

City hires firm to review rates

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News
Goodland electric rates may be going up. City Manager Wayne Hill told commissioners Monday, and he is bringing in an outside consulting firm to review the rates and decide how much.

The commission set the city budget for next year in August. At that time Hill said utility rate would be reviewed in September, and the city commission might have to raise rates by the end of the year.

"I think City Clerk Mary Volk and Electric Plant Superintendent Rod Blake have done an excellent job getting the figures together," Hill said, "but I would feel better if we get a professional firm in to review the raters."

Hill said he had contacted two firms about doing the review, but one would not be available for several months.

The manager said he was able to contract with Ranson Financial Consultants of Wichita for the review at an estimated cost of \$4,000.

"We all agree we need a third party to look at it," Hill said. "I am confident that when Ranson is done, they will be close to the fig-

ures of Mary and Rod."

Hill said he would report back as soon as the review is completed.

He said City Public Works Director Rich Simon, who was burned when his powered parachute tangled with a power line Sept. 9, was at a staff meeting on Monday. He said Simon is going back to Denver for some medical procedures.

Hill said he gave each commissioner a copy of the existing parking ordinance. Commissioner Daniels had asked about the two-hour parking rule for trailers and motor homes.

"I wanted you to see what is on the books," Hill said. "Commissioner Daniels brought it up at the last meeting. Give me some ideas and get back to me with any changes."

"We have been giving warnings. I am not sure we have given an actual ticket."

"If you have any changes I will take them to the city attorney to see if any changes are enforceable. The changes would be up to the commission to approve."

The meeting began at 5 p.m., and adjourned at 5:45 p.m. The next city commission meeting will be 5 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 16.

Out with the old



A crew from Grasser Construction of Stratton, Colo. milled off the old pavement as the first step in redoing a section of North Caldwell from the airport entrance north to County Road 67. The

\$347,063 project will put new pavement in place, plus replace the approaches to the bridge over Sappa Creek with concrete. The road will be closed for six to eight weeks.

Photo By Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Street projects: intersections finished, others near bid opening

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News
The City Commission approved final payment for the brick intersection project Monday, then OK'd payment of the first engineering bills on the street projects under the \$12 million city-county road program.

City Manager Wayne Hill said the intersection project was completed on time and \$37,856 under budget, adding that there were two change orders to approve.

The first was an increase of \$6,249 for additional storm drain "Ts" at 10th and 11th and connecting street roof drains at 12th to the

storm drains. The second change was a reduction of \$44,072 in the total project, bringing the total construction cost to \$1,029,793.

Mayor Rick Billinger asked why the changes, and if everything was done.

Jerry Nemechek, engineer technician for Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Associates, said the reduction was in the quantity of material used in the intersections.

Billinger told Mike Miller, owner of Miller Construction, that the intersections look good, saying that his workers should be complimented.

Billinger asked Miller if leftover

material could be taken back.

Miller said the city had bought the leftover pipes and bricks for \$12,353, and that Public Works Director Rich Simon said he would handle moving it.

Hill asked Miller if he would help clear the material off the parking lot in front of Adronics/Elrob so the lot could be swept clean. Miller said he would help if Hill would tell him where it would be stored.

The commission approved a final payment of \$171,122 to Miller for the project.

Hill said in the bills it showed a different final total, a difference of \$1,208. He asked the commission to

approve the total, saying that the check for the difference would show up on the next expense total.

Once the contractor was paid the city commission approved requests to the state Department of Transportation for reimbursement for the projects. The city asked for \$49,148 for the 11th and 12th intersections and \$66,270 for the Ninth, 10th and 13th project. The state reimbursement is for 70 percent of the total eligible of \$810,052.

The commission approved the final engineering bill for the projects from Evans, Bierly, Hutchison for \$12,027.

With the intersections com-

pleted, Hill said, the city had received the first engineering bill from the firm for work on the city part of the city-county joint road program.

Mayor Billinger asked why the city was being asked to pay these bills, saying he thought all the bills were to be paid by the county.

City Clerk Mary Volk said the agreement with the county says the city staff and commission will review the bills and after approval, send them to the county commissioners for payment.

