

**NOTICE OF SALE**

There is a 2003 For Escape (White), VIN# 1FMYU02173KD42580 that will be sold at Sheriff's public auction on the front steps of the Hot Springs County Courthouse on Tuesday, May 30, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. This sale is to satisfy abandoned vehicle costs against Christian Ray Vallejo on the above listed vehicle by Specialty Towing in the amount of \$1,000.00.

Pub. May 18 & 25, 2023 No. 1349

**NOTICE OF FINAL PAYMENT**

Pursuant to Section 16-6-116 of the Wyoming Statutes, latest revision, Notice is hereby given that Town of Thermopolis, Wyoming has been advised that the work on the THERMOPOLIS—2021 TREATED WATER REHABILITATION PROJECT has been completed according to the plans and specifications and rules set forth in the Contract between the Town of Thermopolis, Wyoming the Owner, and High Country Construction, Inc., the Contractor, and said Contractor is entitled to final settlement therefore. All persons, firms or corporations who have any claims for work done or equipment/materials furnished on said work are hereby notified that final payment will be made to said Contractor in accordance with the terms of the Contract after the 41st day (6-21-23) following the first publication of this Notice. This Notice does not relieve the Contractor and the sureties on their bond from any claims for work or labor done or materials or supplies furnished in the execution of the Contract.

/s/ Town of Thermopolis

Pub. May 11, 18 & 25, 2023 No. 1347

STATE OF ) OFFICE OF THE  
WYOMING ) BOARD OF  
OF ) COUNTY  
COUNTY OF ) COMMISSIONERS  
HOT SPRINGS ) May 2, 2023

The Hot Springs Board of County Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, May 2, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. in the Public Meeting Room at the Government Annex Building. Present were Commissioners Tom Ryan, Phillip Scheel, and Paul Galovich. Also present were County Clerk Becky Kersten, County Attorney Jill Logan, and Administrative Assistant to the Commissioners Connie Guntly. Chairman Ryan led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Agenda** – The Commissioners approved the agenda with the addition of Item 10 Regular Business: Sheriff – Approval of Vehicle Request; and Item 11 Regular Business: Commissioners – Executive Session, Personnel/Possible Litigation.

**Approval of Minutes** – The Commissioners approved the minutes as presented.

**GIS Update** – Report on the GIS update. Maddie and Brian were in Thermopolis in April for a work session to go over the GIS Open Data and provide a tutorial to the Commissioners. Ms. Ross obtained the 2022 septic permits from County Planner Bowman; scanned, processed and uploaded the 2022 septic file to the cloud storage. The draft 2023-24 scope of work was delivered to County for review. Anticipated work includes adding septic permit information in to the GIS database, as well as land use changes, and county road easements and right of way documents. Chairman Ryan asked Brian Clarkson to explain the budget amount increase for 23-24. Mr. Clarkson stated after looking at all the increased services that includes working with the Sheriff's Office and other departments such as the Assessor's Office, Ardurra thought it would be best to increase the amount from \$80,000 to \$90,000 to cover the work needed.

**Road and Bridge Monthly Report** – Road and Bridge crew have been implementing the GIS reporting on the tablets with the work they have been doing, it has been a nice feature to be able to log the road issues and create reports from the data. In April the Road and Bridge crew had been busy fixing run off damage around the county. A pipe was replaced on East Sunnyside Rd that had washed out, once it is settled they will come back in and patch the road. The equipment ordered for the Communications grant is delayed due to Motorola not getting the parts needed. Mr. Rankin had been in contact with Wilson Brothers for slip lining pipes, they came to look at the pipes but had not returned with quotes. Mr. Rankin also presented a Right of Way permit for Lucerne Water and Sewer District to a residence. The Commissioners approved the Right of Way permit with all fees paid.

**FBO Monthly Update** – There were 192 total recorded operations. The fuel sales included 1,382.67 gallons of Avgas and 2,424.19 gallons of jet fuel. A flight instructor out of Cody has been coming to the Airport to practice touch and goes. WYDOT Aeronautics Commission will be in Thermopolis touring the airport on May 16th at 4:00pm for about 45 minutes. It will be a good time to discuss current projects and future projects. The Commissioners changed the May 16th Commissioners meeting time to 2:00 p.m.

