

Home water system proposal flops

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A motion to study the possibility of putting a reverse osmosis system in each home and business in Oberlin instead of building a water treatment plant, died for lack of a second at a City Council meeting on Thursday.

Engineers Chris Miller and David Blau, with Miller and Associates, the firm designing the water plant, were at the meeting to talk with the council about the idea.

At the previous meeting, the council voted to sign a consent order with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to build a water treatment plant to remove traces of arsenic and uranium from the water.

The engineers and council members talked about ways to remove nitrates and

Council OKs new breakers for power system

The Oberlin City Council approved buying two new circuit breakers for the city's electric system at a cost of \$49,250 from Mid-States Energy Works Inc. of Salina at its meeting Thursday.

City Administrator Austin Gilley showed a map of the main parts of the electric system. The graphic included the nine circuit breakers, the power plant, generator, transformers and substations.

Not on the graphic, said Mr. Gilley, are the 30 miles of lines,

80 percent of which are original. Half of the lines were built before 1950 and most of the rest before 1973, he said. The city has 1,500 to 2,000 poles and about 500 smaller transformers serving businesses and homes.

Foreman Dan Castle said he's tried to implement a plan to replace items a little at a time. They didn't do any replacements last year, he said, primarily because there was a failure at the substation they had to spend money on.

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There will be others who don't want someone in their home putting in a system."

Councilwoman Rhonda May asked if Mr. McFee would be willing to spend \$2.5 million more because he didn't want someone in the house?

Mr. Miller said he didn't think there is that much of a difference in the cost of the two ideas.

There was some discussion that putting reverse osmosis systems in was a temporary fix. It would take care of the consent order, said Mr. Miller, but not the distribution lines that need to be done or the plugged meters.

Councilwoman Marcia Lohoefer said she's trying to figure out the money they would save on a water treatment plant by putting in the reverse osmosis units and (See WATER on Page 10A)

County to buy warning sirens for more areas

The Decatur County commissioners approved the emergency management director's application for a grant for new emergency sirens at the golf course, the shelter house at Sappa Park and in Leoville, Traer and Cedar Bluffs.

Jacque Boultinghouse said the grant from Nex-Tech is for areas where there isn't a storm siren. The sirens will carry 1.4 miles.

The commissioners called Gary Walter, who serves on the Oberlin Country Club board, about putting the siren at the golf course.

The siren, said Ms. Boultinghouse, would go on a 50 foot power pole. Commissioner Ralph Unger said they would need to get permission to put up the pole.

Mr. Walter said he would talk with the board.

The group talked about power for the siren. The sirens, said Ms. Boultinghouse, have battery back-up so there needs to be steady power.

The grant, she said, is from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. There will be insurance and maintenance costs on each.

Commissioner Gene Gallentine said he would check with Norcatur and Jennings and make sure there aren't any deficiencies in the areas

Siren test set for Thursday

Decatur County plans to test the emergency sirens to make sure each one is working correctly before tornado season gets here.

Emergency Management Director Jacque Boultinghouse said the sirens will be tested at 10 a.m. Thursday.

She said they will make repairs as needed, then wait to start weekly testing until severe weather season starts next month.

those sirens cover.

While Ms. Boultinghouse first asked about putting a siren at Sappa Park, the golf course and in Leoville, after talking to Sheriff Ken Badsky, he suggested Cedar Bluffs and Traer.

Mr. Unger suggested Ms. Boultinghouse call Hansen Mueller for Cedar Bluffs and D&S Grain for Traer to see about putting up the pole on their property in each town.

City councilwoman plans to resign post

Oberlin's mayor is looking for a volunteer to serve on the City Council after Marcia Lohoefer told the mayor she plans to quit next month.

At a council meeting Thursday night, Mayor Joe Stanley said that Councilwoman Lohoefer plans to turn in her resignation by the middle of March.

Mayor Stanley said anyone interested in serving on the council should let him know. The mayor can appoint someone to finish the term with approval of the council.

Mrs. Lohoefer said she plans to attend the meeting Thursday, March 4, but that will be her last. Mayor Stanley said he'll probably make a choice by the end of March.



Lohoefer

As of Monday, he said he'd had one person contact him.

Her main reason for resigning, she said, is that she's always wanted to travel and her husband Jerry is now ready to do that. She said they have some trips coming up, with two grandkids getting married in May and June in Virginia and Oklahoma, fly fishing in Montana and maybe some winter in Texas.

Mrs. Lohoefer, who was re-elected last year, has a little more than three years of her term left, until April 2013, the mayor said. Whoever is appointed will serve out the rest of the term, said City Attorney Steve Hirsch.

'Conversation' to focus on recreation proposal

The Decatur Tomorrow plans to hold a "community conversation" at 7 p.m. tonight at the Golden Age Center.

The conversation will focus on recreation opportunities, said Gary Anderson, steering committee co-convenor.

Mr. Anderson said the recreation and economic development directors from Greeley County will be at the meeting to give a presentation about what has happened with the recreation program there, which he said benefits all ages.

Greeley County's recreation program includes pilates exer-

cises, a dodge ball tournament, youth soccer, "From Couch to 5K," father-daughter dates, a pool tournament, a wrestling clinic, "Bowling Rocks," a 10K race, open gym, a fund-raising cakewalk, karate, a Wii tournament at the library, a mud volleyball tournament, a paintball adventure girls volleyball and much more. Planned programs include foster parenting classes, women's tennis and volleyball, pictures with the Easter Bunny and a men's flag football league.

Everyone is invited to attend the conversation.



Snow storm can't keep a lot of people inside

WORKING AND PLAYING in the snow, Madison and Landen Macfee (above) were out cleaning their sidewalks and having a snow fight Sunday afternoon. Meanwhile, Paul Shields (left) was helping clean the walks off in front of the Sunflower Cinema in preparation for Sunday's matinee. John Stanley (below) helped a customer load her purchases into her car at Raye's Grocery.

— Herald staff photos by Cynthia Haynes



Board to discuss ways to cut budget

The Oberlin School Board plans a special meeting at 6 p.m. tonight to start planning for possible budget cuts next year.

The meeting, at the district office, is open to the public, but much of it will be held in closed session so the board can discuss individual teachers and what classes they might take.

In this year's budget, said Superintendent Duane Dorshorst, the district already will lose \$150,286 from what it had been promised. He said the school

board and administration saw more state cuts coming and built in enough cash for this year.

There may be more cut, he said, and the district is to the point where it may have to cut programs, so the board would like to talk about the future.

He said the district plans to hold a public meeting later this spring, but this session is mostly for the board. It probably won't last long, he added, because people may want to go to a recreation meeting at 7 p.m.

Baseball players needed for game

Ball players are needed for a 125th anniversary baseball game at Sappa Park the first weekend in May.

The game will be played on the lawn at Sappa Park starting at 2 p.m. Sunday, May 2. Gary Anderson, a committee member, said a team from Hodgeman County will be here to play.

The vintage team, he said, will play by the 1890s rules against a team from here and one from Phillips County.

Mr. Anderson said they need at least 12 players for a team, plus a coach.

Some of the rules that might seem odd today: catching a fly ball doesn't result in an out, no gloves are used, and the ball can be thrown at a runner. If hit, they are out.

The Hodgeman County team would play the Phillips County team first. In between that game and the one against the Oberlin team, the Community Band will perform, said Mr. Anderson.

Director Neal Russell said Mr. (See BASEBALL on Page 10A)

