

Council approves budget on first reading

by Mark Dykes
Tuesday evening, the Thermopolis Town Council — with Mayor Mike Mortimore absent — approved the first reading of the fiscal year 2016-17 budget. Among the recommended budgets are: \$101,750 for Legislative/Executive, \$183,250 for Clerk/Treasurer, \$10,800 for Judge, \$58,200 for Law, \$85,900 for Town Hall, \$757,550 for Police, \$288,785 for Dispatch Department, \$61,000 for Corrections, \$32,350 for Codes Administration, \$84,800 for Fire Department, \$630,686 for One Percent Sales Tax Projects, \$603,550 for Streets and Alleys, \$35,350 for Parks, \$38,655 for Animal Control and \$227,540 for Other General Accounts.

The budget will go through a second and third reading before it is finalized.
Also during the meeting, Attorney Michael Messenger swore in new Thermopolis Police Officer Michael Mascorro.
Council approved a variance to allow for a planned 15-20 chickens at Thermopolis Middle School for one year, ending and the end of the 2016-17 school year. Students Emme Norsworthy, Oakley Bowman, Regan Severance and Elisa Weber, along with teacher Becky Martinez, presented about the project.
The students noted they could use eggs to help supplement the school lunch program, and the shells for the school's new garden.

The chickens could also be used as a learning tool for those who are not familiar in working with them, teach them about the ag industry and help them develop work ethic.
As for where the chickens would be, Martinez explained a greenhouse would be built and the garden moved into it, and the current garden area would be set up for the chickens' yard. Martinez would like to see it be a year-round project, with birds going to out of town people during the summer or being used for fair projects.
Permits were approved for Shorty's. Owner

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photo by Mark Dykes

Hands on

During Wooley Bulley Day Friday, Billie Jo Norsworthy provides Ralph Witters Elementary students an opportunity to get a feel for what wool is like before its processed into yarn.

Wooley Bulley Day educates on ag industry

by Mark Dykes
Friday at the Hot Springs County Fairgrounds, students in grades 3-6 got an up-close look at cows, horses, sheep and hogs, and learned more about what the agricultural industry is all about during the Wooley Bulley Day.
Thermopolis Middle School student Chase Taylor explained the event was headed up by Ray Shaffer, but she helped bring another six stations to broaden students' understanding of the industry. Shaffer, she noted also started presentations of agriculture in the classroom but the Wooley Bulley stations go beyond that.
Agriculture impacted her life, Taylor said, and she wanted the students to understand how it impacts theirs and help them understand products like meat and eggs don't just simply come from the grocery store.
Taylor attended school at Fremont County until seventh grade. While in fourth grade there, students went to an ag expo at the fairgrounds. She said the event was huge, with about 20 stations and even though she was raised on a farm she still learned quite a bit.
As for deciding on the stations to have at Wooley Bulley, Taylor initially had a list of 20 but decided to start small with more general topics such as hogs, cattle and cattle transportation. Regarding transportation, she looked to help debunk the thinking that cattle trucks are used for only sending animals to the slaughterhouse.
A tractor was also present, with its driver available to answer questions, and though an irrigation station was planned the presenter lived in Fremont County and was dealing with flooding issues.
Taylor expressed her appreciation to Shaffer and Thermopolis Middle School Principal Breez Daniels — who helped approach the Farm Bureau for funding — for helping make the project possible, as she couldn't have done it without them.

Two men facing felony charges resulting from separate incidents

Schwan charged following tragic DUI accident

Taylor charged in assault involving weapon

by Mark Dykes
Matthew Schwan, age 34, has been charged with a felony count of driving under the influence with serious bodily injury, following a Saturday incident. The charge is punishable by a \$2,000-\$5,000 fine or 10 years in prison, or both.
According to court documents, about 2:40 a.m. May 14 an officer responded to an ambulance page in the 1000 block of Broadway, in reference to a car vs. pedestrian accident. The officer met with the resident, who was looking under the vehicle, a 2008 Chrysler Town and Country.
A person appeared to be underneath the vehicle, and the resident said it was Reilly Schwan, who was not responsive. EMS and fire department personnel responded, the vehicle was secured and lifted, and Reilly was extricated.
The resident was further questioned, and stated he had gone out with his wife, as well as Matthew and Reilly to celebrate in Worland. On the way home, he said Matthew and Reilly had an argument. Once home, he stated he went into the house.
The resident said he heard Matthew yelling outside, and when he came out he saw Reilly under the vehicle. The officer was told Matthew had gone back to the alley, and the officer went to look for him.
Matthew was on the phone, and was asked to hang up the call. He complied, and also showed signs of intoxication. When asked what happened, he began crying. He later explained they were celebrating his birthday and their anniversary in Worland.
Matthew continued to sob and cry while he was being interviewed, and repeatedly asked officers to tell him Reilly was OK. Documents state that under further interview, he did admit to being drunk. Matthew was also read his Miranda rights, and said he understood them.
Matthew advised there was an argument between him and Reilly, and she walked away. He said he was advised to get her by the residents, he said, and in do-

