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Thermopolis
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Violated unwritten policy on using local vendors

Commissioners apologize to Rowe

by Cindy Glasson

Vendors, grants, projects and appointments kept the Hot Springs County commissioners busy at their meeting Tuesday.

"We violated our unwritten policy on using local vendors," commission chairman Brad Basse said in a public apology to Dan Rowe of D&D Machine in Thermopolis regarding the decision to use P&S Machine of Worland to repair the county airport snow plow.

Rowe sent letters to the commissioners expressing concern over going out of town when local firms can do the job just as well.

After apologies from each of the commissioners, Rowe said, "I am here. I have been here and done airport work for 20 years. I see no reason why that can't continue."

SEVERAL requests have been submitted to the commissioners for funding through

the block grant projects. Just over \$1.6 million will be split with the towns, county entities and districts this year.

A work session will be held April 17 in the district court room at 9 a.m. to discuss the various options the county has before a joint meeting with the other block grant participants.

PLAN ONE Architects presented three-dimensional renderings of the Hot Springs County annex building along with samples of stone and brick.

The architects will use mock-up walls using the different stones and bricks to show to the commissioners, probably at a May meeting.

THE COLD mix proposals for the summer road work should be completed by Friday, according to Harry Hughes of Owl

Creek Engineering. The recent weather and road closures kept much work from being accomplished.

Hughes told the commissioners about problems encountered when trying to fill the hole where the Odd Fellows building was demolished.

When Canyon Concrete workers started to backfill the hole, they found the ground was unstable.

Another 190 cubic yards of asphalt, concrete, sewer pipe and debris had to be removed from the hole. Hughes said the original building had been built on top of all of this, which probably accounted for the problems with the basement floor in the hall.

MARGARET Stansill was appointed to the hospital board to replace Brian Yarrington, who resigned.

County library nears \$160,000 mark

by Jonathan Green

The Hot Springs County Library Foundation is nearing another fund-raising milestone that will see \$30,000 added to the group's coffers.

A five-year challenge funded by the Legislature offers libraries nearly \$300,000 each when a 25% local match is raised.

Library director Chrissy

Bendlin said she is both surprised and happy with current progress.

Over \$37,000 has been raised locally. The state pays matches quarterly and in \$10,000/\$30,000 increments, so the library here will be eligible for another \$30,000 when local contributions cross the \$40,000 mark.

If the library raises the

maximum amount (just under \$100,000) and earns the entire match, the state will also contribute a \$100,000 bonus payment.

That would put the permanent endowment just shy of \$500,000 by the end of 2013.

Bendlin said donations were coming in from some unexpected quarters. She credited Paul Heimer, executive director of the

Albany County Public Library Foundation, for many of the contributions she had not anticipated. Heimer has been writing grants for libraries statewide.

The funds raised during the challenge program must be invested, but the interest earned by those funds may be spent any way that the library board wishes.

Chickens to return to Thermopolis?

by Jonathan Green

The Thermopolis Town Council dispatched a full agenda of routine business Tuesday evening and agreed to take under advisement a resident's request ordinance be amended to allow chickens to be kept in town limits.

Kim Schmidt and her son, River, asked the council to reconsider a long-standing ordinance against keeping chickens in town. Currently no animals other than "dogs, cats or household pets" can be kept in town, although "household pets" are not further identified.

Chickens are specifically prohibited. The livestock ordinances were ratified in 1955-56.

Schmidt read a statement indicating chickens may be kept in major cities including Los Angeles, Portland and Seattle.

"There should be no reason we should not be able to keep chickens," she said.

Citing a "very likely" food shortage, she described chickens as "clean, modest, non-threatening" animals, which help fertilize the ground.

She said dogs, which are allowed in town so long as they are licensed, are already a bigger issue than chickens have the potential to become.

"Don't get me wrong; I love dogs," she said, adding she owns one.

Schmidt said she is not asking to include roosters, which have a tendency to create disturbing noise in the early morning.

The council agreed to take the issue under advisement, but mayor Bill Malloy said it would take some time to study the idea.

Liquor license

The council also voted to grant Lil Wrangler's request for a bar and grill liquor license contingent upon the restaurant owners surrendering their current restaurant license and paying the difference in fees, about \$600.

Each municipality is limited to one bar and grill license, which allows a bar area. No representative from the restaurant attended the meeting, so it was unclear what is planned in the way of a bar.

Grant funds list

Ahead of a joint meeting with other governmental agencies in the county, the council moved to approve a prioritization of State Loan and Investment Board funding requests.

About \$1.6 million is available to the county from the state funds, and the council will need to reconcile town priorities with others in the county.

The council voted to prioritize the four projects, in descending order:

- \$130,000 for 20 blocks of lining old sewer main lines

- \$200,000 for replacement of water main along Clark Street

- \$500,000 for 8-10 blocks of sewer replacement

- \$200,000 for replacement of the water main near 12th and Clark streets.

The first two projects are ready to begin, engineer Heath Overfield said, while the second two still need final design and preparation work.

The council tentatively agreed to hold a joint work session with other entities in the county prior to discuss SLIB grant funding.

