

## City looks to regulate windmills

By KIMBERLY DAVIS  
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The Oberlin City Council decided at its meeting last Wednesday to have the mayor and two council members meet sometime before the end of the month to revise and make suggestions for an ordinance to allow private wind turbines in the city.

The council had a sample ordinance that was adopted in Colby. Mayor Joe Stanley said the ordinance deals with wind turbines that would be put up by homeowners or businesses in town. The city probably should have done something six months ago.

Councilman Jay Anderson said he had been worried about wind turbines interfering with the airport. He said he also didn't understand how interconnection into the electric

### Council Countdown

At a meeting last Wednesday, the Oberlin City Council:

- Agreed to have the mayor and Council Members Rob McFee and Rhonda May look at an ordinance to allow wind turbines for homes and businesses, and then talk about it at the Thursday, Oct. 30, meeting. Story at left.
- Talked with a man about the speed limit on the Sappa Creek Road, which runs west from U.S. 83 at the southwest corner of town. Story to come.
- Approved hiring an Oberlin woman as the new manager at The Gateway. Story to come.

- Talked about meeting with the Decatur County commissioners, the city/county attorney and the city/county fire chief about fire reports that haven't been filed with the state. Story to come.
- Tabled an addition to an ordinance allowing dog owners to do DNA tests to prove their pet isn't a pit bull or any of the other dogs not allowed inside the city. Story below.
- Agreed to offer a 99-year lease at \$1 a year to the Kansas National Guard for the former youth ranch at Sappa Park, including the buildings and land. Story on Page 3A.

system worked.

The council probably needs to adopt an ordinance before any towers are built in the city, said Mayor Stanley.

Sunflower Wind, said Foreman Dan Castle, is trying to come in the

back door and put up towers inside the city's electric service territory, and then interconnect to the city's grid. Sunflower Wind may be misleading people, said Mr. Castle, by telling them they can connect to the city lines. The city doesn't have

to allow people to put power on its lines, he said.

Sunflower Wind talked to the city at great length this year about putting up wind turbines in the county and selling power to the city.

Mr. Castle said he's heard of two

leases for turbine sites east of town. This company, he maintained, is misleading the customers.

The Colby ordinance defines a small wind energy system as a turbine or tower that produces 100 kilowatts or less energy. Mr. Castle said he thought it should read that people can generate a certain percentage of what they would use in their homes, like 20 percent.

Then wind energy wouldn't be able to be put into the grid at all? asked Councilwoman Rhonda May.

The interconnect would have to be inspected by the city, said Mr. Castle. This isn't about discouraging people from "going green," he said; going green is a good thing. For safety, the city needs to have rules about connecting to the grid.

From what he's heard, said Mr.

Castle, this wind company is telling people that they are going to generate and sell the power to the city and shave their costs. Whoever these customers are, he said, should take the estimates to Prairie Land Electric and find out the real figures.

These turbines aren't inside city limits? asked Dr. Anderson. Two of them that are proposed, said Mr. Castle, are inside city limits.

The state does say that a power provider has to buy any excess power that's generated, said Ms. May. That doesn't mean the city has to buy it, Mr. Castle replied.

Aren't there height restrictions already in place for every zone in the city? asked Mayor Stanley. City Attorney Steve Hirsch said the height restrictions vary from 35 to 75 feet zone.

(See WIND on Page 5A)



### Players work on football

THE JUNIOR RED DEVILS finished their football season Saturday at home. During the three month season, the boys played six teams. Kelden Breth (above) showed off his running skills in a game against Goodland, while Kaine Fredrickson (left) tucked the ball he had just received.

— Photos by Sarah Fredrickson

## Sick kids need to stay at home to limit disease

Kids with what is known as "hand, foot and mouth disease" should stay home until their fever breaks and is back to normal and the blisters are scabbed over, health officials say.

Marilyn Gamblin, administrator of the Decatur County Health Department, said she has received a few phone calls from parents about the disease, which several children in town have or have had this year. The disease isn't reportable, and there are no medications that parents can give their children.

It actually just takes some time for the kids to get over the disease, said Ms. Gamblin. If a child has the virus, she said, they need a lot of rest, fluids and can take over-the-counter pain relievers as needed.

Some of the symptoms include a fever, sore throat, painful red blisters in the mouth, then on the hands or feet, headache, fatigue, loss of appetite and irritability in infants and toddlers.

If your child has this disease, said Ms. Gamblin, it's important to keep them at home. The infection spreads easily and quickly through

coughing and the particles from the blisters being moved around, and in feces.

