

Sewer project may quadruple rates

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

The Oberlin City Council heard Thursday that sewer rates could quadruple to cover the loan payment and maintenance on a new sewer plant required by tighter state and federal rules.

Thaniel Monaco, the engineer with Miller and Associates who is working on the project, gave the council two technical letters on the project. The first included a summary on the process and what the city has chosen to do. The second showed that the

city would have to increase user rates anywhere from \$26 to \$30 per month to repay the loan and maintain the plant.

The council didn't make any decisions. Mr. Monaco said he will be at the meeting on Thursday, Nov. 20, to see what the city wants to do.

Mr. Monaco said at the existing plant, the city will need to refurbish concrete, replace or repair air lines, replace most of the interior equipment, upgrade the disinfecting system, refurbish doors and window, elimi-

nate the existing sludge ponds, upgrade the sludge drying bed and upgrade the lab area.

The council had selected a counter-current aeration process for the plant with ultraviolet disinfecting.

The project is estimated to cost \$3.313 million, said Mr. Monaco. Maintenance should be about \$123,000 per year.

The way the project is set up, he said, the contractor will have 11 months to build it. There is a month to evaluate the bids, 45 days for the bidding process, two months for

the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to approve the project and seven months for the design process. That's just short of two years from start to finish.

The service has 918 users, he said, with a minimum bill of \$9.15 a month.

There are two options for loans, he said, a state revolving loan fund for 20 years at 3 percent interest or the U.S. Department of Agriculture for a 40-year loan at 4 percent.

Using the state fund would mean an in-

crease of \$20 a month in sewer bills and the federal program would cost \$16 a month. Maintenance for the plant would cost each customer \$11 a month.

That means an increase of \$26 to \$30 a month over the current minimum of \$9.15 a month, or up to four times as much as the current charges.

The city then can try for a grant which would be part of the Department of Agriculture funding, he said, but the most they could (See SEWER on Page 12A)

District revises policy

Schools may have to cut teachers

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

Facing the possibility the Oberlin School District will have to reduce the teaching staff, a committee made up of two board members, the superintendent and eight teachers has been revising the policy and writing a new one.

Superintendent Kelly Glodt said the policy is part of the negotiated agreement between the board and the teachers. In the first three paragraphs, it says that a committee will be formed to revise it. The revised policy will then be agreed on during negotiations before the next school year starts.

Mr. Glodt said it doesn't look like the new policy will be a whole lot different than the current one. The new policy has something about seniority in it, whereas the current policy only talks about tenure, he said.

The current policy also says nothing about evaluations, which had been suggested for the new policy.

If the district has to reduce the staff this year, he said, the current policy will be used. It includes guidelines on how the reduction will be done. Mr. Glodt said it goes in the following order: needs of the district, individual certifications, qualifications, tenure and training and skills.

Mr. Glodt said for a teacher to get tenure, they have to have taught in the district for at least three years. Tenure, he said, has nothing to do with seniority.

There are also a bunch of legal issues and state statutes, he said, that take precedent over that list. Mr. Glodt said he and Principals Duane Dorshorst and Charles Haag will be visiting with a lawyer from the Kansas Association of School Boards this month to check into those issues.

At this time, he said, he doesn't (See TEACHERS on Page 12A)

Highway study planned

The U.S. Highway 36 Association plans a corridor study for improvements along the highway across Kansas, hoping to show the state the economic value of widening the road through one of the least-developed areas of Kansas.

Meeting at the Huck Boyd Center in Phillipsburg, the association's board voted to pursue the study with the Docking Institute at Fort Hays State University.

The board held an hour-long conference call with Preston Gilson, who now lives in Missouri, a senior fellow with the institute. Gilson did a similar study of U.S. 50 last year for southwest Kansas communities. The retired Fort Hays professor said that study cost about \$48,000 and he expected a U.S. 36 study to cost about the same.

The study would cover the economic impact of the highway across the northernmost 13 counties of Kansas and measure the potential benefits of widening and improving the road.

The association lists as its primary goal having the road rebuilt to four (See HIGHWAY on Page 12A)



WITH CUTTERS IN HIS HAND, a worker (above) for Bainter Construction of Hoxie cut a piece of metal for the side of the carports while two men (below) put a piece of the siding up. —Herald staff photos by Kimberly Brandt

Donations make carports available at Wheat Ridge

With the help of several donors, residents at Wheat Ridge Terrace have a place to park their cars out of the weather.

About two weeks ago, a crew from Bainter Construction of Hoxie started putting in 10 carports for the residents. Although the carports aren't finished, they are well on the way to completion.

