taxes for next year, said County Clerk Janet Rumpel.



Library's new air conditioner inspires time capsule

Keith Bowman, owner of Bowman's Heating and Air Conditioning, had help from Ella Ihrig, 6, granddaughter of librarian Karen Gillihan, to put a time capsule in a hole in the wall at Goodland Public Library where the old air conditioner was taken out Thurs-

day. The new air conditioners will take a lot less space, gaining the library 84 square feet, and are expected to cut the utilities in half. It will also be more convenient and comfortable, as the old one did not turn on and off automatically.

Photos by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News



Fake FDIC e-mails an attempt to steal personal information

An alert from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. warned Goodland banks that e-mail claiming to be from the agency could trick people into installing possible spyware on their computers.

The agency says a new round of fake e-mails last month appears to come from the FDIC, and may be an attempt to steal personal information or bank account codes.

"The subject line of the e-mail includes the phrase, 'Urgent Noti-

fication — Security Reminder.' The e-mail is fraudulent and was not sent by the FDIC," said Sandra L. Thompson, acting director of the Division of Supervision and Consumer Protection.

Thompson said the e-mail describes "a small client utility" referred to as "ProBank" that recipients are asked to install on home and business computers.

"This utility only starts whenever an online session is opened with a

Financial Institution insured by the FDIC," the agency said, "thus it will never interfere with any programs installed on your computer. Please help us combat fraud by installing ProBank on any computer that is used to open an Online Banking session."

The e-mail requests the recipient to click on a link that appears to be related to the FDIC, which directs their computer to download a program.

The agency says this may be an attempt to collect personal or confidential information, which could be used to gain unauthorized access to on-line banking services or to conduct identity theft.

No one should access the link or download the executable file, Thompson said, adding that the FDIC is investigating the file.

She said this similar to a fraudulent e-mail circulated in January 2004 claiming to be from the cor-

poration.

Consumers and banks are asked to report any attempts to obtain this information by sending information to alert@fdic.gov.

Information about counterfeit items, cyberfraud incidents and other fraudulent activity may be forwarded to the FDIC's Cyber-Fraud and Financial Crimes Section, 550 17th Street, N.W., Room F-4004, Washington, D.C. 20429, or transmitted to the same

e-mail address.

Information related to federal deposit insurance or consumer issues should be submitted to the FDIC using an online form at www2.fdic.gov/starsmail/index.asp.

FDIC Special Alerts may be accessed from the FDIC's website at www.fdic.gov/news/news/SpecialAlert/2006/index.html

matters of record

District Traffic

The following fines were paid in the Sherman County District Court:

Aug. 16 — Michael J. Leebrick, \$192 for speeding.

Daniel L. Mershon, \$102 for improper parking.

Steven T. Simon, \$144 for speeding.

Donald G. Toof, \$166 for motor carrier safety rules and regulations.

Aug. 17 — Kamoru A. Akinniyi, \$126 for improper driving on laned roadway.

Nathan M. Peabody, \$126 for improper driving on laned roadway.

Erik T. Russett, \$126 for improper parking.

Alberta Swan, \$138 for speeding.

Johanna M. Thompson, \$138 for speeding.

Aug. 18 — Shane W. Hall, \$183 for speeding.

Carlos Lozano, \$146 for overweight load.

Nickolas P. Vittas, \$144 for speeding.

Aug. 19 — Kevin M. Baker, \$126

for speeding.

Heather M. Brokaw, \$156 for speeding.

Aug. 21 — Justin J. Banta, \$132 for speeding.

Sandra L. Manis, \$138 for speeding.

Aug. 22 — Natasha Ceceil, \$114 for speeding.

Martha J. Garrett, dismissed for no liability insurance.

Thomas L. Speir, dismissed for no liability insurance.

Donald G. Thomas, \$117 for overweight load.

Aug. 23 — Frank Hernandez, \$114 for speeding.

Michael Schwendenman, \$271 for overweight load.

Aug. 27 — Charles R. Stanley, \$123 for overweight load.

Aug. 28 — Royal D. Reid, \$201 for improper parking.

Aug. 30 — Courtney J. Lee, \$192 for improper parking.

Jan. 21 — Peter M. Gonzales, \$266 transporting an open container

March 3 — Ryan M. Lewakowski, \$126 reinstated for speeding.

April 6 — Jeremiah D. Parker, \$138 reinstated for speeding.

April 26 — Christopher Wayne Hart, \$108 reinstated for overweight load.

May 1 — Mario E. Villalba, \$132 reinstated for speeding and \$300 reinstated for no liability insurance.

May 12 — Mark W. Middleton, \$145 reinstated for speeding and \$10 for no seat belt.

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.

May 13 — Bradley W. Davis, \$360 for first conviction of driving while suspended.

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