

Community Development News

By Christy Hopkins

Next Thursday marks the third annual Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge we've held here in Greeley County. It's such a privilege to have the opportunity to work with the students each year and I'm grateful for Drew and Melissa Zerr for all the time they spend with their classes, making this opportunity possible. I encourage you to carve time out of your day next Thursday, March 4, and come visit with the students and view the projects from 3-4 p.m. We'll be at Greeley County Schools, in the high school and junior high, for this year's competition.

Just a reminder – two free training sessions are available to area residents later this week:

On Thursday, February 25, as part of the How-To Series, a How-To Interview training will take place from 5-7 p.m. MT. It will include information on etiquette, what to bring, common interview questions, follow-up, job offers, and top interviewing blunders. To

attend this session, contact me at (620) 376-2548 or greeleyc@fairpoint.net.

On Thursday, February 25 a Building Better Leaders will take place from 10:30 – 12 noon MT. This session will describe how critical thinking and careful diagnosis are key skills for HR professionals to properly develop and communicate a leadership development strategy; discuss guidelines for identifying performance gaps in managers and leaders and techniques to remedy them; and develop the skills and ability to communicate the needs, design, process, and results, and how they align with corporate strategic initiatives to senior leadership. To register go to: <https://ksbdc.ecenterdirect.com/events/26330>

The second session can be accessed from your home computer, using Zoom technology. If you'd like to attend in the local University Center classroom, please contact me at (620) 376-2548.

Wheatland...

(Continued from page 1) Wheatland Electric does not yet know all the costs associated with this extreme weather event, we recognize our members are concerned about receiving an electric bill that is higher than usual.

Wheatland Electric is looking at ways to mitigate the impact these increased gas prices will have on your future electric bills. We apologize for the potential hardship this will cause. Wheatland Electric will work diligently with our members during these unprecedented times to limit the financial impact.

This is a continually evolving situation and we will learn more in the coming days and weeks. Wheatland Electric will continue to keep you updated. Please follow us on social media and continue to check our

website for updates, www.weci.net.

About Us

Our Mission: Delivering Energy for Life – Wheatland Electric Cooperative, Inc., a member owned distribution cooperative headquartered in Scott City, KS, was established in 1948 as a distribution and power cooperative, in the state of Kansas. Today, Wheatland Electric serves more than 33,000 electric meters in 14 Kansas counties and 3 Colorado counties and maintains over 4,000 miles of distribution power lines across western, southcentral Kansas and eastern Colorado. Together, with the help of our members, we are committed to building a better and stronger rural America. Visit www.weci.net for more information.

Unified Supervisors meet

Unapproved Unified Greeley County Board of Supervisors Minutes by Gina Bond. Monday, February 22, 2021, Greeley County Courthouse: Regular Session

Present: Kirby Kleymann, Corbin Myers, Monty Moritz, Justin Phillips and Scott Steele, Supervisors; Brock Sloan, Public Works Director; Charles Moser, Unified Attorney, and Gina Bond, Utility Administrator, were present. Others present: UGC Road Superintendent Dan Smith.

Agenda: Kirby Kleymann moved to approve the agenda, Corbin Myers seconded and motion carried unanimously. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

New Business:

Road & Bridge Equipment: Road Superintendent Smith

reported on issues with the tanker, which is not usable at the current time. The supervisors reviewed estimates from several companies for both bud and pilot wheel hub replacements, as well as tires. Lengthy discussion followed, and Corbin Myers moved to approve the purchase of tires and wheel axles for the county water tanker in an amount not to exceed \$5,374.24 from Plains Mountain and Rocket Tire & Auto to be paid from the Road & Bridge Fund. Scott Steele seconded and motion carried unanimously.

Bills: Corbin Myers moved to approve the GSD bills of \$39,772.99 and the transfer of funds. Monty Moritz seconded and motion carried 5-0.

Minutes: Scott Steele moved to approve the 02/08/2021 minutes, Monty Moritz seconded and motion carried unanimously.

District Court Audio: District Court Clerk Tammi Hazel introduced the new Court Administrator Kelsey Duncan, as well as the IT technician Alfredo Galvan to the supervisors. They presented an updated courtroom audio equipment quote for microphone, amplifier, speaker, and labor costs for a turnkey installation. This price is drastically reduced from the prior estimate due to the availability of COVID-19 funds that were used to purchase some of the more expensive items, including a digital processing head unit, a 7" touch screen audio control unit and a 55" smart board. After a brief discussion, Corbin Myers moved to accept the audio equipment quote from McClelland Inc. for \$8,000 to be paid from Special Count Equipment Fund. Monty Moritz seconded and motion carried unanimously (5-0). Hazel, Duncan, and Galvan left the meeting at this time.