"The illness spreads by person-to-person contact with nose and throat discharges, saliva, fluid from blisters, or the stool of someone with the infection," a handout says. "Hand, foot and mouth disease is most common in children in child care settings, where diaper changing and potty training are constant, and little hands often are in and out of the mouth frequently."

It's important to wash your hands and make sure that kids are washing theirs, too, Ms. Gamblin said. Daycare providers should disinfect their toys.

Some things that can help is sucking on an ice pop or ice chips, eating ice cream or sherbet, drinking cold beverages, serving foods that are soft and rinsing the mouth with warm water after meals.

The county has had this disease before, said Ms. Gamblin. It's not uncommon this time of year. Adults can get it, too, but it isn't as common for them.

## Council tables rule change to help owners prove breed

By KIMBERLY DAVIS  
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An ordinance change that would allow dog owners to do DNA tests to prove their pet isn't a pit bull or any banned breed was tabled by the Oberlin City Council at a meeting last Wednesday.

The change, said Mayor Joe Stanley, would make it easier on the city's animal control officer by giving dog owners a chance to prove their pet isn't a breed that isn't allowed in the city.

This is just fine tuning the ordinance, he said, but evidently the lab that tested the dog in question has DNA samples for more than 60 breeds, but may not have the breeds that actually make up a pit bull.

The lab that tested the dog's DNA, said Jeff Johnson, city animal control officer, couldn't test for pit bulls because they aren't a breed recognized by the American Kennel Club. They are made up of a bunch of breeds, he said. The lab had 62 in its database. When DNA is put into the computer, it comes up with the closest breed it can. The lab just couldn't test for a pit bull, he said.

It seems the current ordinance lists the breeds that could be pit bulls, said Councilwoman Rhonda May. All of those breeds are recognized by the club, said Mr. Johnson.

Testing a dog's DNA is a good idea, said Ms. May, but the ordinance probably needs to be tabled so it can be fine tuned.

Isn't that simple, said Mr. Johnson, because lots of breeds make up a pit bull. So what should be done?

asked Ms. May. Leave the ordinance as it is, said Mr. Johnson.

Who would know more about this testing? asked Councilman Jay Anderson. Maybe the city could write the veterinary school at Kansas State University and see what breeds make up a pit bull.

The problem with the ordinance, said Councilman Rob McFee, is that any dog can be made nice to be around kids or be made mean. The other side is that the entire ordinance could be thrown out, said Mayor Stanley.

The city could just let the dogs prove themselves, said Mr. McFee. The city has a leash law and an ordinance about vicious dogs.

There's been two pit bulls in town recently that have attacked puppies, said Mr. Johnson.

He said he thinks pit bulls are good dogs, but they have to be properly trained. He said his sons have pit bulls, and they have had some issues. With that said, though, he said he didn't think the city should get rid of the ordinance.

"I don't think I would favor dropping the ordinance," said Councilwoman Marcia Lohoefer. "Our kids rank above that."

There are quite a few pit bulls in town now, said Mr. Johnson, at least that's what's been reported.

The city could just ban all dogs, said Councilman Rob McFee. Labs bite the most, so those could be banned. People can't have horses or chickens in town, he said, so maybe they shouldn't be able to have dogs either.

## Food pantry could use a few special items

The Decatur County Food Pantry needs a few items, from baking supplies to cleaning products, as the holiday season approaches.

The list of what the pantry needs changes quickly, said Melanie Anderson, who runs the pantry in the basement of the United Church.

It seems more people have asked for help this year than ever before, said Ms. Anderson. With hard times for the economy, use of the pantry is up, but people have really stepped up and made donations to help those people.

Really, the supply is in pretty good shape, although they need:

- toilet paper and paper towels.
- cream of mushroom soup.
- ramen noodles.
- baking supplies such as sugar, corn starch, flour, baking power, baking soda, black pepper and other spices.
- macaroni and cheese.
- mexican and chinese foods.
- personal hygiene items like toothbrushes,

shampoo, conditioner and deodorant.

- cleaning items.

Ms. Anderson said the pantry doesn't need any cake mixes, peanut butter, jelly or spaghetti sauce right now. It can always use canned fruits and vegetables, however.

Anyone wanting to make a donation can bring it by between 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Monday through Friday. Anyone wanting to use the pantry can come between 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

## Recycling moves from trailer to metal shed

The Decatur County recycling trailer will soon begin traveling to the smaller towns in the county, while people in Oberlin will be taking their material to an old metal building south of town by the county weed control office.

