

Courthouse heating system planned

Written by Darci Tomky

After much deliberation, Phillips County Commissioners accepted a plan to replace the courthouse heating system. At their meeting Tuesday, June 30, they reported an approved \$40,000 energy impact grant for the project.

An energy audit was taken on several county buildings for recommendations regarding alternatives to the heating system. The grant application was revised after commissioners decided to stay with the steam heat system at a much lower cost than the other possibilities.

“It’s the best for this building,” said commissioner Susan Roll Walters.

Commissioners will wait on a contract until plans are finalized on how to proceed.

Also in the month of June, commissioners discussed a grant from the Colorado Historical Fund to be used for the restoration of the front steps of the courthouse. Because it is a historical building, special steps must be taken, and commissioners are currently in the process of getting plans developed for the bidders.

Changes made to Event Center plans

Commissioners recently approved a small number of change orders to the construction plans of the Phillips County Event Center. These changes amount to \$126,000 in additional costs and include doors, windows and an upgraded sound system.

Additionally, a large part of that cost is due to an alternative flooring method. Commissioners reported that although the flooring will be more expensive, the type they have chosen will not need to be replaced since it lasts much longer.

Funds for much of the landscaping will come from enhancement grants from the Colorado Department of Transportation. Commissioners are waiting on the state to finalize the grants, and the next step in the process is to go to bid on some of the items.

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With Event Center bills needing to be paid, commissioners reiterated they approved an interim bridge loan to finance construction until grants and donation money become available.

While progress on the Event Center is coming along well, restroom facilities will not be finished in time for the fair as commissioners had hoped. They have been in contact with Potter's Septic Service about providing facilities for the fair.

Local programs to receive TANF funds

In the coming year, the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program, administered by the Department of Social Services, will provide funds to several local programs that qualify and will benefit from the money.

Those receiving funds include Baby Bear Hugs, Nurturing Parenting Program in Phillips County, Bull Pup Preschool, Dragon's Wagon Preschool summer school program, Northeast Early Childhood Council teachers training, Phillips County Family Education Services, Northeast Colorado Child Care Resource and Referral and Centennial Mental Health.

Other business

In other business during the month of June, county commissioners:

—noted the 2001 Ford Taurus county car was having trouble with the transmission. It will be replaced in the next few weeks.

—approved the use of Homesteaders Park by the Holyoke Chamber of Commerce for July 4 activities.

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—visited with Pam Shaddock, regional representative for Senator Mark Udall.

—approved agreements with PC Telcom and Haxtun Telephone Company regarding their applications to bury cables in county roadways.

—noted Ken Ham was appointed to the Phillips County Fair Board to fill the vacant seat left by Duke Edwards. The term will last until 2010.

—approved the Holyoke ambulance license.

—noted Wilbur Strickert has been hired for the weed and pest position. While the contract has not been finalized, he is scheduled to start early July.

—approved part-time employees Dawn Archibeque, dispatcher and Dustin Wieland, summer maintenance.