**Maintenance Monthly Report** – The monitoring system for the generator for the Public Health building is installed and Dean Peranteaux will finish the connection; work is almost complete for the gas regulator valves for the Public Health generator. The crew finished up equipment maintenance to start mowing. Mr. Dorman

inquired about the generator for the Law Enforcement Center, he thinks it has been ordered, however cannot find the documentation. Commissioner Scheel suggested Mr. Dorman call Jadeco and TW Enterprises to check on shipping status. Mr. Dorman asked if there were any new projects that need to be worked on. The air conditioning is done for the IT room. The Commissioners mentioned the campus security project that Mr. Dorman is already involved, but no new projects at this moment.

**Public Health / Prevention Update** – Prevention Coordinator Jen Cheney reported a loss team was created to assist people who had lost someone to suicide. The team is formed and they are working on getting proper training. Ms. Cheney reported a change has been made to the Tips Training (alcohol beverage server training); trainings were performed in person, but now are offered online with vouchers included. Ms. Cheney is collaborating with the high school 9th grade health teacher in the drug unit; and working with the superintendent to bring in a speaker for Trauma services for the students, teachers and community members. Ms. McPhie reported the Public Health Response Coordinator returned from a preparedness summit in Georgia. May 11th is the end of the Public Health Emergency for COVID, for funding purposes.

**Youth Alternative Monthly Report** – Report of 16 youths in the program and 4 may be released as soon as tomorrow. Testing has been happening at the Learning Center and in the last 2 weeks an 18-year-old and 16-year-old graduated. There are 5 areas the kids are tested in; this can take hours to complete, and take up to 3 trips to Riverton. Ms. Rice stated the Help Center program is transitioning to the Hope Agency Building, and the Learning Center will remain at Common Ground. The Commissioners asked Ms. Rice if there was a way to have some of the tests here instead of driving to Riverton. Ms. Rice stated they do have a secure testing space now and started administering the lower level test here; there needs to be an additional person to separate duties and the College has funding for a part time instructor and will send one to Hot Springs County. The College may be able to provide other types of support such as technology as well.

**Planner Monthly Report** – Planner reported the NRPC meets next week, May 10th at 5:30 p.m. The LUPC meets on the 17th with a land use change on the Agenda, and may come to the Commissioners in June. Road construction will start on the two subdivisions (Shaffer and Red Rim Ranch). Chairman Ryan asked if Mr. Rankin will be involved with the inspection of the roads for the subdivisions once they are complete and Mr. Bowman confirmed he will. Former Planner Lee Campbell came into the Planners Office May 1st to discuss the presentation BLM had on April 18th regarding BLM projects and the mention of the islands in the river. Mr. Bowman has a problem with the Blue River Trail project and the islands; if the Commissioners would like, Mr. Bowman can look into the islands, as some land owners had obtained titles to the island by going through District Court. Chairman Ryan stated a work session can be held this summer if needed.

**Insurance Review** – Presentation from HUB Insurance consultant of the Aggregate Report for the County's health insurance plan regarding the last two years and what items will look like moving forward. After reviewing the loss ratio and cost comparison the Commissioners made the following motions: The Commissioners renewed with Companion/Summit RE. The Commissioners renewed with Allegiance as the third party administrator. The Commissioners renewed with Wyoming Financial Insurance – HUB's Brad Johnson and Melissa Bilby as consultants with an increase from \$6,500 to \$7,000 a year.

**Insurance Change of Services** – Presentation on the end of COVID National Emergency health insurance plan considerations. This includes COVID testing, OTC Tests, and COVID vaccines. The Commissioners approved the recommendation of paying COVID testing like any other diagnostic, excluding OTC tests from coverage, and paying for COVID vaccines the same as other vaccines.

County Clerk Kersten asked who would be the health insurance contact for the County, the Commissioners approved for Clerk Kersten to be the contact and sign applicable health insurance items.

**Approval of Vehicle Request** – Presentation for a vehicle request, 2023 Ram 1500 Classic Special Service Vehicle 4x4. Sheriff Kraushaar stated he plans on trading in the 2014 Ram truck to offset the price. The funds for the vehicle will be budgeted in 23-24 Fiscal Year budget. The fees for the 2023 Ram truck should be similar to the 2022 truck that is already ordered. The Commissioners agreed to allow the 2023 truck in the upcoming 23-24 budget.