Gaylen Huntley, noxious weed and recycling director, said they've been working on getting people to use the building more so the green trailer can be taken to other towns. The building is set up with large boxes called gaylords for people

to be able to put their items into, instead of putting them in the bins on the trailer.

Then the trailer will move among Jennings, Norcat, Cedar Bluffs and Dresden. Mr. Huntley said he has contacted people in both Nor-

catur and Jennings. It would be nice in those towns if there is someone to keep an eye on the trailer while it's parked there, he said.

Sarah Fredrickson, who works for the weed department, said the plan (See TOWNS on Page 5A)





IN THE NEW RECYCLING BUILDING south of town, Sarah Fredrickson (above) put a plastic container in the correct gaylord Monday morning. Donovan Baughman (below left) and Ryan McEvoy helped load e-waste into a large trailer Tuesday, Sept. 30.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

# \*Wind turbines, power usage stirs up council

(Continued from Page 1A)  
 “I agree that wind power is coming,” said Mayor Stanley. “Someone will build them in town, and we need to protect our power utility when that happens.”  
 The ordinance from Colby is to be used as a guideline, an idea, he said. The council can put their own numbers in it and its own suggestions.  
 The city has only one commodity to sell, said Councilman Ray Ward, noting that the city makes money to finance other programs with the electric service.  
 If that’s cut back, he said, then taxes could go up.  
 If people put individual generators in, that will cut down on power use and then the taxes would have to go up.  
 “So then don’t allow them at all?” asked Ms. May.  
 That wouldn’t be right, said Mr. Castle, because it’s our duty to go green, use less resources. Maybe not today, but to work toward that goal in the future.  
 It seems wrong to see the city not allow the wind turbines, said Mayor Stanley. People have the right to do better and save money, but the city needs to maintain control over the electric system and the safety of the people who work on it.  
 The regulations on height already make it impossible for someone to put a wind turbine up in their yard, said LaVern Burtis, who said he was at the meeting because he is interested in the ordinance on a personal basis. A lot of people couldn’t do

the \$2 million insurance policy the ordinance suggests either.  
 If the city says wind turbines or towers just aren’t allowed, that means big power users like the school or hospital can’t do it, said Ms. May. She added that she’s not sure if the city should say that wind towers just aren’t allowed.  
 People could be allowed to have a home turbine based on the power they use, said Mr. Castle.  
 If someone put a turbine up on the outer edge of town, said Mr. Castle, the city’s line might not be big enough to bring power into town. People can’t just pick a spot and put up a tower, because in places the transmission capacity isn’t big enough.  
 People can put up a turbine outside the city limits, but inside the city’s power territory, because the two aren’t the same, he said; the city could still say no because they wouldn’t be able to interconnect.  
 Mayor Stanley suggested he and two council members get together and look at the ordinance. Both Mr. McFee and Ms. May said they would help.  
 “This is a two-way street,” said Dr. Anderson. “We need to protect those who want to put one up and those who don’t want to put one up.”  
 The city also needs to protect its workers, said Mayor Stanley. One potential problem would be when the power goes out and the workers think a line is dead and someone else is generating energy and feeding it into that line.

# \*Towns to get trailer

(Continued from Page 1A)  
 is for the trailer to go to Norcat between the first and 10th of each month and then to Jennings between the 11th and 20th. Dresden and Cedar Bluffs haven’t been set up yet.  
 People need to put their recycled materials inside the boxes that are marked for each item, just like they would take the items out of their plastic bags before putting them in the marked boxes, said Mrs. Fredrickson, except for shredded paper which needs to be kept in the plastic bags.  
 The metal building is just to the west of the old stone building. The door is on the east side of the building.  
 The Decatur Co-op said the county can borrow its forklift to move the filled gaylords and cardboard bundles around, he said.  
 There’s a lot of cardboard that gets recycled, said Mr. Huntley, but there isn’t really an area to store it before Mrs. Fredrickson bundles it together. It really piles up, he said, especially during spray season when she’s busy.  
 It might be smart to find an old horse trailer or something that’s enclosed to keep the cardboard in, he said.  
 At the end of September, he said, the truck from Northwest Kansas Regional Recycling Organization was here to pick up the e-waste, mostly old televisions, computer monitors and towers. The group picked up 17,000 pounds of e-waste.



