



A day of gifts and play

ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY Quinton Call (above) jumped off Elias Phillips' legs while playing in the yard of his great-grandmother, Phyllis McCartney. The same day at Cedar Living Center Alvina Gamblin (right) received balloons from her great-grandchildren for her birthday.

— Herald staff photos by Cynthia Haynes



New design for airport to cost less

By STEVE HAYNES

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The bad news, engineer Don Klapmeyer told the City Council on Thursday, is that he made a mistake in the revised design for revamping the existing runway at the Oberlin Airport. The good news was that fixing it should save the city half a million or more.

"We're happy it's less," said Councilman Bill Riedel. "We don't always hear less."

Mr. Klapmeyer, a principal and senior vice president of airport services for BWR engineering of Kansas City, said it would take another two weeks to redo the design report, but the work still probably won't be done until next summer.

He said he had been concerned that the cost for the supposedly simple project would approach \$2.5 million, rather than \$1.2 million to \$1.3 million as originally thought. Now it looks more like \$1.5 million, he said.

The city has to remove 615 feet from the south end of the runway to provide an unobstructed "runway protection zone" and "object-free area" beyond the end of the pavement. The project will add 322 feet to the north end of the runway, in effect shortening it from nearly 3,800 feet today to 3,500 feet.

The federal requirement for a clear safety zone beyond the runway is fairly new. Several towns around the area, including Goodland and Colby, have had to move the ends of their runways to meet the regulation, with the government paying most of the cost.

Mr. Klapmeyer said shortening the runway 300 feet should not affect emergency medical flights into Oberlin.

"I've talked to all the air ambulance people," he said. "They said they'd have no problem using your runway at 3,500 feet. In the summer, when temperatures warm up, they may have to watch their loads real close."

Report covers 19 areas

A 69-page environmental assessment up for the Oberlin Municipal Airport runway extension project covers 19 areas that could be affected by construction:

1. Air quality — will increase activity increase the amount of carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, ground-level ozone, particulate matter and/or sulfur dioxide over what federal standards allow?

• There will not be enough traffic to cause any air quality problems.

2. Coastal resources — will the impact the aquatic environments near the Atlantic, Gulf or Great Lakes?

• No.

3. Compatible land use — will homes and businesses in the area be negatively impacted by increased noise?

• There are no homes or businesses close enough to have problems.

4. Construction impacts — will appropriate erosion control measures be taken?

• Yes.

5. Department of Transportation Act, Section 4(f) — will any publicly owned lands such as parks, golf courses, recreation areas or wildlife and (See PLAN on Page 8A)

Takeoffs would be more difficult then, because warm air is less dense and a plane's wings generate less lift.

(See AIRPORT on Page 8A)

Report finds no negative impact here

By CYNTHIA HAYNES

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While 24 people showed up for a public hearing on an environmental assessment for construction of a new runway at the Oberlin Municipal Airport, the only person to speak was the engineer who put the report together.

The assessment ends with a finding that the project will have no "significant" environmental impact, meaning that the city can avoid doing a full environmental impact statement, which would cost thousands.

The public meeting was to run from 5 to 7 p.m. but it started 10 minutes late and pretty much broke up 15 minutes later when no one wanted to get up and Brad Weisenburger, an engineer for the BWR Corp., the firm that did the assessment for the city, had answered a couple of questions.

"This is your chance to comment to the FAA," City Administrator Austin Gilley told the crowd, adding that the assessment was to cover any likely impact from construction of a new runway.

Mr. Weisenburger told the crowd that the document is available at the city office for anyone to read, and even if no one wanted to speak at the public meeting, they would have 30 days to send in written comments to the Federal Aviation

Administration.

While no one wanted to get up and talk, there were a couple of questions and comments for Mr. Weisenburger.

Former Mayor Chuck Frickey asked what topics the assessment covered, and Mr. Weisenburger quickly went through the list, noting that many did not apply to Oberlin such as the one on protection of wild and scenic rivers.

"You have no wild and scenic rivers running through Oberlin near the airport," he noted.

"Did you find anything that had a negative impact?" Decatur County Commissioner Gene Gallentine asked.

"No," Mr. Weisenburger said. "None significant. A spade of dirt is an impact, but it's not significant."

City Councilwoman Rhonda May was the only other person to speak.

"Add my voice to the FAA is support of the airport and hope that this can be done in an expeditious way," she said.

In accordance with federal regulations, Mr. Gilley, Mr. Weisenburger and court reporter Paula Keller, who came from St. Francis to record the meeting, said they had until 7 p.m. No one else showed up, however.

