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Charges dropped in Weisbeck case

by J.D. Stetson

The Hot Springs County Attorney's Office has dropped all charges against James "Jim" Weisbeck in Hot Springs County Circuit Court.

On Friday, Circuit Court Judge Tom Harrington signed County Attorney Jerry Williams' motion to dismiss all charges against Weisbeck without prejudice.

Williams states in his motion, filed Thursday, it would be in the "best interest of justice to do so."

Hot Springs County Sheriff's deputies arrested Weisbeck on June 15 on suspicion of aggravated assault after they responded to his Eagle Ridge Road home in response to a claim by Jill Ferris, 51, that Weisbeck allegedly fired a gun toward her.

Prosecutors charged Weisbeck with attempted second-degree murder and influencing, intimidating or impeding a witness based on the witness' statements, the discovery of a bullet in a wall of the home and a statement from the victim that Weisbeck had allegedly threatened to kill her if she contacted law enforcement.

Williams said in a Friday in-

terview new information had led to dismissal of the charges. Williams did not elaborate on the information based on court rules prohibiting prosecutors from talking about cases.

Sheriff Lou Falgoust said the information had to do with inconsistent statements made by the victim.

Falgoust said the case remains open and because it was dismissed without prejudice, charges could be filed again if new information is obtained.

"I concur with the actions of the county attorney," Falgoust said.

Weisbeck's attorney, Alex H. Sitz III of Cody, said he and Weisbeck are happy with Williams' decision to drop the charges.

"We believe it lacked merit and was wholly unsupported by any credible evidence, which would have made a successful prosecution very unlikely in the matter," Sitz said.

"It is unfortunate that Mr. Weisbeck had to spend six days in jail to get to this juncture, but we are hopeful that Jim can begin to put the pieces of his life back together now that the criminal case has been dismissed."

Splashing good time



Sesi Jensen, left, and Jaxson Jensen enjoy a race down a waterslide during the Relay Fun Fair on Friday afternoon at Hot Springs State Park. The event was held in conjunction with this year's Relay for Life, which featured the fundraising efforts of eight participating teams. Nearly \$28,000 was raised for the American Cancer Society in the battle against the disease. See a Relay for Life recap on page 11. — Joe Sovo photo

School budget public hearing set for next Wednesday

by Joe Sovo

Patrons in Hot Springs County School District No. 1 will see minimal changes in the fiscal year 2012 budget compared to the budget for the 2010-11 school year.

Trustees will hold a public hearing on the proposed budget at 8 p.m. next Wednesday, July 20 in the boardroom at the administration building. The board will convene at 7 p.m. on that date for its regular monthly meeting and adjourn to go into the public hearing. When the hearing is concluded, trustees will return to their regular meeting and adopt the fiscal year (FY) 2012 budget (ending June 30, 2012).

By state statute, budget hearings in Wyoming public schools must be held at 8 p.m. on the third Wednesday of July.

Trustees held a special meeting to approve a number of budget revisions June 29. District Business Manager Lisa Pearce said the revisions re-

sulted in an increase of about \$36,000 in the proposed budget. Putting it in perspective, Pearce said the increase was just three-tenths of 1 percent.

Pearce explained budget adjustments were made to keep the district in compliance with state statutes. One of the most significant factors involved the lease-purchase of three new buses, which was not approved until February and amounted to about \$60,000.

"It was in our best interest to make that first payment the year we got them," Pearce said of the buses. The district leases the buses and then buys them outright at the end of the term.

Adoption of a new math curriculum also figured into the budget adjustments; the adoption has a cost of \$70,000.

Pearce said district patrons have had 30 days to review the proposed budget and they have final input at the July 20 budget hearing.

In the proposed budget for FY2012, the gener-

al budget is \$11,623,097. That compares to last year's general fund of about \$10,689,000, according to Pearce.

Mill levies unchanged

Pearce expects the Board of Cooperative Education Services mill levies to remain the same; they are one-half mill (.500) for Northwest BOCES and the same levy for Fremont County BOCES. CWC Board of Cooperative Higher Education Services (BOCHES) is also expected to stay the same, at one-quarter mill (.250).

The mill levy for Special District Tax would be 25 mills and 6 mills for County School Tax – both the same as for the 2010-11 school year. The Recreation Board mill levy should stay the same at 1 mill. There will be an increase in tax collections in the district, since assessed valuation went up from last year. The unofficial valuation is about \$223,298; the valuation will be certified by the county commissioners at an August meeting.

The district has to deal with rising costs for food service. Pearce indicated dairy costs alone have gone up 40 percent in just two years.

In looking at other funding areas in the district, Special Revenue is about \$1.1 million in the FY2012 budget. That is significantly lower than 2010-11 since the district will not receive federal stimulus money like it did for the last school year. The Capital Construction fund has about \$1.06 million, with some of that money shifted from reserves.

Pearce said there was \$700,000 in Major Maintenance. Much of that money will be needed to pay for a new bus turn-around at the middle school and new windows for the administration/auditorium building.

Approximate amounts of other district funds for FY2012: Debt Service, \$284,000; Food Service, \$413,000; Insurance Trust, \$1.66 million; Scholarship, \$30,000; Pupil Activity, \$190,000; and Recreation District, \$251,000.

Got milk?



Lisa Shaffer, a member of the High Mountain Ranch team competing in the Lions Club Ranch Rodeo on Saturday, checks to see if she has any milk in her bottle during the wild cow milking event. The rodeo also featured ribbon roping, trailer loading, team doctoring, branding and wild cow riding as well as calf scrambles and mutton bustin' for the kids. See Sports on page 6 for results of the Ranch Rodeo. — Joe Sovo photo

All-Class Reunion this weekend

The annual Hot Springs County High School reunion is set to kick off this weekend with registration at the VFW from 1-4 p.m. Saturday.

Celebrating the graduating classes ending in 1 and 6 this

year, each class will hold its own Friday night mixer and Saturday night dinner before the culminating event, the all-class picnic on Sunday.

A dance will be held at the VFW on Saturday starting at 9 p.m.

Hot Springs County Educational Endowment members will give tours of the auditorium and the new high school Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon. For more information on the tours, call Margaret Stansill at 921-0000.

Class Year	Contact	Friday	Saturday
1941 - 70 years	Lois Williams		
1951 - 60 years	Delores Loughlin	Delores Loughlin 1301 Clark 6 p.m.	Tut Ellis 125 Cedar Ridge
1956 - 55 years	Joan Harris	VFW 7 p.m.	Armory 6:30 p.m.
1961 - 50 years	Charlyne White	VFW 7 p.m.	Shorty's patio 103 E. Broadway 6 p.m.
1966 - 45 years	Ann Roberts	Wedge Taylor 211 E. River Road 5:30 p.m.	Stones Throw Airport Road 6 p.m. cocktails 7 p.m. dinner
1971 - 40 years	Patty Jeunehomme	R&S Well Service 818 So. 7th St. BBQ 7 p.m.	R&S Well Service 818 So. 7th St. 7 p.m.
1976 - 35 years	Deb Mount	Deb Mount 353 Bonneville Road 7 p.m.	Las Fuentes 530 Arapahoe 7 p.m.
1981 - 30 years	Kim Enis	A&W Bowling Lanes 6 p.m.	Eagles Club 6th & Shoshoni 6 p.m. cocktails 7 p.m. dinner
1991 - 20 years	Dana McDermott	Dana McDermott 361 Bison View Lane 6 p.m.	Pumpknicks 6 p.m.
2001 - 10 years	Anne Ivie	Candy Jack Park 5 p.m.	Butch's Place 6 p.m. cocktails 7 p.m. dinner