**Executive Session (Personnel/Litigation)** – Commissioner Scheel moved to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel/possible litigation item at 11:21 a.m. Present for the Executive Session were Commissioners Tom Ryan, Phillip Scheel, and Paul Galovich, as well as County Clerk Becky Kersten, County Attorney Jill Logan, and Administrative Assistant to the Commissioners Connie Guntly. The Commissioners returned to regular session at 11:36 a.m. No action was taken during or as a result of the Executive Session.

**Other Business** – 1) **Approval of Request for Information for Old Airport Use** – Jackie Dorothy created a Request for Infor-

mation (RFI) for the former airport, which can lead to creating a Request for Proposals. The Commissioners approved the RFI. 2) **Approval of Modification to Agreement with USDA, Forest Service Shoshone National Forest** – The Commissioners approved the USDA, Forest Service Shoshone National Forest Agreement in the amount of \$3,500. 3) **Approval of 2023 Wildland Fire Management Annual Operating Plan** – The Commissioners approved the annual operating plan. 4) **Approval of RFR #9 – Bighorn Basin Nature Discover Center TAP Grant** – The Commissioners approved RFR #9 in the amount of \$9,715.11 (\$7,772.09 reimbursed by WYDOT; \$1,943.02 reimbursed by BHBND). 5) **Approval of RFR #10 – Black Mountain Road Project** – The Commissioners approved RFR #10 in the amount of \$35,776.42 (\$5,366.46 paid by County; \$30,409.96 paid by WYDOT). 6) **Approval of Notice of Award and Concurrence Letter for Selected Contractor for HSG Pavement Project** – Chairman Ryan reported Ardurra released a bid request for the seal coat project at the airport, project will total \$145,196.55 paid for by WYDOT Aeronautics. The Notice of Award will be sent to American Road Maintenance. The Commissioners approved the notice of award and concurrence letter. 7) **Approval of Geotechnical Engineering for BHBND TAP Grant** – Commissioner Scheel reported the planning phase is complete and the remaining funds available through the TAP grant will support the geotechnical engineering for the construction phase of the path ways. The Commissioners approved the letter from Ardurra for the geotechnical investigation.

**Correspondence** – 1) **County Planner Letter for Land Use Change Notification**; 2) **Operator Outreach for Wind River Bighorn Basin District Agenda** – May 3, 2023; 3) **HSC Rural Water Joint Powers Board Minutes** – March 16, 2023; 4) **HSC Museum Board Minutes** – February and March 2023; 5) **Chamber of Commerce Newsletter** – March 2023 (Basket)

The Commissioners reviewed the forgoing correspondence. No further action was required.