Other business

The council also:

- Adopted a resolution to enable the town to seek stimulus funding for additional sewer work

- Granted a right of way waiver for a decorative fence to Nick Dowdy, 1004 Clark

- Agreed with town clerk-treasurer Tracey Van Heule's suggestion to consolidate three checking accounts, the sidewalk assessment, Nicholson trust and revolving loan into a single money market account to increase interest earnings

- Approved Cindy Stevens' request for Shorty's Liquor for several 24-hour catering permits

- Accepted a plat of the El Rancho Motel property.



Ciley Andreen drops a student's egg at the Lights On Great Egg Drop Monday, to see if it would survive.

Schedule of services for Easter

The schedule for Easter services and programs includes:

• Church of Christ, 701 Richards. Bible study 10 a.m., Sunday services 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.

• Church of God of Prophecy, 335 Amoretti, Sunday service 11 a.m., lunch to follow.

• Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 625 S. Tenth St. Sunday service, 9 a.m.

• Community Federated Church, 244 N. Sixth. Maundy Thursday, communion 7 p.m. Good Friday, "A Walk to the Cross," 7 p.m. Easter drama "Settled at the Cross" Sunday 8 and 10:30 a.m.

• First Baptist Church, 310 S. Sixth St. Sunday breakfast 8 a.m., Sunday School 9:45, Easter Cantata, 11 a.m.

• Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 642 Arapahoe. Maundy Thursday, communion, 7 p.m. Good Friday, stations of the cross, 7 p.m. Sunday service Holy Eucharist 11 a.m.

• Hot Springs Christian Church, 1102 Broadway. Sunday Bible study 9:30 a.m.; Easter worship 10:30 a.m.

• Living Waters Assembly of God, 318 N. Eighth St. Sunday services 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

• Open Bible Ministries, 319 Broadway. Sunday breakfast 8:30 a.m.; Easter worship 10:15.

• Risen Son Southern Baptist Church, 342 Amoretti St. Sunday service, 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m.

• Roundtop Baptist Church, 810 Park St. Sunday sunrise service 7 a.m., breakfast, Easter worship service.

• Red Bluffs Evangelical Free Church, 810 Park St. Sunday service 6:37 p.m.

• Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, 129 Mountain View Dr., Sunday service 9:30 a.m., breakfast to follow.

• St. Francis Catholic Church, Eighth and Arapahoe, Good Friday service 6 p.m. Saturday Easter vigil service and mass 8 p.m. Sunday Easter Mass 9 a.m.

• St. Paul Lutheran Church, 288 US Highway 20 South. Thursday divine service 7 p.m. Good Friday, Tenebra 7 p.m. Saturday Easter vigil 7 p.m. Sunday sunrise service 6:30 a.m. in Hot Springs State Park, breakfast at the church after sunrise service; divine service 9 a.m.

Commissioners hear Red Lane complaint

by Cindy Glasson

Heated disagreements involving the Red Lane Water and Sewer District and the Watershed Improvement District led to a civil stand-by by police at a meeting March 31.

Board member Carol Pickett approached the Hot Springs County commissioners at their meeting Tuesday, asking for help in resolving the issues.

Pickett said she thought the issues had been resolved with the landowners in the area, but the March 31 meeting proved that was not the case.

She said the two boards cannot agree, there is no approved budget and there are apparently

problems between Pickett and the treasurer.

She said with just 66 landowners in Red Lane it is difficult to find people who will sit on the boards.

Commission chairman Brad Basse told Pickett the commissioners have no jurisdiction as it applies to district boards.

While the commissioners approved formation of the board in July of 2008, Basse said that is where their involvement ends.

County attorney Jerry Williams said the commissioners "have no authority to remove or appoint a board member or members unless the board is completely defunct."

Easter egg hunt set

The annual Thermopolis Lions Club Easter egg hunt will be Sunday at the Hot Springs State Park at 2 p.m.

Signs will be posted at loca-

tions for ages 10-18 months, 18 months-4 years, 5-6 years and 7-9 years.

There will be prizes for all ages.

Precipitation highest here in five years

Precipitation for the first three months of 2009 is the highest in the past five years in Thermopolis.

A total of 1.60 inches of moisture was measured at the National Weather Service site at the wastewater pumping station next to the Big Horn River. That is up from .69 last year, 1.45 in 2007, .96 in 2006 and .83 in 2005.

However, the total is well below the 2.23 inches in 2004, 3.52 in 2003 and 1.86 in 2002.

Just under 20 inches of snow has fallen this year, using unofficial morning measurements. (The staff at the pumping station measures the snow at 4 p.m., often after much of it melts.)

Using the maximum totals reported to the NWC for the October-December portion, snowfall this winter in Thermopolis is at 50 inches.

The majority of that snowfall, 24 inches, came in a storm in October.



Traditional cinch making is taught to Clarke and Crystal Jackman by Pop Wagner, center, at the Hot Springs County Library on Monday in a recreation district class. Wagner has been presenting workshops throughout Wyoming for four years. —Cindy Glasson