Treas Qtrly Statement: Corbin Myers moved to approve the quarterly treasurer's statement, Scott Steele seconded and motion carried unanimously.

Clerk/Sheriff Fee Reports: Corbin Myers moved to approve the clerk and sheriff's fee reports, Monty Moritz seconded and motion carried unanimously.

Sheriff Dept: Sheriff McDaniel entered the meeting at this time. Kirby Kleymann moved to enter into executive session with the sheriff and board of supervisors present for a period of (ten) 10 minutes to discuss non-elected personnel matters. Corbin Myers seconded and motion carried unanimously. The board entered executive session at 5:20pm. At 5:30pm, the meeting

reopened and Corbin Myers moved to re-enter executive session with the sheriff and supervisors for the purpose of discussing non-elected personnel matters for a period of ten (10) minutes, Monty Moritz seconded and motion carried unanimously. Meeting reopened at 5:40pm, and motion was made by Monty Moritz and seconded by Justin Phillips to authorize a pay increase to the employee hired on 12/01/20 by \$2.10/hour effective 03/01/21. Motion carried 5-0.

MSD: Unified Attorney Moser presented an encroachment agreement between the City of Tribune and Sunflower Prairie Farms, allowing the property owner an encroachment license for the north half (N/2) of Lot Twenty-Three (23) and all of Lot Twenty-Four (24), Block Thirty-Eight (38), First Addition to the City of Tribune, Greeley County, Kansas. The encroachment waiver was requested due to an issue with the street placement extending the right-of-way further onto the aforementioned parcels than is typical. The license is temporary and may be terminated by the City if necessary. Corbin Myers moved to approve the Encroachment License with Sunflower Prairie Farms, LLC. Scott Steele seconded and motion carried 4-0, with Monty Moritz abstaining.

Tax Sale: Brief discussion was held regarding the upcoming tax sale, and the unified attorney reported there have been additional redemptions with a final deadline set for next week. A journal entry of judgment will be entered before the tax sale occurs, tentatively scheduled for mid to late April.

Mask Mandate: In order to remove the current county-wide mask mandate, the board would need to pass a public health order to repeal or revoke the original order originally passed in October 2020. Then a new public health order would be required to exempt the county from the governor's Executive Order 20-52 (mask mandate). This process will require consultation with the local health officer to obtain his recommendations, then a final determination may be made by the supervisors.

Personnel: Kirby Kleymann moved to enter into executive session for a period of five (5) minutes to discuss non-elected personnel issues with the BOS, PWD, payroll clerk and R&B superintendent present. Monty Moritz seconded and motion carried unanimously. The meeting was reopened after a period of five minutes, and Corbin Myers moved to re-enter executive session for a period of ten (10) minutes to discuss employment applications with the BOS minus Kirby Kleymann, PWD, payroll clerk and R&B superintendent present. Scott Steele seconded and motion passed 4-0. After a period of six (6) minutes had elapsed, the meeting reopened. Motion was made by Corbin Myers to hire Applicant #1 and Applicant #2 at the normal base pay for Equipment Operator, effective immediately. Scott Steele seconded and motion carried 4-0, with Kirby Kleymann abstaining.

Scott Steele moved to promote Equipment Operator Gus Ochsner to the position of Road Foreman, and increase his hourly rate by .50¢/hr effective 3/01/2021. Justin Phillips seconded and motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Senator Marshall: Kansas keeps seat at the table on Senate Agriculture Committee

(Washington, D.C., February 22, 2021) – Yesterday, U.S. Senator Roger Marshall, M.D. penned an op-ed in the High Plains Journal about his priorities for Kansas Agriculture after he was named to the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee. The Senator said in part,

"Having grown up in agriculture and now with the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of my good friend and mentor Pat Roberts, I could not be more proud to join the Senate Agriculture Committee... This assignment will keep Kansas' voice at the table to help ensure our farmers, ranchers and producers remain profitable and our rural communities prosperous. Where I'm from people work per acre, not per hour. My earliest and fondest memories growing up were spending time on our family farm. While it's true growing up a Kansas farm boy is mostly having fun, I learned some of life's most important lessons: an appreciation for the land and environment, a hard work ethic, and the value of a strong handshake. Those life lessons will guide my work in the Senate Agriculture Committee..."