Blood draws scheduled for this week

Anyone wanting to take part in the blood tests for the biennial Decatur County Health Fair needs to stop by the county Health Department today or Thursday.

Administrator Marilyn Gamblin said the department is offering two

kinds of tests. A complete blood profile, which looks at everything from blood sugar to lipids, including cholesterol, to a blood count to thyroid test, costs \$25. The second is a prostate specific antigen test for men, designed to detect prostate

cancer, for \$20.

The blood will be drawn at the department from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. both days. Call 475-8118 for information.

The results will be handed out to participants during the Health Fair

from 2 to 7 p.m. Thursday, April 8, at the Golden Age Center. Jennifer Taylor, a physician's assistant at the Oberlin Clinic, will answer any questions people might have.

The department used to hold the (See HEALTH on Page 8A)

Tied vote leaves city council seat still vacant

By STEVE HAYNES

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Mayor Joe Stanley's choice to fill an opening on the Oberlin City Council came right at the first of the meeting Thursday, but never really took off.

After preliminary business, the

mayor nominated retired pharmacist Rusty Addleman to fill the seat vacated by Marcia Lohoefer, who resigned effective the end of this month.

Councilman Rob McFee asked Mr. Addleman, who was in the audience at The Gateway, if he could

work with City Administrator Austin Gilley. The administrator kept his job on a 3-2 vote Dec. 17 after Mr. Addleman and former Councilman Jay Anderson, both supporters of the city's airport expansion project, had asked the council to fire him.

Mr. Addleman responded that he

thought he could. Someone questioned him again, and he replied that he'd said he could.

"No, you said you *thought* you could," said Councilwoman Rhonda May.

"I have problem with this," Councilman (See TIED on Page 8A)



LAST WEDNESDAY City Administrator Austin Gilley Weisenburger, with BWR about the airport project. and Connie Grafel, marketing director talked with Brad — Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

*Tied vote leaves city seat still vacant

(Continued from Page 1A) cilman Bill Riedel added. "I still don't know who the other candidates were. "I've heard there were four people in the ring. There've been rumors..."

Some discussion on procedure followed, but everyone agreed it was the mayor's prerogative to make the choice, and that he didn't have to talk about the candidates. The motion to approve the appointment failed on a 2-2 vote, with Ms. May and Councilman Ray Ward in favor and Mr. McFee and Mr. Riedel opposed.

"I guess I'll keep looking," Mayor Stanley said. "I'm sorry, Rusty."

Mr. Addleman said he'd be willing to talk to anyone about how he felt, and the council moved on to an airport project.

Later, the mayor explained that he had been advised by the city attorney that he could not vote to break a tie, as is the case in most council

decisions. "I had checked with Steve (Hirsch) earlier in the day," he said. "Apparently the council has to approve with a majority of the remaining voting members. "I couldn't vote, or obviously I would have."

Mr. Addleman said he remains interested in the position, though he was disappointed by the vote and a little embarrassed. "I volunteered to serve," he said, "and the question Rob asked... I wouldn't have agreed to serve unless I thought I could work with Austin."

"I do agree with Bill (Riedel) that there should be a procedure to make this easier on the mayor. "Yeah, I'm disappointed. A lot of people are pretty upset about this."

The person who is appointed to the post will serve until the April 2013 city elections, when the seat will be up for grabs along with those that expire.

*Airport project to cost a little less

(Continued from Page 1A) In the project, the pavement on the strip, designated by compass direction as "runway 17-35," will be widened from 50 to 60 feet and the sides contoured to meet Federal Aviation Administration safety requirements and provide drainage. Turnarounds designed to fit in with a proposed future taxiway would be built to the east at both the north and south ends.

The city will replace existing runway lights with new lighting and add a "precision approach path indicator" system at either end, a set of red and white lights which show a pilot whether he is on the recommended glide path for the approach to a landing, neither too high nor too low.

While most lights will be high-intensity quartz, blue lights marking the turnarounds and taxiway will use light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs to save energy. Lights will

come on at dusk and go off with a timer, he said, but pilots will be able to "click" them back on by radio.

Mr. Klappmeyer told the council the cost increase came because the engineers assumed they would have to stick with the current top elevation when the runway is extended on a fill to the north. To maintain sight lines from one end to the other, he said, they would have to remove most of the existing pavement and a great deal of dirt, about 100,000 cubic yards in all. The report he brought with him proposed all-new concrete paving with a subgrade stabilized with fly ash and a base of recycled asphalt millings.

