

Town council approves purchase

by Zachary White

The Town Council approved the purchase of a used Caterpillar 627G scraper for the cost of \$319,995.

The scraper will be used to create new cells, areas where trash is stored in a landfill, at the local landfill. Currently, the town has two old scrapers that no longer work.

Director of Public Works Ernie Slagle said that the old scrapers have almost no use currently, as they are just too old.

Additionally, before both machines became unusable, Slagle said the town had been taking parts off of one of the machines in order to get the other ma-

chine to run.

Both of the town's old machines were built in the 1970's.

Additionally, by purchasing the new scraper, council members said the cost of creating new cells should decrease because they will not need to hire contractors to create the new cells.

The town council also discussed a possible road closure along Broadway Street where it intersects with 2nd Street.

Currently there is an emergency sewer project going on in that area and eventually construction will move to that intersection.

However, traffic may not be stopped as it is possible to keep one lane open and the other lane can be capped by a metal platform that can be placed above the construction area so as to not slow traffic too much.

There is no date yet set for construction at the Broadway and 2nd Street intersection.

Additionally, the council discussed a special meeting planned for March 24. The meeting will be between the town council and the county commissioners at the County Annex.

Council members said the two groups should be discussing the landfill and the joint law enforcement center.



Learning the art of fly tying

Dick Staiger, center, gives 4-H members Will Clark and Luke Dickey a review of what the group of young fly tiers had gone over during the previous week's lesson at their meeting. -Zachary White photo

Hospital OKs new air conditioning unit, upgrades

by Zachary White
The hospital board approved \$53,000 to be spent to replace the current chiller, air conditioning unit, at the hospital.

However, the unit will take some time to arrive and be put together. This required a quicker board decision so that there would still be time to put the new system into effect be-

fore the hot summer months.

"If we wait until July we will be without air conditioning for a few days," Robin Rolingsaid.

The board also approved a \$14,222.35 expenditure for upgrading the workforce management system, Kronos.

Included in this cost are new software and a new server for the hospital.

Some board members point-

ed out that the last time the hospital software was updated many employees had trouble making the transition.

To alleviate this, board members said they plan to implement more rigorous training early on so that employees do not have the same difficulty learning new software, this time.

Additionally, the board

approved spending between \$14,800 and \$19,800 on new hardware and maintenance to the current electronic database system they use.

Currently, the hospital is not using their storage network in the most efficient way possible, causing problems both with overusing space and poorly backing up information.

The approved cost range is based on the cost of equipment and the cost of hiring a third party company to come in and help organize the storage problems currently being faced.

The board also discussed replacing the current MRI machine in the hospital.

The reason for the push to replace the 15-year-old machine is what hospital staff

call a quality of care issue. The current machine is outdated and isn't up to par with what other hospitals in the region are using.

A new machine could cost in the area of \$1 million dollars, with the additional costs of updating the current MRI room.

A decision on a new machine should be made by the Hospital Board meeting in April.

HS County one step closer to online tax payments

by Cindy Glasson
The unusual weather we've been experiencing has created something of a mystery at the Hot Springs County Library.

Chuck Carver, head of maintenance, told the commissioners on Tuesday there were a few ceiling tiles in the library that are stained from a possible leak in the roof.

Carver said he removed the tiles and looked at the area around them, but didn't actually see a leak, so its not certain they are from a new problem with the roof.

There is another five years left on the warranty for the library roof, so Carver is going to wait until the current snow begins melting and check again.

Most of the roofs under the purvey of the county are still under warranty, however, Carver will begin checking them all this spring to create a permanent file to refer

to in the future.

The commissioners approved a home-based business permit for Brad Lofink, owner of Powboy Auto Sales north of Thermopolis.

Lofink has been selling cars in the area for some time, but is thinking about a small expansion to allow a few more cars and possibly a sales office on the land.

The permit does not change the land use of the property from agricultural, it simply allows him to sell vehicles from a certain area near the highway.

County Treasurer Julie Mortimore informed the board she had received the contract from Forte, the company that would allow county residents to make their tax payments online rather than having to come into the office.

County Attorney Jerry Williams has gone over the contract and found a few places he

would like to see changed.

Mortimore said Forte indicated they didn't have any apparent problems with Williams' suggested changes, but their attorney will look it over as well.

Using the Forte system, which is in place in most counties throughout the state, residents will be able to use their credit or debit cards to make online payments or pay their taxes using an e-check.

The system will save money and time in the treasurer's office, allowing the employees to spend more time waiting on customers at the counter than on the phone processing payments.

County Planner Bo Bowman has been working on amendments to the current county planning regulations and hopes to have a rough draft of the updates to the commissioners in the next couple of months.

Before any of the changes are made, Bowman will hold public meetings to get the public's input on the revisions to the plan.

Once the meetings are concluded, Bowman will bring the finished product to the commissioners for their approval.

The entire process could take as much as six months to complete, but it will be the first revisions to the land use plan in many years.

GDA Engineers in Cody updated the commissioners on the new county airport during the meeting.

They have been coordinating with the contractor for Phase III and Phase IV and it looks like construction will commence again the end of March or the first part of April.

Plans for a terminal building are being drawn up by GDA with the hopes the building can go to bid the first part of April.