Marcia Lohofener, with Wheat Ridge Terrace, said about a year and half ago they opened an account for contributions. She said the first \$2,000 came from the Terrace and Charles Frickey.

Recently, an area family who are strong supporters of the county and community, offered

to complete the fund for the carports and to put a roof over the back patio, said Mrs. Lohofener.

The project started, she said, because they had gotten so many questions about getting garages at the senior apartment complex. She said they thought it might help fill the apartments while making it a little easier on the residents.

The residents won't have to clean the snow off their cars anymore, she said, and they are tickled about that.

The Terrace has 12 apartments with seven residents currently living there.

Future projects at Wheat Ridge may include a shop for the men who live there.



Two dozen turn out to hear talk about school foundation

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

Two dozen Oberlinites learned a little about setting up a school foundation Friday afternoon.

Gary Tunnison from Nebraska held a 45-minute meeting at Decatur Community High School Friday about school foundations and how to start and work one.

He said he has spent 10 years helping people set up foundations for various things.

Mr. Tunnison asked the 24 people why they think people give. The group made a list, including that people want to give, there is a need, tax write-offs, memorials, emotional attachment, obligation, success and to pay tribute to a family member.

A foundation, he said, is no dif-

ferent than a business. It needs a board made up of about five to seven people who are not in the school system. He said the administrators shouldn't run the foundation.

The board meets about twice a year and sets investment strategy. He suggested that half the money be placed into equities (stocks) and half into fixed-income securities such as bonds. The board should keep everything open so people know where the money they have given is going, he said.

Over the years, he said, he has found something simple that works, an envelope that is mailed out to people asking them to invest in the foundation. He said the envelope has the information about

the foundation on it.

The envelope also has several choices on it as to where the person giving wants the money to be spent.

When a foundation is started, he said, there needs to be some kind of recognition level so people who give different amounts of money can be recognized.

A foundation supplements programs, he said. It doesn't take care of what the school district is supposed to be doing. He said the money isn't used to pay the bills, but can help improve things, like buying new windows or providing scholarships.

"The money that comes in here," said Mr. Tunnison, "is go- (See SCHOOL on Page 12A)

Woman celebrates 105 years of living

By MARY LOU OLSON

Bertha Brock celebrated a milestone on Saturday, when she observed her 105th birthday with family and friends at Cedar Living Center.

A native of Jennings, Mrs. Brock was born in a sod house south of Kanona on Nov. 8, 1898, the daughter of Theodore and Mary (Pracheil) Tacha. She lived all of her life in the Jennings area and attended Rock Island Grade School. She attended Jennings High School for two years, then transferred to Oberlin, where she graduated in 1917.

After attending normal school in Oberlin, she taught for two years at Rock Island before giving up her teaching to marry Kenneth Fay Brock on April 23, 1919.

She said that their wedding presents included livestock, bedding and a tub filled with sugar, coffee, bacon, potatoes, canned goods and a mop.



Bertha Brock

"The tub was very useful," she said. "I did the laundry in it during the week and at week's end, it served as a bathtub."

They lived northeast of Jennings on the Big Timber Creek, where their children, William and Maida, were born. They later moved to her folks' farm, where they spent 10 years before moving to Jennings. Her husband, a county commissioner for several years, died on Jan. 12, 1962.

After his death, she and her (See BIRTHDAY on Page 12A)



FRIDAY AFTERNOON, Gary Tunnison explained the ins and outs of setting up a local school foundation to two dozen people at the high school. — Herald staff photo by Kim Brandt

* School foundation discussed

(Continued from Page 1A)
ing to go to help the kids.”

Charles Frickey, an Oberlin lawyer, asked if it was better to have a hospital, fair and school foundation or to just have one community foundation. That is a tough one, said Mr. Tunnison. The plus side is when a school foundation sends out letters, it can focus on the school instead of having to touch on everything in the community.

One woman asked if the scholarships already in place would remain. Mr. Tunnison said that would be up to the people behind them.

Principal Charles Haag said they aren't trying to take over the scholarships. People can decide to give the same scholarship through the

foundation or continue as they are. Mr. Tunnison said the foundation board would have to approve all of that.

Superintendent Kelly Glodt asked the advantage of giving to a local foundation instead of, say, a university foundation. Mr. Tunnison said he wants his money to stay in his town. A local foundation keeps the money here.

Colleen Rittmann asked how administrative expenses are covered. Mr. Tunnison said start-up costs are covered by the first donations. If the foundation gets going, it probably won't be until February or March, and there won't be a mailing until September or October. A “book of memory,” which pays tribute to a

family member for a certain price, can also be used for those expenses.