**Approve Bills** – The following bills were submitted for approval. Payroll for April - \$192,744.89

**BILLS – April 2023**

HANSON'S FIRE EQUIPMENT 26.91 / HOT SPRINGS VETERINARY CLINIC 12.00 / HASCO INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY 322.82 / HOT SPRINGS CO. CEMETERY DISTRICT 150.00 / HOT SPRINGS COUNTY LIBRARY 16,250.00 / WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE 100.00 / VERNON W. MILLER, M.D., PC 1,300.00 / ENTERPRISES TECHNOLOGY SERVICES 14.30 / ALLEGIANCE BENEFIT PLAN MANGT, INC. 132,014.58 / ANITA WEISBECK 37.34 / ARMACOST TRANE SERVICE COMPANY 1,467.85 / CHARTER COMMUNICATIONS 139.98 / AXIS FORENSIC TOXICOLOGY 282.00 / BARTON STAM 215.89 / BIG HORN WATER 116.13 / LONG BUILDING TECHNOLOGIES, INC. 2,935.00 / AMERITAS LIFE INSURANCE CORP, 350.90 / BROWN'S WESTERN APP 664.99 / BUDD-FALEN LAW OFFICES, LLC 5,177.98 / CARDINAL HEALTH 110, LLC 892.83 / CITY SERVICE VALCON 3,409.84 / CLIFF MANNING 500.00 / RED ROCK FAMILY PRACTICE, PC 1,000.00 / CNA SURETY DIRECT BILL 85.00 / THERMOPOLIS HARDWARE 257.01 / COLONIAL SUPPLEMENTAL INS. 18.70 / VERIZON WIRELESS 49.78 / VERIZON WIRELESS 37.01 / VERIZON WIRELESS 122.25 / VERIZON WIRELESS 4,301.94 / CR LOCK AND SAFE 265.00 / DAWNNETTE M. PEIL 22.14 / PINNACLE BANK OF THERMOPOLIS 41,119.55 / PINNACLE BANK 185.40 / US. FOODS 5,552.78 / FRANDSON SAFETY INC. 28.00 / GOTTSCHKE THERAPY REHAB WELLNESS 110.00 / HIGH PLAINS POWER 493.43 / HONNEN EQUIPMENT CO. 434.58 / HOT SPRINGS COUNTY SCHOOL DIST. #15, 176.01 / HOT SPRINGS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT 400.00 / HOT SPRINGS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE 180.00 / HOT SPRINGS COUNTY TREASURER 1,118.11 / HOT SPRINGS COUNTY HEALTH INS ACCT 56,996.59 / HOT SPRINGS CO. SCHOOL DIST #1 5,592.60 / THERMOPOLIS INDEPENDENT RECORD 2,848.95 / JADECO, INC. 4,512.20 / JENNIFER CHENEY 30.00 / JULIA'S RENTAL SALES & SERVICE INC. 180.00 / KELLER LAW FIRM, PC 100.00 / KENNEDY ACE HARDWARE 35.94 / KEN GARFF VALLEY CJDR FIAT 23,686.00 / KRISTINA D. MCNEFF 8.47 / KRISTEN J. SCHLATTMANN 350.00 / LASERS EDGE LLC 100.00 / LEGEND ROCK MEDIA PRODUCTIONS, LLC 412.50 / MACK'S MARKET, INC. 147.36 / HIGH COUNTRY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH 5,000.00 / NAPA MOTOR SUPPLY, INC. 763.93 / NIELSEN OIL CO., INC. 462.00 / NRS 3,559.48 / ONE STOP REPAIR & SERVICE CENTER 359.96 / O'REILLY AUTO PARTS 390.11 / OFFICE SHOP INC. 897.30 / OWL CREEK AVIATION, LLC 7,524.24 / OWL CREEK AVIATION, LLC 951.74 / ROCKY MOUNTAIN POWER 3,581.85 / PERFORMANCE AUTO & GLASS 762.65 / PINNACLE BANK OF THERMOPOLIS 3,529.40 / PINNACLE BANK OF THERMOPOLIS 3,843.10 / POSTMASTER 881.40 / CENTURY LINK 670.34 / RIVERTON TIRE AND OIL 99.95 / RANGE 3,044.91 / SADY MOUNTS 138.50 / SERLKAY 128.94 / SKAGGS COMPANIES, INC. 2,342.92 / STAPLES ADVANTAGE 103.16 / STATE OF MONTANA 1,800.00 / THE STANDARD INS. CO. 1,620.17 / STAR PLUNGED 221.50 / STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE 500.00 / STEVE'S PLUMBING & HEATING, INC. 1,276.88 /

