

Signers file airport petition after information meeting

To the Editor:
I am sad to report that we have been pushed into filing the airport petition papers Friday morning, so we are asking the city elected officials to weigh their decision carefully.

Two hundred names were collected for the petitions — those interested in letting the people show their desire — and the names were gathered in not more than five days of leg work.

Thursday night was an informational meeting prepared by the city administrator and by 8:15 p.m., the petition carriers were humbled that maybe the petitions were not necessary and we could just let the governing body proceed.

But then the meeting turned ugly. The crowd had been encouraged

to keep it friendly, and information — both good and bad — about the airport project had been presented. But heckling began and took over the meeting, pushing Austin Gilley right out of his presentation. This was very convincing — just like the Gateway Building process and many we talked to feel even the new construction on Main Street of Oberlin.

A few people in charge appear to not really want to listen to what the public has to say but truly believe that money is no object.

Questions were presented from the audience but they were not al-

lowed to state their views, as the presenter said the meeting was not called for a debate but to give out information to the public as to how the airport had been planned up to this point.

Even the petitioners were not allowed a time to discuss the petition and no one contacted them as to why the petitions were being circulated.

The bottom line for taxpayers seems to be the city needs to raise over \$800,000 by 2012 and that would be for a 5,500-foot airport runway at that time. The city would be responsible for operations and

maintenance to keep it open and operational by FAA standards for a grant promise of at least 20 years.

This was information for the public, but there were very few average taxpayers in attendance. We understand phone calls were made to ask that people stay home and let those “in charge” handle it. And we say we live in a democracy!

Mr. Haynes — thank you for listening and please keep us informed of the process as it goes on from here for the city airport.

Marilyn Horn, a city taxpayer Oberlin

Letters to the Editor

Young man wants airport so he can work, live in Oberlin

To the Editor:
This is a letter in regards to the petition that was started by Steve and Marilyn Horn and Howard and Joanne Lahman.

I could not be more frustrated or angry about the pessimism and desire of certain people to prevent future opportunities and growth of Oberlin. Oberlin needs jobs to grow. I would give anything to be able to use my college education at a job in the town I spent almost my entire life in and have grown to love and care about deeply. I cannot stand aside anymore and let the pessimistic voices be the only ones heard.

I applaud the letter from Bob Fraker. It points out just one of the reasons why Oberlin needs a bigger and better airport. Oberlin is an aging community, and a longer runway for medical purposes could save countless lives throughout the years. Aside from this, however, there are more reasons.

A longer runway would bring opportunities for bigger businesses that need airports to ship their supplies and cargo across the country. Maybe even an entrepreneur from Oberlin could start an international business made possible by a bigger airport. As far-fetched as it seems now, there is potential someday for regular weekly or daily flights into and out of Oberlin. The possibilities are endless for Oberlin if only we give people, and the airport a chance.

Building a bigger airport would show that our community wants positive change. We do not want to be like every other community in western Kansas that is shrinking. We want to bring in younger

families to fill our fantastic school system so that we know Oberlin has a future.

As seen recently with the new, and much-needed, community center, there are people in Oberlin who are optimistic about the town's future. Greg Lohofener took the lead on the project to raise the money to build a fine community center.

The Gateway is another prime example of optimism in our community. No other community around Oberlin has a place like the Gateway. It's a great location for auctions, wedding receptions, meetings, theater, the high school prom, the arts and crafts show, art shows, or almost any event you may need catered.

I can only hope and pray that Oberlin has more optimistic people like Mr. Lohofener and those who donated the money to build the recreation center and The Gateway.

Oberlin is unique. I hear it all the time when I'm asked where I'm from and that person has been to Oberlin. They remember how courteous the people are. They remember how people wave to each other even when they are strangers.

They remember the beautiful scenery and the brick streets leading to a beautiful and unique downtown with unique stores and a one-of-a-kind bed and breakfast and museum. Our school system is one of the best in the state, with some of the most influential people in many of our lives teaching there.

This is why I cannot understand how or why there is any pessimism in Oberlin. It is the same pessimism that prevented our schools from getting a much-needed upgrade several years ago when the bond issue was

voted down. Our schools are old and near disrepair. Fortunately we have leaders at the schools who understand the importance of the buildings and have made great improvements with the little money they are allotted from the state.

I wonder how this pessimism could prevent the airport from being built. If the government is willing to pay for 95 percent of the project, why would people of any community in their right mind say no?

If the money is coming from the Federal Aviation Administration, then it will go to some airport, whether it is Oberlin's or Kansas City's. It would be absurd to turn that down. On top of that, it is my understanding that we're in line for \$500,000 of stimulus money, leaving only 2 percent of the original cost to the city.

Unfortunately, not only do a few people not want it to happen, they also don't want the government to help pay for anything except for repairs on the airport for the next 10 years! How can this make sense to anyone? How could they get enough signatures on the petition? Why are there so many people who do not seem to care about Oberlin's future?

There is a future in Oberlin, but only if we the people set up opportunities for our future to continue. Many people have taken the initiative on this project over the last couple of years to get contacts with state and federal officials and secure government loans and financing.

State officials have shown great interest in our community and have commended our town for pushing so hard to get this project under way. There is no reason why we should

turn down this tremendous, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

The future of Oberlin depends on the optimism and hope of the citizens. Oberlin is not a good place for pessimists to live.

It's up to everyone in Oberlin to decide; do we want a future for this town? The fate of this town could very well depend on building this airport. If it is not built, I can guarantee the fate of Oberlin will not be good.

I know there are only a few pessimists in our town who are against the airport. Unfortunately, these pessimists are the most outspoken. That is why I hope that if this issue is voted on, that the optimism Oberlin is known for will show and quell the pessimism that can only destroy a community.