In subsequent conversations with state airport officials, he said, he found that they could just raise the top elevation by four feet to accommodate the extension. That means that most of the existing pavement can be reused, he said, milling off the surface and adding 2 to 5 inches

of new asphalt overlay. That should cut the price back down to \$1.5 million.

"Your pavement is in good conditions," the engineer said. "I think it has held up pretty darned good."

Either way, he noted, the federal agency would pay 95 percent of the cost and the city just 5 percent. He said when the redesign is done, he will come back out with the new plans.

"Going to that much cost in it, that was a hard one for me to swallow..." the engineer said. "I think the FAA would have had a hard time with \$2 million."

Mr. Klappmeyer said he didn't think work could start this year on the project, as the council had hoped. He noted that the city is doing an "aeronautical survey" of runway approaches for the federal agency.

Once done, this should let pilots to make "GPS" approaches in bad

weather, allowing landings with as little as 250 feet of visibility rather than the present three-fourths of a mile. In the past, he said, a GPS approach helped only for horizontal location, not altitude, or vertical approach.

While that will allow pilots to land here in much worse weather than today, he said, "You've got to get everything just the way they want it."

A subcontractor is doing aerial surveys now, he added, and the survey should be done this summer. Until then, though, the runway project needs to be on hold.

Councilman Riedel asked if the runway work will remove the existing "hump" in the middle of the runway. Mr. Klappmeyer said no, that would cost more and the hump isn't seen as much of a problem. Phil Fraker, whose father Bob is the airport fixed-base operator, said most complaints he gets from pilots are about the length of the runway, not the grade.

*Health fair set for early April

(Continued from Page 1A) fair every spring, said Ms. Gamblin, but started to do it every other year a few years ago. This year's fair will be aimed more at middle-aged to older people, she said, and there will be more preventative information for them and not as much for kids. The fair itself is free.

Ms. Gamblin said several groups and businesses have booths during the fair, including:

- Henningsen's Therapeutic Massage.
- Early Detection Works, which does free mammograms for women over 50.
- Heartland Lions Eye Bank.

- Hospice Services.
 - Stevens Hearing Center.
 - Kelly's Home Medical.
 - Northwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging.
 - Lifetime Eyecare.
 - Twin Creeks Extension Service.
 - Decatur Health Systems.
 - Decatur County Good Samaritan Center.
 - High Plains Mental Health.
- Ms. Gamblin said the Lions Mobile Screening Unit has been invited to the fair with its new trailer. Inside the trailer, people can be screened for blood pressure, blood sugar and visual acuity. She said they haven't heard if the unit will be here for not.

*Report shows no adverse impact

(Continued from Page 1A) waterfowl refuges be effected?

- None nearby.

6. Farmlands — how will taking farmland out of production because of the airport affect the area?

- The land taken out of production is a small amount compared to what is available in the area.

7. Fish, wildlife and plants — will any endangered fish, wildlife or plants be affected by the change of environment and will any migratory bird flocks likely be affected?

- No.

8. Floodplains — is the proposed runway in a flood plain?

- No. The airport is atop a hill.

9. Hazardous materials, pollution prevention and solid waste — is the airport change likely to create any hazardous waste? Is the facility located near a solid waste disposal site that might attract birds and have blowing trash as a problem for aircraft?

- No.

10. Historic, architectural, archeological and cultural resources — are there any historic buildings or known early American Indian sites in the area that might be disturbed?

The Kansas State Historical Society said none is known.

11. Light emissions and visual impact — will lighting cause a problem for the surrounding area?

- Lights will not be strong enough to cause impact.

12. Natural resources and energy supply — is there any oil or gas production or other energy resources in the area that might be affected?

- None.

13. Noise — will increase aircraft traffic cause unacceptable noise levels?

- Not enough traffic is expected to cause too much noise.

14. Secondary (induced) impacts — will the construction cause an increase or decrease in population?

- Probably not, but the De-

catatur County Hospital will benefit, which should help the community.

15. Socioeconomic impacts, environmental justice and children's environmental health and safety risks. Will any daycare centers, schools or minority or low-income populations be adversely affected?

- No.

16. Water quality — will the project affect stream runoff or wastewater treatment?

- No.

17. Wetlands — will any wetlands be affected?

- None in the area.

18. Wild and scenic rivers — will any damage be caused to areas that have outstanding scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, cultural or historic value?

- No.

19. Environmental consequences (other considerations) — will anything else anyone can think of be affected?

- No.



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THE OBERLIN HERALD

and the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce welcome Creative Collision to the business community

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