TUMBLEWEED PROPANE 300.00 / TAC 1 SYSTEMS 59.00 / TEPEE POOLS 216.00 / T-O ENGINEERS, INC. 4,775.58 / T-O ENGINEERS 9,715.11 / TOWN OF THERMOPOLIS 1,370.75 / TRAVELING COMPUTERS, INC. 9,893.86 / TRACTOR & EQUIPMENT CO. 167.53 / TRI COUNTY TELEPHONE ASSOC. INC 301.39 / TRICIA MCPHIE 40.00 / NORCO, INC. 2,168.09 / VERIZON WIRELESS 95.61 / VERIZON 30.31 / VERIZON WIRELESS 50.48 / VICK-LUND PHARMACY 53.89 / PINNACLE BANK (VISA-CARD TWO) 225.00 / PINNACLE BANK (VISA CARD THREE) 207.76 / PINNACLE BANK (VISA CARD FOUR) 355.00 / PINNACLE BANK (VISA CARD SIX) 1,443.77 / PINNACLE BANK (VISA CARD SEVEN) 265.47 / PINNACLE BANK (VISA CARD EIGHT) 3,104.90 / PINNACLE BANK (VISA CARD NINE) 4,000.00 / PINNACLE BANK (VISA CARD 10) 154.10 / PINNACLE BANK (VISA CARD 1-SHERIFF) 477.39 / PINNACLE BANK (VISA CARD 2-SHERIFF) 2,114.76 / PINNACLE BANK (VISA CARD 3-SHERIFF) 898.65 / PINNACLE BANK (VISA CARD 4-SHERIFF) 1,265.91 / WALK-N-ROLL 712.86 / WASHAKIE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH 30.00 / WEDGWOOD & COMPANY LLC 190.00 / WESTERN STATES FIRE PROTECTION CO. 300.00 / THOMSON REUTERS - WEST 797.00 / WILLIAM F. GORDON 189.90 / WYOMING DEPT. OF WORKFORCE SERVICES 6,840.87 / GREAT-WEST TRUST COMPANY, LLC 4,245.00 / WYDOT-FINANCIAL SERVICES 2,768.38 / WYOMING GAS 2,787.00 / WYONET INC. 312.95 / WYO RETIREMENT SYSTEM 33,729.14 / 036-NCPERS GROUP LIFE INS. 304.00 / WYOMING RETIREMENT SYSTEM 337.50 / R&A SAFETY LLC 275.42 / WYOMING WASTE SERVICES - RIVERTON 76.38 / YOUTH ALTERNATIVES 200.00

**Adjourn** – The meeting was adjourned at 12:29 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Hot Springs County Board of Commissioners will be held on June 6, 2023 at 9:00 a.m., at the Hot Springs County Annex building, 117 N. 4th St. Thermopolis. The public is invited to attend in person. To be placed on the Agenda please email Connie Guntly, Administrative Assistant to the Board of County Commissioners at connie.guntly@hscounty.com. Per Wyoming Statute section 18-3-516 (f), County information can be obtained at the County website <https://hscounty.com/> or by requesting a Public Records form from the County Clerk's office.

Attest

Thomas J. Ryan, Chairman  
Becky Kersten, County Clerk

Pub. May 25, 2023 No. 1351

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that a Special Public Meeting regarding the budget for Fiscal Years 22-23 and 23-24, and a review of the membership for the **Hot Springs County Rural Water Joint Powers Board** will be held on **June 1, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.** in the Meeting Room at the Government Annex building located at 117 N. 4th Street, Thermopolis, Wyoming. Any questions regarding this meeting should be directed to Connie Guntly, County Commissioners Administrative Assistant, 307-864-8040.

Pub. May 25, 2023 No. 1352

STATE OF ) IN THE  
WYOMING ) DISTRICT COURT  
) ss.

COUNTY OF ) FIFTH JUDICIAL  
HOT SPRINGS ) DISTRICT  
FILE NO. 2141

IN THE MATTER )  
OF THE OWL )  
CREEK IRRIGATION )  
DISTRICT )

**OWL CREEK IRRIGATION DISTRICT ORDER**

The Commissioners of the Owl Creek Irrigation District having filed with the Clerk of the District Court of Hot Springs County, Wyoming, their REPORT AND PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2024 for said District, and therein itemizing money to be raised by assessment against lands comprising said District in the amount of \$2,566,357.00, which is by assessment of \$19.63 per acre against 4,415.07 acres of land in the Lower Area or Lucerne and Dempsey Areas of said District and \$4.12 per acre against 6,059.33 acres of land, more or less, comprising what is commonly known as the Middle Area for said District; and \$4.12 per acre against 3,226.84 acres of land, more or less, comprising what is commonly known as the Upper Area of said District, together with income from other sources for a total proposed budget of \$2,566,357.00 as revenue, available for operations and all for the purpose of operation and maintenance of existing facilities, and to meet and pay expenses heretofore incurred and expenses that will hereafter be incurred, and to meet possible delinquencies; and it is, therefore, ORDERED that on the 2nd day of June





photo by Jurri Schenck

## Mental health awareness

Hot Springs County Prevention Coalition, along with the help of the high school group Sources of Strength, held its “Mental Health Matters: Let’s Taco Bout It” event at Bicentennial Park on Monday. Clover Cheney, right, hands out some stickers to Cody Rossler, 4, and his mother Anna.