Jace Robinson Lawrence

Girls beat St. Francis

The Oberlin eighth-grade volleyball girls beat St. Francis in two games while the seventh graders lost to the young Indians in three on Thursday, Sept. 3, in St. Francis.

The eighth-grade team won 25-8, 30-28 in its first match of the year.

“We had a great serving night, serving 80 percent,” said Coach Gina Witt. “We had a little trouble with transition. Overall, I think the team did a good job.”

The Decatur Community Junior High seventh graders weren't so lucky.

Sports

The girls won the first game 25-20 but dropped the second on 25-14 and the third 15-9.

“The seventh-grade team did pretty well for their first game,” said Coach Lindsay Fortin. “I saw a lot of potential and improvement, even throughout the game. The first-game nervousness is over, and we are preparing for next week.”

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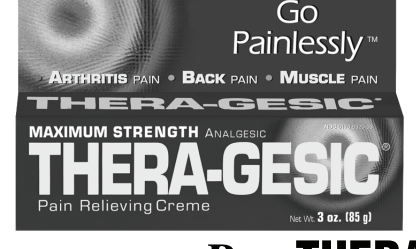
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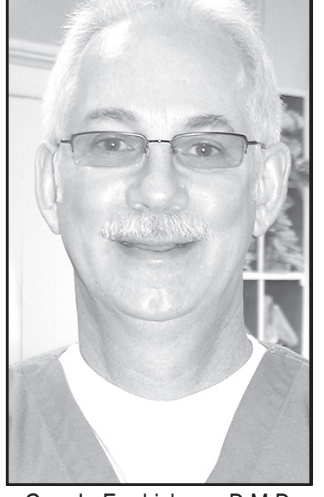
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Reader feels meeting negative

To the Editor:
This letter is in regards to the community informational meeting concerning the proposed airport expansion, held at the Gateway and presented by City Administrator Austin Gilley last week.

I attended for two reasons: to see what the update was on the proposed project and to understand those who had opted to pass a petition against the project.

The whole tone of the meeting was, in my opinion, very negative. I do not fault those who are opposed, as I have been on that side of the fence before. What I do take issue with is the total arrogance, disdain and lack of respect for genuine

questions posed by the citizens, and how they were answered, or not answered, by the city administrator. For those not present, two people who had worked on this project for some time were in the audience. Neither of them was allowed to answer questions, as dictated by Mr. Gilley.

True leadership at public meetings and forums allows for all pertinent information to be presented. It was only after Mr. Gilley exited the building, along with half of the crowd, that Greg Lohofener was able to answer other questions from citizens.

To the petitioners, I would say, I respect your rights. In looking

back, I have some personal regrets because I did not embrace opportunities and potential change that might have come to Oberlin.

It is important to me not to just take from a community, but to give back, to help make sure the town is here for generations to come, even stronger and better than it is today. This community is unique because it has been blessed with many forward-thinking citizens who were able to see past the next day or week. Hopefully, we can come together and do the same.

From someone who wants to grow old in a progressive town,
Shayla Williby Oberlin

Medical flights face problems

To the Editor:
I would like to comment on the letter Bob Fraker wrote in last week's paper. Mr. Fraker is right about the air ambulance planes not being able to land at our airport.

There have been several times we have had to pick up a patient at the hospital who needed to be flown out, and taken them either to McCook or Atwood because they are unable to land here due to the runway.

When we take a patient like this to another airport, we have to let the flight crew come into the back of the ambulance, which does not have much room. They then have to hook up all their equipment onto the patient and then we have to move the patient off our cot onto their cot, which is lying on our small bench, and then move them again back to

our cot so we can move them out to the airplane.

When it is possible for a plane to land here, we pick up the flight crew at the airport and take them to the hospital with their equipment. The flight crew can then apply their equipment, plus be able to talk to the doctor and nurses about the patient's condition.

If the patient needs other medications, they have access to it there. The extra room to work is a big plus. After they have the patient ready, we have the flight's cot on top of ours and all we have to do is move the patient over onto the cot and secure them and go to the airport.

If one of my family members needed a flight, I would much rather they be transported from our hospital to our airport, not 30 miles away.

Look at the time you are losing when this patient needs to get to a higher level of care. Time is very important when a person's life is on the line.

There are some times a helicopter cannot come because they are out on other calls or the weather is bad. When this happens, we have to have a plane come in.

I just feel for the patient who has to be moved around and be taken care of in this manner because a few people don't want the airport improvements. It could make a lot of difference in the care of a very sick or injured person.

Thanks for listening to my side of this issue.

Linda Manning, Oberlin director, Decatur County Emergency Medical Service

Rawlins County Health Center

RAWLINS COUNTY HEALTH CENTER COMMUNITY CALENDAR

707 Grant Atwood, KS 67730
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Bringing Specialized Healthcare To Your Community

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
		Dr. Rubinowitz, Oncology will be at the Rawlins County Health Center on October 5, 2009	Diabetic Clinic Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab		MRI's Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Cardiac Rehab		Dr. Frankum Surgery Bone Density Diabetic Clinic Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab		MRI's Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Cardiac Rehab		Dr. Curtis Podiatry Diabetic Clinic Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	Dr. Reeves Podiatry Dr. Saba Orthopedics	Dr. Reeves Podiatry MRI's Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Mammograms Cardiac Rehab	Dr. Miller Cardiology	Diabetic Clinic Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	Dr. Curtis Cardiology	MRI's Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	
27	28	29	30			
	Cardiac Rehab		Diabetic Clinic Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab			

September 2009



TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH A VISITING PHYSICIAN, PLEASE CALL (785)626-3211 Cheryl Banister, RN Specialty Clinic Director