



Alternative water sources presented

by Mark Dykes

Tuesday evening at the Hot Springs County Government Annex, a draft report prepared by DOWL was presented in regard to alternative sources for water in the county. Many of those in attendance were members of the recently formed Hot Springs County Rural Water District Joint Powers Board.

Jeffrey Rosenlund with DOWL explained a study was done to develop an additional source water supply in the county and evaluate options to supply the districts around Thermopolis. There had been previous studies, he noted, and they wanted to capitalize on that information.

Looking specifically at population growth, Rosenlund noted there hasn't been much in town but population is going up in outlying districts, which could have an impact on how much water needs to be pumped from alternate sites to supply people with water.

Ben Jordan with Western Engineering spoke to the well sighting study. When looking at a regional system like the one in this part of the county, he said, they should look at which aquifer would be most suitable for what you need. However, if demand is high and people want good quality it starts to narrow down options. In this area, the Madison limestone formation is the one choice. Using

that option, he further added, a well has to be dug in a location where rocks are fractured to get the volumes needed.

Early on in the project, Jordan said, the demands were looked at. For just rural systems, the peak day demand is around 300 gallons per minute. If Thermopolis were on the system, it could be up to 2,500 gallons per minute by the year 2050.

Through various studies since the early 2000's, nine or 10 different well sites were identified in southern Hot Springs County. That list was narrowed in the draft report to

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photo by Lara Love

Field sobriety tests

Thermopolis Police officer Mike Mascorro watches closely as truck driver Randall Harrison performs field sobriety tests after the truck Harrison was driving rolled over on the corner of Sixth and Park Streets around noon on July 19. The trailer was loaded with bentonite and had to be unloaded before it could be brought upright. Hot Springs County High School students volunteered to unload the truck. Harrison was arrested for alleged driving under the influence. No one was injured in the crash.

Standing room only at candidate forum

Monday evening, the Thermopolis Middle School Commons was packed with political candidates and their constituents for public forum. Candidates from the town, county, state and federal level were each given two minutes to introduce themselves, and another 90 seconds for each question presented to them if any. Following is some information presented by the candidates, grouped by the position they are seeking.

Senator

Speaking on behalf of Senator John Barrasso was his wife, Bobbi, who said her husband takes his job seriously. She further noted he knows it is his job to represent Wyoming. John, Bobbi said is a lifelong conservative Republican who is proud to support the President and his conservative efforts in our country. Additionally, she said, he is also proud of the largest tax cut in 30 years and what it has done for people across the state and country. He is also proud, she said, of having worked on rolling back regulations and law that are burdensome to Wyoming businesses and economy, and working with his colleagues to confirm a conservative justice to the Supreme Court.

Bobbi said John also works tirelessly on behalf of the people of Wyoming, taking comments back to Wyoming and being our voice there.

Charles Hardy said one of the major problems in politics is money, which is something he's been talking about that for years. Among the concerns he has include the costs associated with healthcare, the minimum wage that hasn't been raised in nine years, fiscal responsibility and money in politics.

US Representative

Greg Hunter, who is running for the U.S. House of Representatives, said he has 35 years experience dealing with federal issues and has worked for almost every agency and earned his way to Washington D.C. He didn't like what he had to do to stay there, so he left and has been primarily working for land management agencies.

He said he loves the West and our public lands, and supports keeping them in public hands. He also noted there have been higher rates and costs related to healthcare, which needs to be looked into hard. He plans to govern based on Constitutional principles, and would work to ensure energy, tourism and agriculture get the most "bang for the buck" so money comes back to the Legislature to fund public education.

Governor

Phyllis Baker, co-chair of the Sam Galeotos for Governor campaign in the county, read a letter from Galeotos. Among the information presented about the candidate was his being a third generation Wyoming resident, born and raised in Cheyenne, his strong pro-life stance, his defense of the Second Amendment and his support of conservative values. Galeotos is running for Senator, Baker said, because he believes this is a critical time for the state. His focus will be on an education system that prepares kids for Wyoming jobs, economic growth and building of the private sector. Additionally, she said, he would fight for lower taxes, less regulation, and protection of schools, businesses, farmers, ranchers and natural resources.