# Mental health awareness month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. It is a time to spread awareness about the signs and symptoms of living with a mental health challenge, educate the public to cultivate a sense of understanding and acceptance, and provide support throughout our community.

Mental health is just as important as our physical, emotional, and spiritual health. We must reduce the stigma associated with the term mental health. A visit to a counselor for some emotional support should be seen as just as important as an annual visit for a physical. Check in with yourself on your mental health and overall well-being.

Even though May is Mental Health Awareness Month, it is important to check in with yourself, and your loved ones, often and make your mental health a priority every day, 365 days a year.

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. This can include how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices in life. Everyone’s journey with mental health is unique and different.

A person’s mental health can change over time depending on many factors, such as stress, physical health conditions, family or relationship conflicts, work or social demands, and finances.

It is normal to experience times when you feel down, stressed, afraid, or anxious. Those feelings will usually pass, but occasionally they can persist and become more serious.

Sometimes, people can feel alone and uncomfortable sharing about their mental health challenges, but it is important to remember that mental health challenges can happen to anyone. You are not alone. There is hope and there is help.

The healthy habits below can play a role in your mental and emotional health:

Strive for a good night’s sleep. Sleep is essential for overall health. It’s the time when your body and mind recharge and repair.

Limit screen time. Blue light from screens (such as on phones, TVs and tablets) can make it harder to fall asleep. But what you’re watching matters, too. Too many violent or upsetting TV shows, the news, etc. can weigh on mental health. Looking at social media can lead to worry, depression and loneliness. Taking a break from media can sometimes help you reset. Make time for mindfulness. Medita-

tion, muscle relaxation and breathing exercises all work very well. Activities like yoga and tai chi are good examples of these. You might also try keeping a journal. Jot down what you’re doing, how you’re feeling and what you’re grateful for. Everyone is unique, so try different things until you find something you enjoy.

Nurture the meaningful relationships in your life. Close, quality, relationships are good for a happy, healthy life. If you are looking to make new friends, seek local community events or volunteer opportunities to meet people with similar interests.

Take time to laugh. Hang out with friends, watch a comedy, or do an activity that brings you joy. Laughter can help reduce anxiety. Smiling can help lower your heart rate and promote calm feelings.

Work on your strengths. Build self-confidence by doing something that you enjoy and are good at.

Do your best to make healthy choices. Eat healthy and regular meals, strive to get regular exercise, exercise good sleep hygiene practices, practice forgiveness, and build and nurture healthy relationships in your life.

The good news is that you don’t have to take a whole “mental health day” or even an hour to recharge. Taking bite-size stress breaks (5 to 10 minutes at a time) each day can help maintain or improve mental health.

It takes bravery, strength, and persistence to reach out for help. There is hope and there is help. Recovery means different things to different individuals, but it is always possible. Seek ways to raise awareness, this month and every month, to help build a strong and supportive community.

Need to talk or get immediate help in a crisis? Help is available. If you or a loved one need assistance, please reach out to:

The Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call, text, or chat 988

Veterans Crisis Line: call 988, then press \*1\*

Crisis Text Line: Text “SUPPORT” TO 741741

The Trevor Project (LGBTQ+) 866-488-7386

Trans Lifeline: 877-565-8860

Safe Haven (Violence and Crisis Prevention) 307-864-HOPE (4673)

Your healthcare professional, faith-based leader, school counselor, or trusted friend or call 911.

# NW BOCES offers update on status of program to school board

by Kirk Boxleitner  
kboxleitner@  
masoncounty.com

Carolyn Conner, administrative director of the Northeast Wyoming Board of Cooperative Educational Services based in Thermopolis, addressed the Hot Springs County School District Board of Directors on May 18 to provide an update on NW BOCES, which marks 53 years this year.