ing so he pulled forward and heard screaming. He said he didn't understand why Reilly would be laying on the ground. The only time he had been driving that night, Matthew said, was that one time.
Field sobriety maneuvers were attempted with Matthew, who continued to show concern about Reilly and was getting more upset. It was determined he could not comply with the maneuvers due to his frame of mind.
Matthew was arrested and taken to the Joint Law Enforcement Center. He agreed to a breath test, with results of .20 percent. He was then told he was under arrest for driving under the influence, and escorted to the Hot Springs County Detention Center.
Officers checked on Reilly's condition, and later advised Matthew she was in critical condition and was being life-flighted to Casper. At the time of the officers' response, she was not responsive, not breathing on her own and had bleeding in her belly.
Her injuries also include a large bruise on the top of her right thigh, bruising on her right hand, forearm and bicep, her right chest and the left side of her throat, blood coming from her nose and ear, bruising on her left hand, scrapes and bruising on her left hand, bruising and a large burn on her back and a large bruise on the back of her left calf.
Reilly is in a coma on life support. According to a family member, she has shown some reflexes but doctors are guarded about her prognosis at this time. She is going to be allowed to rest and heal for a few days and further tests will be performed.
Matthew's bond was set at \$10,000, and he is scheduled for preliminary hearing on Monday, May 23. He has posted bond, and according to a family member, he visited Reilly and their children in Casper. The family has pulled together and is remaining supportive of each other through this tragedy, according to the family member.
A Go Fund Me account has been set up to help the family with expenses. To donate, go to www.gofundme.com/24dr8xf7.

by Mark Dykes
Christopher A. Taylor, age 41, is charged with aggravated assault and battery — threaten with a drawn deadly weapon. The charge carries with it a possible 10 years in prison, a \$10,000 fine or both.
According to court documents, at about 4:30 a.m. May 13, a Thermopolis Police Officer was dispatched to the Joint Law Enforcement Center regarding a report of an assault on Rebecca Obremski.
Obremski reported she was at home asleep and awoke to find Taylor hovering over her with a knife in his hand, holding it in such a way that she believed he was attempting to stab her. Obremski further stated Taylor had been up for several days without sleep and she believed he was coming down from using methamphetamine.
The officer attempted to locate Taylor, but was unsuccessful.
Later in the day, officers attempted to locate Taylor and found him and Obremski standing next to a vehicle. Upon officers' arrival, Obremski was putting items in the vehicle. Taylor, who was standing with his hands in his pockets, started to turn and walk away. He was instructed to stop, and he walked a short distance and pulled an unidentified object from his pocket.

Taylor gave no verbal response and appeared expressionless, then turned and continued walking at a faster pace. An officer followed, prompting Taylor to run, and no pursuit was initiated.
Officers spoke to Obremski, who stated when she woke she saw Taylor standing over her with a knife in both hands with the blade pointed at her chest. She noted he started bringing the knife down in a stabbing motion. Obremski said she yelled at Taylor and he stopped, and she got out of bed and said she was leaving.
Also in the bed was the couple's daughter, and Taylor sat down on the bed next to the girl, still with the knife in his hand, according to Obremski. Obremski moved to pick up the girl and Taylor made stabbing motions in Obremski's direction, she said.
Obremski gathered up her daughter and was leaving, she said, and Taylor tried to intimidate her. She further added he never said anything through the encounter.
Obremski allowed officers to enter the home and escorted them to the bedroom, where she removed a large "Buck" knife from a sheath and gave it to them.
Officers also discovered Taylor is currently on supervised probation.
Taylor's bond is set at \$30,000, and he is scheduled for preliminary hearing May 23.