You may click [HERE](#) or scroll down to read Senator Marshall's op-ed in its entirety.

Kansas keeps seat at the table on Senate Agriculture Committee

High Plains Journal
U.S. Senator Roger Marshall
February 21, 2021

Having grown up in agriculture and now with the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of my good friend and mentor Pat Roberts, I could not be more proud to join the Senate Agriculture Committee. For 48 of the past 50 years, Kansas has had a voice on the Senate Agriculture Committee. Why? Because agriculture is the No. 1 industry in Kansas and is responsible for 40% of the state's economy. This assignment will keep Kansas' voice at the table to help ensure our farmers, ranchers and producers remain profitable and our rural communities prosperous.

Where I'm from people work per acre, not per hour. My earliest and fondest memories growing up were spending time on our family farm. While it's true growing up a Kansas farm boy is mostly having fun, I learned some of life's most important lessons: an appreciation for the land and environment, a hard work ethic, and the value of a strong handshake. Those life lessons will guide my work in the Senate Agriculture Committee, and here are just some of the priorities I have my sights set on:

First, we have to stay on top of our push to reduce the regulatory burden on farmers and ensure the new administration doesn't increase this burden. We made great strides in the previous administration on this front—whether it was repealing Waters of the United States rule or waiving electronic logging device mandates—and we can't afford to go backward and hamper Kansas farmers, ranchers and producers with bureaucratic red tape.

Second, I will work with the new administration and my colleagues to advance the mission of free and reciprocal trade in order to open new international markets for Kansas farmers and ranchers. With the China Phase One Deal, the Japan Free Trade Agreement, and the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, we've modernized nearly 50% of our export markets. We must enforce our existing agreements and continue to seek new export opportunities around the globe.

Third, we must protect to fully protect and preserve crop insurance. I've seen first-hand how harsh

Mother Nature has been on our Kansas producers, and during these times we must ensure our producers continue to have access to crop insurance and other tools. Quite frankly, securing the next farm bill starts now.

Fourth, we must do everything we can to continue the revitalization of rural communities in Kansas and expand cleaner, more affordable options at the pump—support for our biofuel producers will do just that. The 10 biofuel plants operating in Kansas utilize corn, sorghum and soybeans to produce clean-burning fuel, while contributing to the economic health of rural communities across the state. Under the previous administration we made great strides to increase demand, both domestically and abroad, and grow consumer access to biofuels with common sense regulatory adjustments. We must continue this work in the new administration.

Fifth, we have to make progress so consumers can be sure that the meat products they are buying are indeed real meat. Consumers should be able to rely on the information on food labels they see on the shelves to be truthful and not deceptive. For years now, alternative protein products have confused many consumers with misleading packaging and creative names for products. I will continue to advocate for greater transparency in labeling to protect terms like "meat" and "beef" and help consumers better differentiate real meat from non-meat products. Additionally, on the meat front, local butchers and small meat processors who have state-inspected facilities and the livestock producers who use their services should have better access to consumers across the country. I will push for changes to provide those producers with more options to market directly to consumers across state lines.

Sixth, while we must continue to secure our borders, we need to make common sense reforms for our immigrant agricultural workers. We can do both. The previous administration finalized H2A visa changes making that program more flexible and efficient. However, the current system still is not workable for dairy farms and livestock producers needing year-round help. I will work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to help get legal ag workers our producers back home need for continued success.

And finally but certainly not least, we must continue to invest in rural communities by deploying more broadband across rural Kansas. My parents grew up in an era when 160 acres of good Kansas land, hard work, and a sharp pencil could support a family. But today's producer has to be as much of a sharp business person as they are a mechanic, a master of technology, and a soothsayer of the markets. They've turned the pencils into high tech precision agriculture, and in order to remain successful, they need access to a fast and reliable broadband connection. Whether it's a farmer out on his combine at dawn, a small business owner working on payroll, or a child virtually learning, increasing the availability and quality of broadband for rural areas is critical to keep Kansans connected and economically viable.

It is crucial that those of us in Washington do absolutely everything in our power to provide farmers, ranchers, and producers with the tools necessary so that they can continue to feed, fuel, and clothe this nation and the world. The vastness of Kansas agriculture can't be overstated, and I look forward to providing leadership for all Kansans on this important committee.

It's your future. Let's protect it.™

Together we'll create a plan to protect what matters most to you.

Monday-Friday 8am-12pm

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