“We provide a safe and trusting environment for our children,” Conner said, adding that NW BOCES serves kindergarten through eighth-grade students. “When the youth come to us, they’re usually angry, impulsive and reactionary. They have more issues than can be taken care of in a school district or a foster home.”

In response, NW BOCES provides each child with an individualized education plan, which also allows them to learn social and life skills, while the program works to reintegrate them into their homes.

“But we don’t just stay in our little institution,” Conner said. “We get out into the community.”

Conner explained that NW BOCES was created to promote learning and growth among emotionally disturbed children, by meeting their behavioral and academic needs alike.

“They have suffered from trauma, abuse and mental health issues, and other intensive treatments have not been successful,” Conner said.

NW BOCES offers daily and residential programs for students from not only Thermopolis, but also Worland and Shoshoni, although Conner admits “anything further than that is difficult” for the program to provide transportation, even though it serves the entire state of Wyoming.

Conner elaborated that the program conducts “a lot of assessments,” and provides recreational therapy,

“so kids can learn some leisure skills, and have things to do when they get home, to hopefully keep them out of trouble.”

Aside from “unstable funding,” staffing remains a pressing concern for NW BOCES, as Conner credited 24-hour supervision with helping to address sleep issues during night shifts, and praised both the “excellent” psychiatric nurse practitioner and “our psychologist (who) comes from Winchester” with conducting evaluations.

Conner pointed out that “we never know when we might get a call, or two calls,” which will result in NW BOCES receiving more students.

According to Conner NW BOCES imparts self-control to young people who have been diagnosed with multiple disorders and are “terribly traumatized,” and she reported the program has experienced “great success with the autism spectrum,” even as she acknowledged that “those kids need some specialized care.”

Conner noted that NW BOCES uses positive reinforcements precisely because so many students arrive “really scared,” because “they’re known as bad kids, and are used to getting in trouble.”

Students start with close supervision, which gradually decreases over time, because as Conner observed, “These kids have been unsafe, and we want to make sure, before we take them out into the community, that they can be safe.”

Conner deemed community activities as “very important for our program,” given NW BOCES students’ degree of participation in regular school district activities, and in spite of some of those students coping with significant cognitive issues, there was “a lot of academic achievement this year.”

Indeed, since 1998, 83% of the students who have completed the program “did

not have to go to any future residential treatment facility for at least three years,” Conner said.

NW BOCES also works extensively with the students’ parents, a number of whom Conner reported have told her, “I learned as much as my child did.”

NW BOCES staff, who currently number around 40, are required to be certified, just like school district staff, while parents are kept in the loop through weekly Zoom calls that started during COVID.

Not only does NW BOCES gradually reintegrate the students with their school districts, but Conner credited 10 of the program’s 18 member school districts with contributing meal funds, just as she singled out the Hot Springs County School District for allowing the program to buy fuel “at a lower cost (than) the local pumps,” as well as buy breakfast and lunch from the district.

Conner cited the parent of a former student, who stopped by NW BOCES to report that he’s now graduating from high school, seventh in his class “at a school district that’s larger than this one.”

He was a student of the month a few months ago, and was described as on task, listening well and turning his assignments in on time, which are criteria on the NW BOCES daily behavior rating score.

“He’ll be going to college for computer science,” Conner said.

When asked how long students tend to stay at NW BOCES, Conner placed the range between “a little less than a year” to “about 16 months” for students who “have more problems,” and whose issues are “more severe.”

Conner offered the caveat that, “after they stay nine months, sometimes they get too used to us and self-sabotage, because they know nobody’s going to hurt them.”

# We’re All Ears

Questions?  
Comments?  
Story Ideas?

Let us know how we’re doing.

Your opinion is something we always want to hear. Call or contact us online at [www.thermopir.com](http://www.thermopir.com)



431 Broadway • P.O. Box 31  
Thermopolis, WY 82443  
[news@thermopir.com](mailto:news@thermopir.com)  
**307-864-2328**



# Public notices

Continued from Page 10

2023, at the hour of 9:00 a.m., before the District Court in the Courtroom of the above-entitled Court at Thermopolis, Wyoming, or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, is hereby fixed as the time and place for an examination of said REPORT AND PROPOSED BUDGET, and for the hearing of any objections thereto, and for fixing and determining the actual amount to be raised by assessment against lands within said District for the budget year July 2023 through June 2024, and it is furthermore

ORDERED that a copy of this Order be published at least twice in the Thermopolis Independent Record prior to said Hearing. Interested parties may appear by TEAMS link obtained from the District Court Clerk, or phone by calling (307) 316-5574 and, when prompted entering 932 465 778#.

