

Vetter Health Services taking purchase offer under consideration

Written by Wauneta Breeze

Tuesday, 22 November 2011 18:00 - Last Updated Tuesday, 22 November 2011 18:02

By Tina Kitt

The Wauneta Breeze

Village officials report that Vetter Health Services appeared “very receptive” to an offer by the Village of Wauneta to purchase Heritage of Wauneta.

Village board members Page Johnston and Tony Cribelli travelled to the Omaha area last week to present an offer to purchase the facility, equipment and land which comprise Heritage, Wauneta’s local nursing home, for \$50,000. The purchase price would not include the state-issued bed licenses which allow the facility to operate as a nursing home.

Bed licenses will have to be purchased separately.

Johnston and Cribelli, joined by attorney Dick Nelson, met with VHS representatives, including Jack Vetter, owner of Vetter Health Services, for approximately two hours.

“We had a very productive discussion,” noted Johnston.

He said that VHS officials noted there are a number of regulatory hurdles to address first, but indicated they are willing to consider the purchase offer and explore ways to make the transfer of ownership possible.

During a special meeting held earlier this month, the Village Board voted to proceed with efforts

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to purchase Heritage in order to keep the nursing home facility in operation.

Earlier this year VHS had announced plans to close Heritage by June 30, 2012.

The offer to purchase is contingent upon securing enough bed licenses to operate the facility, funding to cover start-up expenses and obtaining a fixed bid to install an updated fire sprinkler system in the building.

Other Village business

During their regular November meeting held last week the board heard an overview of the town's water system assessment from Barney Whatley of the Nebraska Rural Water Association. Whatley told the board they have a very well run system, acknowledging steps being taken to mitigate the elevated levels of naturally occurring arsenic present in the municipal water supply.

Village Superintendent Bill Bischoff updated board members on work underway to remove debris accumulated during the demolition of the large two-story house between the school and football field. Due to environmental regulations there have been some unanticipated costs associated with disposing of the debris.

"When a house needs deconstructed there are now significant costs due to DEQ, EPS and NHHS," noted Bischoff, adding that property owners need to be aware of these costs.

While he was present for the Sheriff's Report Deputy Dave Ridlen told the board a provision in the Village's contract with the county for police services that requires a deputy to live within a certain distance of Wauneta is proving problematic due to a lack of available rental homes and asked if the board would consider altering that requirement.

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