Ambulance Director Linda Manning talked with the commissioners briefly about an accident outside Jennings when a man fell out of a tree while he installing a tree stand for hunting. Mrs. Manning said the helicopter landed near the scene, and the flight crew flew by the location. She said they told her the ambulance department should buy hand-held global positioning devices to help direct a helicopter that needs to land.  
 In this case, she said, the helicopter ended up going all the way to Selden before having to double back. If the ambulance workers had the hand-held units, they could direct the helicopter from the ground.  
 It might be smart to have the longitude and latitude for all of the towns in the ambulance and in the dispatch office, too, said Commissioner Ralph Unger.  
 Ms. Manning said she’s heard lots of good feedback about the work her crew did at the accident.  
 In other business, the commissioners:  
 • Signed a resolution to issue \$300,000 in general obligation bonds for a new senior center, with The Bank as the purchaser.  
 Mr. Unger refrained from the vote since he sits on the board at The Bank.  
 • Agreed to ratify a decision to fix the transmission in the Norcat Fire Department’s Dodge for between \$2,300 and \$2,500.  
 • Talked with County Attorney Steve Hirsch about the fair board and amusement authority joining under the county. Mr. Hirsch looked up the law and said it probably won’t work. The definition of a fair doesn’t include a carnival, he said.  
 The board runs the carnival, said Mr. Hirsch, but the tax levy for the fair probably couldn’t be used for maintenance of the carnival.  
 Can the fair foundation take donations for the carnival? asked Mr. Unger. Mr. Hirsch said he didn’t think there was a problem with that.

# Health department may need state OK

County health departments might have to be accredited by 2011, the Decatur County health administrator and a commissioner learned at a recent meeting in Wichita.  
 Administrator Marilyn Gamblin and Commissioner Stan McEvoy attended the meeting, held by Kansas Association of Counties in conjunction with Kansas Association of Local Health Departments and Kansas Health Foundation.  
 Ms. Gamblin brought back a sample resolution stating that the county will comply with the standards for accreditation. The standards haven’t been set yet, she noted.  
 Mr. McEvoy said at a commission meeting Sept. 30 that he wouldn’t recommend the county sign the resolution, not knowing what will be required or what the standards for the health departments will be.  
 The whole idea, he said, came up because the state could get around \$64 million more in federal money if all of the health departments are accredited.  
 “But, who knows what the cost to get accredited will be,” he said.  
 The health department has been helping people for 30 years, said Ms. Gamblin. Why does it need to be accredited now?  
 Some of the ideas for requirements or standards for small health departments are for ones where there’s a population of 50,000, she said. There are some grants now that she can’t apply for because the county’s population isn’t big enough.  
 Mr. McEvoy said 14 counties in this area of the state would need to combine to get that number of people, then someone would have to say how the cost is divided.  
 Often, said Commissioner Ralph Unger, the massive bureaucracies are put together, but that says nothing about the services the people need or provided.  
 Usually it just means the customers will have to travel somewhere for the same service they used to get at home, he said.  
 In other business, the commissioners:  
 • Heard the health department will offer blood draws on Tuesday, Oct. 14. The blood will be tested for cholesterol, liver function, kidney function and electrolytes, blood count and thyroid. The results will be mailed out within a week to 10 days. The cost is \$25 and \$20 for an additional prostate specific antigen test.  
 • Heard it’s just about time for flu shots again. Ms. Gamblin said she will set up a clinic during the general election at The Gateway.

# Alliance chooses parade theme

Members of the Oberlin Business Alliance chose a theme for the November Parade of Lights in November during its meeting Oct. 1.  
 The parade on Friday, Nov. 28, the night after Thanksgiving, is a tradition the alliance members started eight years ago.  
 The members had six theme ideas from the students at Oberlin Elementary School, including, “Dancing Snowflakes all Around Bring Christmas to This Town!” by Sandy Ketterl’s sixth graders, “Rockin’ Around in Christmas Town” by Carol Dixon’s sixth graders, “Believe in the Spirit of Christmas” by Sherri Ruf’s fourth graders, “Gleaming Lights, Pretty Sights, Everything is Bright in Oberlin” by Jeri Buchholz’s fifth graders “An Old-Fashioned Christmas” by Judy Elwood’s fourth graders and “Christmas Delights” by Cindy Sattler’s first graders.  
 The members chose “Believe in the Spirit of Christmas,” created by the Mrs. Ruf’s class.  
 Kem Bryan, chairwoman of the Chamber of Commerce board, said representatives from the two groups have met and agree that both are open to the idea of a merger, but want to take it slow. She said they talked with the Oberlin City Council about merging the Chamber director position and The Gateway manager spot, but that isn’t going to happen.  
 The Chamber does have applications in for the director spot from seven to eight people, about half from in and half from out of town.  
 The board plans to have a “massive” membership drive soon and also set up goals for one, three and five years, she said.  
 Two of the board members were to be greeters during the “Up in Smoke” barbecue contest on Saturday.

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