DONE AND ORDERED this 19th day of May 2023.

/s/ Bobbi Overfield  
Bobbi Overfield  
District Court Judge

Pub. May 25 & June 1, 2023 No. 1353

**COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS**  
The Thermopolis Town Council met in

regular session on May 16, 2023, at 7 pm at Town Hall. Present were Mayor Adam Estenson, Council members Bill Malloy, John Dorman Sr., Rachel Hughes and Dusty Lewis. Also, present were Mayor/Codes Administrative Assistant Jim Jeunehomme, Clerk/Treasurer Tracey Van Heule, Police Chief Pat Cornwell, Town Attorney Marshall Keller and Town Engineer Anthony Barnett.

**AGENDA:** Following the pledge of allegiance, Malloy made a motion, seconded by Dorman and carried to approve the agenda as written.

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT:** Malloy made a motion, seconded by Hughes and carried to approve the financial statement for April 2023.

**FIRST DRAFT OF THE 2022-23 BUDGET:** Malloy made a motion, seconded by Lewis and carried to approve the first reading of the budget.

**PUBLIC HEARING: HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT: ART STUDIO – 141 CEDAR RIDGE:** At 7:03 pm a public hearing was opened for comments on a home occupation permit for an art studio. No public comment was given, and the hearing was closed at 7:04 pm. Jeunehomme noted the application met all the qualifications for a home occupation permit. Malloy made a motion, seconded by Dorman and carried to approve the permit.

**PUBLIC HEARING: FENCE HEIGHT AND RIGHT-OF-WAY VARIANCE REQUESTS: 306 N. 5TH STREET:** Jeunehomme noted the property owner would like a 5 ft. wrought iron fence on the corner lot, that extends into the town right-of-way. The public hearing was opened at 7:06 pm, no comments were made. The hearing closed at 7:07 pm. Administration did not recommend approval due to the height (5 ft vs 4 ft) and material variance (wrought iron vs chain link) which would decrease visibility, as the property is on a corner, two blocks from the school. Malloy made a motion and Dorman seconded to deny the variance for height and deny use of the right of way. Discussion ensued on the right of way. Voting aye were Estenson, Malloy and Dorman. Voting no were Hughes and Lewis, motion carried.

**FENCE PERMIT: 604 N. 6TH STREET – RIGHT-OF-WAY REQUEST:** Jeunehomme noted the fence had already been built, the property owner was unaware he needed a fence permit. The 4 ft. chain link fence meets the right-of-way parameters, it does not interfere with the corner and ends at the side of the house. Lewis made a motion to approve the right-of-way permit and Malloy seconded the motion. Voting aye were Estenson, Malloy, Dorman and Lewis. Hughes voted no. Motion carried.

**OATH OF OFFICE:** Mayor Adam Esten-

son administered the oath of office to Gualupe “Koa” Rodriguez, a new police officer.

**TOWN ENGINEER: ANTHONY BARNETT:** Barnett reviewed a meeting with the DEQ to extend the landfill permit for two years. Dorman made a motion, seconded by Malloy and carried to approve the mayor’s signature on the proposed request.

**ADMINISTRATION: JOINT POWERS BOARD WATER APPLICATION:** Estenson noted the state approved phase 1 of a Level 2 study. The study will compare surface water sources and well sources for a regional water system. It was noted the State of Wyoming would help build a surface water plant if that is deemed to be the best option for regional use, WWDC mainly funds well sources.

**MAYOR & COUNCIL:** Malloy asked the mayor and council to review the WAM resolutions before the June meeting. At 7:33 Lewis made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Dorman and carried. The next Council meeting is June 6, 2023, at 7pm.

ATTEST:

Tracey Van Heule,  
Clerk/Treasurer

Adam R. Estenson,  
Mayor

Pub. May 25, 2023

No. 1354