

Summer school not all work



JACK FARR MARCHED around the classroom of the old Addleman School at the Last Indian Raid Museum with his fellow classmates while Myrna Jones played the piano during summer school on Friday. The students, from Oberlin Elementary School, spent the day at the school, learning and playing games like they would have back in the days of a one room schoolhouse. — Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

Council talks about golf carts

The Oberlin City Council talked about whether to allow golf carts, which may be legal or illegal to drive on city streets, to be driven inside city limits on the roads Thursday, but put off making any decision.

The council has talked about whether to allow the carts on city streets several times at the request of Charles Godwin, owner of Terrace Garden RV Park. Mr. Godwin and his wife came to the meeting Thursday and again asked the council to allow the carts on city streets.

State law, he said, really isn't clear on whether the carts are illegal or not. An attorney general's opinion only said that the city couldn't have a charter ordinance to allow the carts, he said.

Mr. Godwin has been pushing the city to allow golf carts on streets since last year, saying it would help guests at his business who don't want to unhitch their trailer or towed car when they stop for the night.

There really isn't a definition of what a golf cart is in the Kansas law, Mr. Godwin said. It would probably fall under the definition of a low-speed vehicle. It's understandable, he said, that the carts would need safety measures, including seat belts, rear view mirrors, windshields and brake lights, to name a few.

The council could allow people to drive these vehicles in the city, said Mr. Godwin, by using another kind of ordinance, not a charter one.

Oberlin could be the leader on how this should be done properly, he said, adding that all-terrain vehicles and "mini trucks" don't need a registration and could be allowed

City roundup

At a meeting Thursday, the Oberlin City Council:

- Took no action on whether to allow golf carts, which may be legal or illegal, to be driven inside city limits on the roads. Story at left.
- Talked about what to do with land and an estate valued at a little under \$2 million left by a Dresden couple to the Decatur County Hospital and The Gateway. Story on Page 1A.
- Approved a resolution to back up the mayor's declaration of a Stage 2

water warning Thursday, meaning the city is now on water rationing using an even/odd system for outdoor use. Story on Page 1A.

• Gave Creative Movements Gymnasts permission to use the arena at The Gateway during the school year for practice once a week. Story to come.

• Talked about a tax exemption policy for economic development that the city already has in place. Story to come.

on city streets.

Mr. Godwin said he talked to a highway patrol officer who said the city can do what it wants as long as the carts don't travel on state highways.

Mr. Godwin said he's been ensured by Rep. John Faber that if the city allowed the golf carts, it wouldn't change the city's eligibility for state road money.

The council could give the idea a 60-day trial, he said. In Atwood, people are running all over in their golf carts. They add an orange "slow-moving vehicle" triangle to the back as a warning, he said.

What about insurance? asked Councilman Jay Anderson. There's a discrepancy on that, said Mr. Godwin; some people say it would be covered under a person's current auto insurance. The trooper did say if a person got in an accident while driving a golf cart, that person would be at fault, especially if the accident was on a highway.

"Then if we endorsed people driving those, we would be liable?" asked Mayor Joe Stanley.

Not from what Rep. Faber said, Mr. Godwin said.

With the high gasoline prices, said Mr. Godwin, I think this is one way to help some people.

Why not just ride scooters? asked Councilwoman Rhonda May. What's the difference?

The golf carts have four wheels and the scooters two, said Mr. Godwin. Besides, he said, he wouldn't want to ride a scooter, would you? Ms. May said she actually would. The scooters are legal and get around 80 miles to the gallon, she said.

If the golf cart can't be driven on a highway, said City Administrator Gary Shike, that would mean someone couldn't drive one from Mr. Godwin's park to downtown.

Mr. Godwin said he's purchasing a Gem cart, which has a 17-digit vehicle identification number so it can be tagged. He said he isn't asking for

the City Council to allow the carts for him, but for other people.

Councilwoman Marcia Lohoe-fener said she appreciated his work with Rep. Faber. By the next meeting, she said, the city probably needs to have an answer.

Originally, Mr. Godwin had asked for golf carts to be allowed so people staying at his RV Park on the west side of town could drive a cart to downtown to shop, eat and see the museum, without having to take their big rig.

Ms. May said she didn't feel comfortable taking a leadership role in this because if the state trooper says the golf cart driver is at fault in an accident, it could be a liability issue.

Someone took a leadership role for bicycles, vehicles and scooters, said Mr. Godwin. It doesn't have to be done alphabetically, he asked so why do Abilene or Atwood have to be the first ones?

Mr. Godwin said he wanted Oberlin to be the first one to allow the carts the right way.

Mayor Joe Stanley said he has a problem with the fact that no one knows if it is legal or not. He said he doesn't see how the council can side step this law and not the next one. He said he thinks if they wait, the problem will resolve itself.

If Mr. Godwin buys a Gem, asked Connie Grafel, marketing director for the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., will he be able to use it? Yes, said Mayor Stanley, because it's legal.

Maybe one of the council members could call Rep. Faber before the next meeting, said Mrs. Lohoe-fener, to ask him what's going on.

Two leave positions on hospital board

The Decatur County commissioners held a quick meeting Thursday with only two members available to sign vouchers and take care of a few items.

Commissioner Stan McEvoy went in last Tuesday to sign the vouchers while Commissioners Ralph D. Unger and Doyle Brown met Thursday. The meeting last Tuesday had been canceled because of harvest.

The commissioners received

letters of resignation from Butch Rittmann and Marilyn Noone, who both served on the Hospital Board. Both are moving out of the area. Anyone interested in serving should fill out an application in the clerk's office.

The commissioners talked with custodian Bob Berls about work done by Kone Elevator. He said the elevator is wired in with the fire alarm now, and when the alarm sounds, it goes to the first floor.

Marietta out of race

One of the five candidates running for Decatur County register of deeds has decided to pull out of the race.

Judith Marietta said although her name will be on the Primary Election ballot on Aug. 5, because of personal reasons she has decided not to run.

Mrs. Marietta, a Republican, said she appreciates the encouragement

and support she has received. She plans to stay in her job as a secretary at Decatur Community High School.

The other candidates include Tifanie Farr, Melissa Chambers and Kari Ketterl, all Republicans, and Shanna Long, a Democrat.

County to shut road near Dresden

With no one at the hearing to protest, the Decatur County commissioners approved closing the west half mile of a section-line road in Dresden Township.

Tim Stallman, road and bridge supervisor, said at the meeting on Tuesday, June 24, the road is 2 1/2 miles southwest of Dresden. Clerk Marilyn Horn said she sent out letters to people who own land on the road and the township board.

No one came to the hearing, notice of which had been published in *The Oberlin Herald*.

The commissioners approved the vacation, requested by Sylvester Ritter and Virgil Jansen, for part of County Road 26. Both own land off that road, one on the south and one on the north.

Mr. Stallman said he would like to close the landfill on Saturday, July 5, because of the holiday weekend, and have it open Satur-

day, July 12, instead.

The landfill, said Commissioner Stan McEvoy, will probably have some more activity with roofs being replaced after a hail storm last month.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Approved buying a batch of 10-foot and 12-foot wood sign posts. Mr. Stallman said he thought it would cost less than \$1,500.
- Heard that the crew was almost done replacing a culvert southeast of Jennings that washed out after recent storms.
- Heard that a used grader the county bought is here and in service.
- Suggested that Mr. Stallman write letters to contractors here who have the machinery needed to help demolish the senior center and theater so a new building can be erected, asking for bids.

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