Presenting a letter on behalf of Mark Gordon was his wife, Jennie, who noted he was busy as the State Treasurer and his campaigning. Gordon, she said, grew up on a family ranch and he continues to ranch. He is a lifelong conservative, and advocate for smaller government closest to the people and a defender of the Second Amendment, Jennie said, and has worked in industries most important to Wyoming – energy, agriculture and tourism. As treasurer, she noted, he has grown state funds by \$5 billion, modernized the office to do more with less and stood up against federal overreach. She said he has a proven record of saving taxpayers money, working with the Legislature to bring Wyoming businesses and defending the Constitution.

Harriet Hageman said she grew up on a ranch and comes from a long line of ranchers, teach-

ers and small business owners. She said she has spent the past 20 years of her career fighting to protect private property rights, civil rights and water rights. Additionally, she's worked with the Farm Bureau on many issues and has worked for federal regulatory reform. She also noted she's worked to protect farmers, ranchers, municipalities, counties and the state, and plans to do much more if elected governor. She is running for three primary reasons – federal and state regulatory reform, getting the "fiscal house" in order as Wyoming is facing a \$1.15 billion structural deficit and to ensure the state's legacy industries are protected.

Taylor Haynes described himself as a "pure constitutionalist." He is running on a platform of taking over management of all federally-managed lands with the exception of Yellowstone/Grand Teton, Devils Tower a couple other small lands that would be considered monuments. This is important, he explained, because private property is "the key to liberty and success." A state having control of all of the property within its borders, he continued, can use the natural resource from that property to protect itself from taxes and unconstitutional agencies. Many such agencies, he noted, aren't bad people, but have crossed the line between the federal government constitutional authority and state constitutional authority.

Auditor

Kristi Racines believes and wants a government that is efficient, cost effective and accountable to the people. She is a fourth generation native to Wyoming and a UW graduate. She said she loves Wyoming and can't imagine living anywhere else. The auditor is the "chief accountant of the state." As a CPA and currently a CFO for the State Judicial Branch, she prepares a budget of about \$80 million and is in charge of Human Resources for the branch. The auditor, she said, does not get to be just a figurehead. "There's a

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School board approves budget

by Cindy Glasson

Hot Springs County School District's Board of Trustees approved the budget for the upcoming 2018-19 school year at their July 17 meeting.

Looking at the historical figures from the general fund, there is less than a 1 percent increase overall in expenditures, transfers and reserves for the upcoming year, making a total budget of \$11,296,283.

Enrollment at this point appears as though it will be down about 2.46 percent or a total of 16 students overall. When enrollment is down the cost per student goes up. This year, the district will be spending \$559 more per student for their education, a total of \$17,468 per child.

Fortunately, with the slight uptick in the oil market, revenues from the various mill levies are up just over a million dollars and other sources are up \$4.1 million. However, the state has once again cut funding to the district by just over a half-million dollars.

A little restructuring has allowed the total line item for salaries to go down just

slightly, in the \$20,000 range. Benefits for staff did increase for the upcoming year by \$250,000.

Various items in the instruction costs for students were cut, but nothing drastic, mostly between \$2,000 and \$20,000.

The instructional support budget took a big hit with the auditorium, cutting that item alone by over \$41,000.

Central support dropped \$90,000 from the transportation line item and nearly \$24,000 from technology services.

Middle school activities saw a nice \$18,000 jump in funding for their students. High school activities were cut about \$10,000 for the year and vocational instruction lost \$6,800.

Even with all the cuts mentioned, instruction costs increased \$279,097 for the coming year and instructional support jumped \$157,398.

Another big jump for the district came in the form of grant monies awarded to the schools. Grants are up \$122,000 this year for a total of \$926,205