

Haxtun Wind Project future is up in the air

Written by Darci Tomky

As reported at the commissioners' month-end meeting last Wednesday, April 30, Phillips County received notification on April 23 that National Wind has filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy in Minnesota. National Wind is the company who owns NECO Wind, which is in the process of developing the Haxtun Wind Project.

The attorney involved in the filing indicated that once a trustee is appointed, they hope to find a buyer for existing assets who might continue development and ultimately construct the projects. Until a trustee is appointed, no additional information is available.

Phillips County received a \$2.55 million pass through community renewal energy deployment grant from the Department of Energy for the NECO Wind project. The county is currently in discussion with the Department of Energy on how the project can proceed.

Beavers retires; Thompson named deputy assessor

With over 20 years of Phillips County employment on her résumé, deputy assessor Judy Beavers has retired, completing her last day of county work Wednesday, April 30.

Toby Thompson, who has worked for the county since 2005, has been named the deputy assessor.

Commissioners approved the hire of Heather Meakins as a data transfer clerk in the assessor's office.

Two other hires for the county in the month of April were David Reitz for the District 1 road and bridge crew and Molly Peck as a part-time summer helper for the weed and pest manager.

Commissioners to focus on county roads

A joint effort for all three Phillips County districts is being initiated by commissioners to revitalize a road building project in the county. Their focus is to get started with well-organized road building crews where the needs are the greatest.

Additional equipment is ready for the project, and a couple of part-time drivers will be on hand for the extra work.

Phillips County has applied for an Energy Impact grant for a blending hopper to mix aggregate and clay. Total cost is \$87,000, and the grant applied for was \$53,000. Commissioners said they won't know anything until June.

The rate for processed wood at Phillips County landfill has been raised to \$40 a ton, which is about \$10 more than what residents pay for regular trash loads.

Since the wood is processed, it cannot be burned, and the county is looking at other options such as hauling it to another landfill.

In the month of April, commissioners heard two complaints of junk blowing off property in regards to the new weed and junk ordinance adopted last summer. Both of the cases have been addressed, and commissioners were aware that one had been corrected.

Commissioners recently approved the purchase of a Ford Explorer patrol car for the sheriff's department. After an \$8,000 trade-in, the vehicle cost \$21,905.

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The month of May has been proclaimed Mental Health Month in Phillips County. The proclamation signed by commissioners noted that as many as 1.5 million Coloradans may be affected by mental illness, which is the leading cause of disability in the state.

It states good mental health is essential to the overall health and emotional well-being of Colorado's youth, adults and families, and the state recognizes the importance and value of peer support and advocacy in the recovery of residents who experience mental health issues.

Holyoke Enterprise May 8, 2014