Druggist Rusty Adleman said the school here has a strong alumni association. When it came up a few years ago that there wasn't a strong scholarship program, he said, they got behind it.

If the community is interested, said Mr. Tunnison, the next step is to decide if they wanted him to come back and if there are people who would step forward to be on a board.

School board member Barb Olson asked what they should do if 12 or 13 people wanted to be on the board. He said they could also set up a committee, but he wouldn't suggest going over five to seven people on the board.

* Birthday marks 105 years

(Continued from Page 1A)

brother and sisters enjoyed many years of traveling together in a motor home. She said she visited all of the states, including Alaska and Hawaii, went from the Yukon to the Yucatan, and toured most of Europe.

“When I was 68 years old,” she said, “I bought a book ‘How to See Europe for \$5 a Day’ and we did it.”

One of her favorite pastimes was making afghans and quilts, and she bowled on the Jennings team until she was 85.

Looking back, she said that one of the hardest things for her was losing her independence when she had to give up her car, but after she hit a deer, her children thought it might be safer if she quit driving.

She moved to Cedar Living Center on Sept. 30, 1998. She still enjoys music and said she'd like to dance on her birthday.

Immediate relatives joining her for the birthday party on Saturday included her daughter-in-law, Rosa Brock, and grandson, Bill and Carolyn Brock, all of Lindsborg.



A younger Bertha Brock

* Teachers may see jobs cut

(Continued from Page 1A)

know how many teachers might be let go. The district's auditors are here now, he said, and are looking at the money situation. The board has already made a lot of cuts and increased fees on some things. Mr. Glodt said they will see if those have made it possible for the district to make it through this year.

The district cut half a million dollars out of the budget. That includes cuts, the increase in fees and increase in the local option budget approved by voters.

The auditors will make suggestions on number of staff cuts to get back in line, said Mr. Glodt.

Mr. Glodt said he wanted to know the number months ago, but it takes some time to see what the trends are going to be and see what effect the cuts and increases will have on the budget.

Hopefully by the end of the year, the board will know what it has to do. He said the board will be letting the teachers and community know as soon as possible.

Then, Mr. Glodt said, he will make a recommendation to the board. The board will make the final decision.

In each case, he said, there will be a justification on why that position was chosen and a list to show how losing that teacher will affect the students.

“There isn't one staff member who can be reduced that won't affect the current educational programs,” he said.

The policy also includes rules for recalling teachers later.

The committee, he said, has met every week since school started and now meets every other week.

* Highway group wants study done

(Continued from Page 1A)

lanes from St. Joseph to Belleville and improved to a high-standard two-lane west of there, but the exact type of improvement would depend on the study.

Steve Haynes of Oberlin, president of the group, said he thought they would be able to raise the money for the study with contributions from cities and counties along the way and possibly some foundation grants.

At present, only a few short stretches of U.S. 36 are four lanes. The state's current 10-year highway plan includes widening a six-mile stretch at the far east end of the route, from Elwood to Wathena. Mr. Haynes said the goal of a study would be to get widening west from there in the next state highway plan, eight to 10 years from now.

Mr. Gilson pointed out that an improved route in Kansas could draw traffic off of I-70 and especially from I-80 in Nebraska, which is congested. U.S. 36 offers a bypass for city traffic and a direct route west to Denver.

Smith Center Mayor Larry Brown, who arranged the conference with Mr. Gilson, said the

next step would be to get together with the Docking Institute and scope out the study. After that, the group can begin looking for money.

After some discussion, the board voted unanimously to proceed. Mayor Brown, Bob Strevey of Norcat, Cy Moyer of Phillipsburg and Dan Wenger of Sabetha were named to a committee to oversee the plans.

The association board also agreed to proceed this year with at least one and possibly two billboards aimed at drawing traffic onto U.S. 36. These would be on I-35 in Missouri and on I-70 in Colorado, east of Denver.

They would feature a slogan for a “short, fast” route across Kansas. Mr. Moyer said two signs might cost \$6,000 or more. Mr. Haynes said the association has the money in its account and ought to proceed. The board voted unanimously for the effort.

The association will meet in Hanover in June to review progress on the corridor study and on the billboard project. Another project, placing windmills along the highway, is proceeding.

* Sewer will cost more

(Continued from Page 1A)
get is \$400,000.

Councilman Jay Anderson asked what the estimated life of the facility would be. Mr. Monaco said 20 years.

Mr. Monaco said he would like the council to review the documents and by the next meeting be ready to decide what type of loan they would

like to pursue so the applications can be started.

If they go to the Department of Agriculture, he said, the agency likes to see money invested by the city. City money will be used in the project first, then the loan money and last any grant money.

The department usually asks a



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