

Three strands of wire will keep deer out

The Oberlin City Council decided Thursday to add three feet to the fence around the new waste water treatment plant south of town to keep deer from taking a dip — or wading in the ponds.

The fence now is four feet tall, said City Administrator Gary Shike, who suggested adding three strands of barb wire, making the fence seven feet tall to keep deer out. Mr. Shike said they have already seen a set of deer tracks inside the fence.

Deer hooves can poke holes in the plastic liner under the lagoons, said Mr. Shike, and the warranty doesn't cover that kind of repairs.

Dave Blau, an engineer with Miler and Associate, the McCook firm which designed the plant, said additional fencing will cost about \$7,537.

The council approved the addition.

Does that include making the gate

seven feet tall, too? asked Mayor Joe Stanley.

Mr. Blau said he thought so, but would check. The gate isn't up yet, he said, and maybe they could just make it taller.

Mayor Stanley said they had done the final walk-through inspection on the facility and a few things still need to be finished. Some weeds need to be taken care of at the lift station, said Mr. Blau, and there is some standing water near the entrance.

Mr. Shike said it looks like the city can use some of the money left for the facility to buy a mower to take care of the weeds and ground cover.

Mr. Blau said the council needs to get a few bids and then buy what they need.

How far under budget is the project? asked Councilwoman Rhonda May. Close to \$1 million, said City Clerk Deanna Castle.

The city is only borrowing the

amount of money it needed, he said. The project was authorized a \$2.958 million loan through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Administration. The city also got a \$400,000 Community Development Block Grant.

Does the city want to borrow money to get a mower or other stuff? Councilwoman Rhonda May asked.

Mr. Shike said they just want to get what they need in a mower to be used at the plant.

City Foreman Dan Castle said a tractor-mounted mower like the ones the state has would probably work well.

Mr. Blau said if the city purchases a mower from the federal money, it doesn't have to just be used at the plant. It sounds like something that could also be used at Sappa Park, Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener said. Mayor Stanley asked Mr. Castle to get some bids.

County gives employees raises

The Decatur County commissioners approved raises for county employees, with the workers getting half the raise now and the other half in October.

For more than a month, the commissioners have met with department heads over a proposal on paid time off. The request is for employees to be able to earn 30 days in a year. The commissioners haven't made a decision on the request, but said they would continue working on it.

Currently, county employees get 12 days sick and 12 days of vacation in a year. If the sick days aren't used the county doesn't pay the employee if they leave. Commissioners and department heads also are working on job descriptions for county employees. Commissioner Doyle Brown said he talked with someone from another county, who said they hired a consultant to write the job descriptions at a cost of \$45 a piece. It would cost around \$5,000 for a

consultant to come in here, he said, adding that he didn't think it would be worth it.

Ambulance Director Linda Manning said the departments can do their own job descriptions.

Commissioner Stan McEvoy said County Attorney Steve Hirsch wrote to get an attorney general's opinion to see if the county has to keep the money to pay for that time off in the budget. Mr. McEvoy said Mr. Hirsch thought the county might have to have that cash on hand just in case a lot of people were to leave county jobs at the same time.

Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman said he isn't opposed to waiting on the paid time off, but the county should offer some kind of reward for long-term employment.

The salary changes need to be taken care of immediately, said Mr. Brown at the meeting on Tuesday, June 12.

The proposed raises included moving the starting wage for the

county to \$9 an hour. The starting wage before was \$7.50 an hour.

If the county finds out they have to carry \$250,000 in reserves for paid time off, said Mr. McEvoy, that isn't really reasonable. He added that the auditor didn't think they would need to do that, but they want to wait for the attorney general's opinion.

Mr. McEvoy said after looking over the budget, the county might have to do the raises in two steps because of cash flow. That way the county would pay half of the raises for a few months and then only pay the full amount to employees for the rest of the year. He said he didn't think there was enough money in the budget to pay the raises for the next seven months.

The commissioners held a five-minute closed session for non-elected personnel before making a decision to talk about a specific employee.

The commissioners approved the raise plan, with employees getting half in June and the other half in October. County Clerk Marilyn Horn said that will save the county at least \$12,000.

Theater association plans potluck dinner

The Decatur Area Theater Association will have a meeting at 6 p.m. Sunday, July 1, for anyone interested in joining the group, which produces community plays with amateur actors.

Penny Arnoldy said the organization hasn't been able to find enough people to cast for plays the last several years and might have to dissolve if not enough people show up.

Anyone interested in amateur theater is invited to the meeting at her house at 605 S. Broadway. Bring a dish for a potluck supper. Let Jan Bainter at 475-3703 know you are coming so enough meat will be available.

Everyone who was in a past production, said Mrs. Arnoldy, is invited to come share memories.

Businesses plan to close for the Fourth of July

Most Oberlin businesses will be closed on Wednesday for the Fourth of July, including city, county, state and federal offices, the Decatur County Museum, the Decatur County landfill and all banks.

A&W Restaurant, D&M Sinclair, Crossroads Express, Pizza Hut and Ampride will be open regular hours. Raye's Grocery will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. No information was available at presstime for the Corner

Cafe or the Frontier Restaurant.

The Oberlin Herald will also be closed, but the newspaper will be finished on schedule on Monday evening, then printed on Tuesday, so copies may be picked up at newstands Tuesday afternoon. With the post office closed on Wednesday, mail delivery will be mostly on Thursday.

Deadline for the *Country Advocate* will be noon on Friday, as usual.

All in a day's work



ACROSS FROM the Oberlin Cemetery, a crew from C&H Powerline replaced a pole on a Prairie Land Electric line last week. The company is rebuilding lines throughout the area for the cooperative.

— Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

Pawn shop planned in old restaurant

Oberlin will soon have a pawn shop in the building at U.S. 36 and Penn Avenue that used to house the Dairy Inn restaurant and storage in the old motel behind it.

Ralph Clapper, owner of Fort Sappa Creek Antiques on Main Street, said he bought the building on U.S. 36 a few months ago. He said he plans to convert the restau-

rant into Oberlin Pawn and the motel behind it into storage units.

Mr. Clapper said he isn't sure when the business will open, but he has two men getting the building ready. They had it cleaned out a month ago, he said, but there still there is a lot of work to do.

After it is completed, he said, Randy Allison of California has the

first option to buy the property and run the business.

If Mr. Allison doesn't buy it, Mr. Clapper said he would run the pawn shop and the storage units.

Mr. Clapper said he bought the property to clean it up and beautify the city.

The units, he said, will be called Fort Sappa Storage.

THE OBERLIN HERALD

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Harvest Countdown WINNERS



Tom Basgall of Herndon brought the first qualified load of wheat into the Decatur Coop Association's Herndon elevator on June 21, 2007. His wheat load had a 13.2 moisture content, and 60 lb. weight. Time brought in was recorded as 9:15 a.m.

1st place winner is Rose Riffle. 2nd place goes to Joe Brockelman and third place to Janice Ganje.

Mr Brockelman is not pictured.



Rose Riffle



Janice Ganje

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