The total engineering bill was \$54,077. Darin Neufeld, project engineer, said that included the sur-

vey work on the 17th Street project and survey and engineering work for asphalt paving on Caldwell Avenue with concrete intersections at Eighth Street and Armory Road.

The commission approved the bill and it will be presented to the county Tuesday.

Neufeld said Tuesday the bids for the intersections on Caldwell are to be opened on Wednesday.

Sherman County Treasurer Iris Scheopner reported to the Sherman County commission that the first collection of the special one-cent sales tax received at the end of September was \$90,349.

City boards up dangerous old garage

GARAGE, from Page 1

the hearing."

"We need to do something for the period it is going to take to do the hearing," Commissioner Annette Fairbanks said after looking at photos of the garage that Criswell passed around.

The ramshackle looking building is a one-car garage with a workshop or storage room on the east end that

has a heater and an old bed. There are two doors plus the large garage door for a car. The garage roof has been patched on top of about three layers of old asphalt shingles, and the storage area has a layer of newer shingles. The outside walls of the garage part are covered with what appears to be old warped and cracked asbestos siding. The outside walls of the storage section appear to have newer siding.

"Do you have to notify the landowner before you board it up?" Commissioner Dave Daniels asked.

Criswell said he has tried to contact the owner, but got no response. He said the city had tried to put up police tape to keep the kids out, but that didn't work.

"We had to mow the lot," Criswell said. "We will send the owner a letter after the first publi-

cation of the legal notice."

Hill said the house does not have an electric meter and no one lives there.

Fairbanks made a motion to publish the resolution and to board the garage up as a safety hazard. The commission voted 4-0 to approve the motion. Commissioners Daniels, John Garcia, Rick Billinger and Fairbanks voted in favor. Commissioner Josh Dechant was absent.

Judge rules city can tear down old K Inn motel

MOTEL, from Page 1

torn down.

When the city filed the case Criswell said the property was considered a nuisance and the city filing described it as "unsightly appearance of structure, unsightly stored items and miscellaneous debris including furniture and appliances."

Harsh had been in front of Judge Burr eight times on the case — including the hearing on Monday — and kept telling the court that he was getting the property cleaned up and was applying for a grant to convert it to a shelter for battered women.

Hill said Judge Burr told Harsh he was done listening. Hill said Harsh will have 30 days to appeal the ruling to the state court of appeals.

"At least the ruling was in our favor," Hill said.

The K Inn was a cheap motel advertising rooms for about \$20 a night,

and has been falling apart since it was closed over four years ago.

Harsh told Judge Burr at a hearing on Sept. 11 that he was writing a grant but had not submitted it, and that the land under the Chalktalk Corporation, owned by Harsh was being given to American Trail Foundation.

The city had asked Judge Burr to hold Harsh in contempt of court based on the fact that Harsh had failed to comply with the previous court orders to clean the property up. At the hearing in September Judge Burr said he would not make a ruling, but that the hearing was already set for Monday, Oct. 2 and he would see everyone then.

Criswell said there were hearings on the motel in January, May and July.

"Judge Burr strung this out so long because Harsh kept saying he was working to clean the property

up," Criswell said Thursday.

Criswell said Harsh has done some painting and hauled some of the trash off, but it is the city's opinion that these do not meet all the things that were listed by the city and approved by the judge to be done.

"We can expect him to appeal," City Commissioner Dave Daniels said.

Criswell said the city will have to wait and see if Harsh appeals, and

then if that happens wait on the court of appeals decision.

Criswell said he has not seen the written ruling from Judge Burr, but that as far as he knows it is the city's intention to remove the structures and make it safe.

Criswell said he did not know what the cost has been to the city in legal fees, but that with eight hearings and all the paperwork it has been pretty expensive.

Don't miss this
one-time opportunity to earn your
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK (MSW)
□ through weekend/online classes
□ close to home
□ at reduced tuition

Learn how this prestigious distance education degree program can expand your career options and advancement opportunities. For information, contact Jennifer Fitchett at the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work: jfitch@du.edu or 303-871-3833. Or visit <http://www.highplainsmsw.blogspot.edu>.

SELECT BANKING

MAKE A MOVE.
5.15%

GUARANTEED APY* through January 1, 2007, on minimum balance of \$25,000.

