

First reading of rate increase ordinance approved

by Mark Dykes

Tuesday evening, Thermopolis Town Council, with council members Tony Larson and Dusty Lewis absent, approved the first reading of an ordinance which increases the sewer and solid waste collection rates for users with in and customers of the Town of Thermopolis by revoking Ordinance 826, Resolution 500 and Resolution 493, and establishing an effective date.

According to the ordinance, wastewater charges for commercial or nonresidential users outside corporate limits of Thermopolis shall be the same factor/multiplier mul-

tiplied by the charge to the residential user outside the corporate limits. Each month, all residential and commercial users will also be charged \$1 per thousand gallons of treated water used based on an average of the monthly treated water usage in the preceding months of December, January and February, with a minimum per month charge of \$2.

In addition to the wastewater usage charge, in the corporate limits of Thermopolis and East Thermopolis the base rate for residential units shall be \$25 and the base rate for residential units outside the corporate limits shall be \$36.50. The base rate for commercial

users will be a multiplier of the residential in-town or out-of-town base sewer rates found in the schedule on file with the town clerk.

New utility accounts without a history of treated water usage during the months of December, January and February will be charged the city-wide average of 4,000 gallons for a monthly wastewater usage charge, until an average usage history has been established.

As for solid waste collection, the monthly charge schedule is as follows: one-fourth container or less, \$32 minimum; one-third con-

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photo by Dennis Nierzwicki

Filling the boot for a cause

Sunday the Thermopolis Volunteer Firefighters and their families stationed themselves at the stoplight in downtown Thermopolis for the annual Fill the Boot fundraising campaign. Over \$4,000 was raised to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association who works to free individuals, and the families who love them, from the harm of muscular dystrophy, ALS and related life-threatening diseases that take physical strength, independence and life.

Senior center bathrooms non-compliant with ADA

by Cindy Glasson

The Hot Springs County Commissioners had a busy agenda during their meeting on Tuesday covering things from Youth Alternatives to the Senior Center along with other business.

Barb Rice, director of the Youth Alternatives program, reported to the commissioners that the eight students she currently has in the program have been working hard this past month, doing a lot of community service.

The students worked at the Hot Springs County Fair, did some work for the Master Gardeners, helped serve breakfast at the fly-in at the airport and most recently, spent Labor Day getting the playground ready for the little ones at CRC.

In addition, they have finished the new shelter at the skate park and are awaiting the picnic tables that will go with it. Much of the material was donated by Merit Energy.

Rice has been having meetings in an attempt to develop a proposal for funding to work with the Help Center on life skills training and more community service projects that could benefit people coming into the Help Center.

FBO at Hot Springs County Airport, Nate Messenger, said they had a good amount of fuel sales for the month of August with more jet fuel being sold than av-gas for the first time.

Messenger said the numbers were down a bit at the fly-in compared to last year's attendance, but the crowd which came in for the eclipse made up for it with everyone having a great time.

Five of the eight T-hangars from the former airport have been moved to the new airport, and there is just one plane remaining at the old facility. That plane and the hangars will have to be moved shortly as the commissioners are discussing disk-ing up the runway and surrounding area, leaving nowhere for the plane to take off.

Lisa Pierce, the new director at the Senior Center, advised the commissioners a review of the building

has shown it to be out of compliance with the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) in several areas.

The bathrooms are non-compliant as they are too narrow to accommodate a wheel-chair bound user. In addition, the handicapped parking spaces at the front of the building, while painted with the requisite blue paint, are not marked with any kind of signage.

Something is going to have to be done about the condition of the parking lot to the north of the building as it is in terrible repair with missing chunks of concrete and uneven surfaces. The slope going into the building is no longer ADA compliant. It was in compliance when originally built, but is no longer in compliance.

The roof on the center is also going to need to be replaced as soon as possible due to a number of leaks.

"It is really important to the seniors to have a place to go, to socialize and to get out of the house each day," Pierce said.

The commissioners made the decision to update the county's website using a company out of Casper that has developed websites for other county and state agencies.

The current website is rather static and a bit hard for the department heads to make changes to their particular portion of the site. With the new website, each department can update their sections more easily and more sections can be added as needed for things such as commissioner's minutes.

The commissioners approved up to \$7,000 for the building and training of a new site.

In other business, maintenance supervisor, Chuck Carver, resigned his position to the commissioners at Tuesday's meeting, effective immediately.

Cynthia Garbin was appointed as the newest member of the Hot Springs County Museum and Cultural Center Board and a liquor permit was renewed for the Quality Inn which has a new lounge added to their property.

Hospital board receives reports of new staff, training

by Mark Dykes

There was a new face at the Aug. 29 meeting of the Hot Springs County Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees. Melissa Johnson was approved to fill the board position recently vacated by Breez Daniels. Hospital CEO Margie Molitor said Daniels enjoyed being on the board, but being the Grade 5-12 principal for the school district took priority.

The decision to appoint Johnson to the position was made during a special board meeting on Wednesday, Aug. 23, and she was officially sworn in Aug. 29.

During the meeting, Dr. Jason Weyer with Red Rock Family Practice reported Hallie Bischoff would be joining the practice on Sept. 18. Weyer said Bischoff is a full-time, full-scope family medicine doctor, and will be practicing full-time in the emergency room and obstetrics, and he's excited for her to be here.

Weyer noted Bischoff has also done a residency in Casper, and an OB fellowship in Seattle for more experience, making her even more well-rounded. He said the hospital sees a lot of OB work, some of it high-risk, here in Hot Springs County and from the surrounding counties.

Having Bischoff here also helps to ensure patients are able to get in with someone, should there be a flood of patients. Weyer said he doesn't take offense when patients choose to see and establish with someone other than him.

Weyer also reported Lindsay Brooks has joined as a nurse practitioner, working as something of a "floaters," covering as needed in Thermopolis, Worland and Basin, as the same system is used in all three locations.

Another item being addressed, Weyer said, is the privileges of the CRNA to allow them to do some different types of localized pain injections. He explained the only things done here now as far as pain injections are epidural steroids of the lumbar spine. He noted updating privileges would not only provide people with options for pain management, but it would be an additional revenue stream.

Weyer said the big key for staffing is trying to find the right people and the right mix for them to come here and stay here, but also ensuring those new staff members are not overwhelmed.

Chief Nursing Officer Sarah Aliff reported the hospital safety committee met and they are making improvements to ensure alarms on medical equipment are heard. She further reported safety policies are being reviewed and updated. Items for regulatory and compliance are up-to-date, such as fire drills, generator checks and maintenance on hospital equipment.

An active shooter class is currently in the works, Aliff said, with 20 staff members interested in taking it. Training also continues for proper waste disposal, and ensuring equipment is in the right place so people aren't looking for it or reporting it's missing.

Chief Financial Officer Shelly Larson reported the days in accounts receivable for July were 42.76, about an increase of four days. She noted there was a conversion with the hospital's clearing house, which has impacted the submission of claims to the payers. This impacted the number of

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