MONEY MARKET SELECT ACCOUNT

EASY ACCESS TO YOUR MONEY AND A MINIMUM RATE GUARANTEE.
NOW'S THE TIME TO MOVE TO BANK OF THE WEST.

The more you deposit in your account, the more interest you earn. Yes, it's that simple. For a limited time, deposit \$25,000 in a Money Market Select account and get a guaranteed rate of 5.15%. Not to mention the peace of mind that comes with real-time access to your money, and real nice people to help you with your banking. Stop by your local branch to open an account today. For the branch nearest you, call 800-488-2265 or visit www.bankofthewest.com.

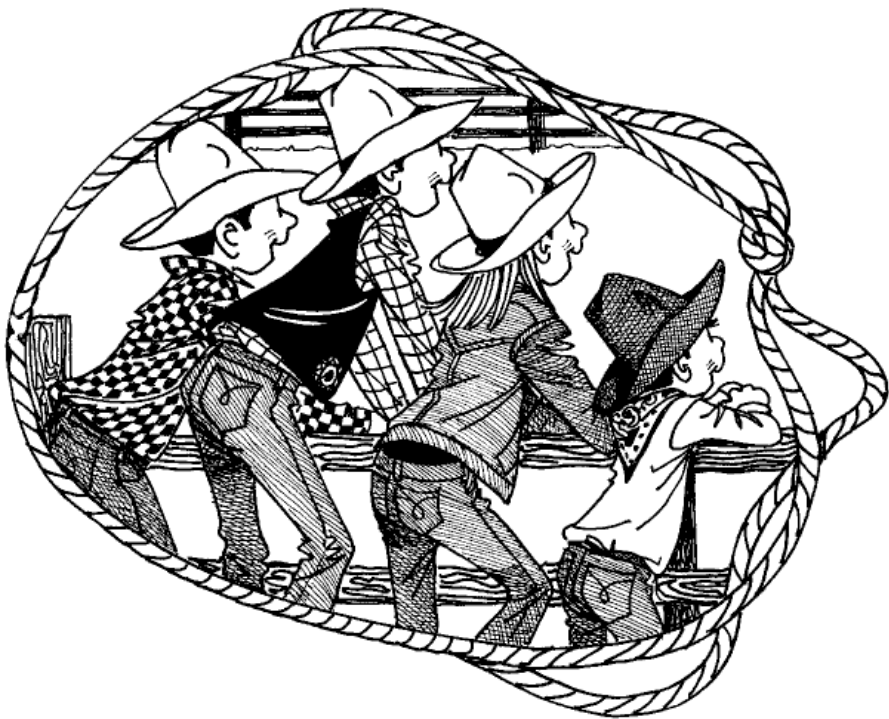
Robert Dible
Agency
155 W. 4th St.
Colby, KS

BANK OF THE WEST

785-462-8020
Toll Free
800-658-4697

*©2006 Bank of the West. Member FDIC. Limited time offer. 5.15% Annual Percentage Yield (APY) effective as of September 26, 2006 for the \$25,000 to \$49,999 tier. Visit your local branch for the special rates on other tiers. APY guaranteed through January 1, 2007 not to fall below the promotional rate for the tier determined by balance. Rates may change after account is opened. APY offer only for funds new to Bank of the West; no transfers from Bank of the West accounts permitted for opening deposit. Personal accounts only, no institutional money please. Money Market Select account requires: \$25,000 minimum opening deposit; maximum balance of \$5,000,000. Money Market Select savings account requires a personal checking account. Money Market Select is a tiered rate account. Interest will be paid on the entire collected balance at the interest rate set for the tier into which the entire end-of-day balance falls. Service charges waived for maintained balance of \$25,000 for Money Market Select, or of \$50,000 combined balance among all deposit accounts. For accounts opened during promotional period, account services charges are waived through January 1, 2007. All other fees apply. Fees may reduce earnings on the account. Additional conditions and restrictions may apply. Rates vary by state.

Classifieds work!
Call 899-2338.



SIGN UP NOW!!

14th Annual Kara Bentzinger Memorial Gymkhana

October 7, 2006

To acquire registration forms or more information please visit us on the web.

www.karamemorial.org