

Village Board dots “i’s” and crosses “t’s” as nursing home ownership draws near

Written by Wauneta Breeze
Thursday, 21 June 2012 16:04 -

By Sheri Hink

The Wauneta Breeze

The Wauneta Village Board met last Tuesday, June 12, for its regular monthly meeting. The jam-packed 28-item agenda was full of nursing home related issues.

Heritage of Wauneta will transition to the Village of Wauneta-owned Sunrise Heights on July 1.

Discussions on possible benefits for Sunrise Heights employees took up the majority of the time spent discussing nursing home issues.

Retirement

Chris Nelson with Valley Financial Services and Brenda Anderson with Valley Bank attended the meeting to present information on possible retirement plans the village board could enact for Sunrise Heights employees.

Nelson discussed two types of retirement plans, SIMPLE (Savings Incentive Match Plan for Employees) IRA plans and 401(k) plans.

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Nelson explained the differences between the two types of plans as well as the potential cost to implement each type of plan. He explained that Sunrise Heights is not required by law to provide a retirement plan benefit to its employees but that if one is offered it must be offered to all eligible employees.

The village board did not come to a final decision on whether to implement a retirement plan for Sunrise Heights employees at the meeting. But, they expressed sincere desire to do so now or in

the future.

Health insurance

The board discussed health insurance plans for Sunrise Heights employees. Terry Engell and Rick Einspahr with HomeTown Agency attended the meeting to present options for employee health coverage.

At the end of the discussion, the board passed a motion to provide health insurance to nursing home employees with a \$5,000 deductible. The village will then self-insure a portion of the deductible so, in essence, the deductible for an individual employee will be \$1,500. Employees will be responsible for paying 25 percent of the monthly premium. Currently, nursing home employees pay approximately 30 percent of the premium for their health insurance.

The motion passed at the June meeting further authorized the Nursing Home Committee to work with HomeTown Agency to research additional health insurance add-ons such as a prescription savings card. The committee was instructed to fit the budgetary constraint of \$120,000 per year for health insurance and retirement plans.

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Throughout the discussion, the board expressed a strong commitment to providing the best health insurance and retirement plans possible within their budget constraints. The board is doing its best to provide coverages similar to those currently provided by Heritage of Wauneta.

HomeTown Agency staff have been working closely with the village board and current nursing home employees.

“The employees understand you (the village board) may not be able to do everything at once,” said Einspahr during a discussion of how to provide the best-possible benefit package to the employees while maintaining budget integrity.

Facility insurance policies

After the lengthy discussion of employee retirement and health insurance plans the board moved on to discuss other insurance policies needed by the facility.

Engell and Einspahr presented quotes for general liability, vehicle and workers compensation insurance. The quotes came in approximately \$15,000 over what the village was hoping for, which Engell explained was due to the workers compensation coverage.

After a discussion the board determined the quotes should be accepted and authorized HomeTown Agency to purchase the policies.

Nursing home vehicles

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Village board member Page Johnston and Village Superintendent Bill Bischoff presented the board with information regarding the purchase of the three vehicles currently in use at Heritage of Wauneta.

The Vetter’s Leasing company currently owns the 1999 Dodge pick-up, 1999 Ford E150 van and 2007 Dodge caravan with ramp. The company has offered to sell all three vehicles to the village for a total price of \$27,700. The village board passed a motion to purchase all three vehicles.

Revenue bonds

The village board passed a motion to issue \$500,000 in revenue bonds as previously approved. The board decided to take the full amount of revenue bonds available to assure adequate funds for the initial purchase and operation of the nursing home.

Other nursing home issues

The board discussed and approved an operations and management plan proposal from B2 Environmental.

The plan will indicate the type, condition, location and quantity of asbestos-containing materials within the facility. In addition, the plan will include information concerning training, occupant notification, monitoring, controls, safe work practices, recordkeeping and worker protection as necessary. The company plans to complete the abatement of present asbestos when the new

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sprinkler system is installed.

The board approved a motion which will allow Chairman Lloyd Sinner to sign closing paperwork on the purchase of the nursing home from Vetter Health Services and bed licenses from the Village of Campbell during closing on July 1.

The board also passed a motion allowing the nursing home committee to give preliminary policies and procedures for the facility.

Public hearing: variance in zoning regulations

The village board meeting last Tuesday included a public hearing to hear support, opposition, criticism, suggestions and/or observations of an application for a variance in the zoning regulations for property located at lots 1-4, block 10 in the original town of Wauneta.

The property is partially zoned as heavy industrial, therefore has stringent guidelines in the setback distances for new construction.

The property owner asked the Board of Adjustments to adjust the setback requirements on the property from 50 feet to 5 feet on the west and east sides of the property in order to construct a small enclosed carport.

After the close of the public hearing the Board of Adjustments approved the motion to amend the setback requirements for the property.

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Sheriff's report

Mike Dukes with the Chase County Sheriff's department attended the village board meeting to give the Sheriff's report. The report, dated May 1 through May 31, stated that the Chase County Sheriff's office had provided 219 patrol hours in Wauneta.

Sheriff's office staff responded to 18 complaints and attended to two accidents. They also completed 92 door checks of Wauneta businesses and found no doors left unlocked.

During the month the Sheriff's office issued six citations and 41 warnings in the Wauneta area.

At the end of his report, Dukes informed the village board that the service pickup he drives during his patrol in the Wauneta area is due to be replaced.

The Sheriff's office plans to replace the pick-up with another 4-wheel drive vehicle. According to a previous agreement, the Village of Wauneta would cover half the cost of the new vehicle, which equates to approximately \$15,000.

The County will be accepting bids for a new vehicle until July 9. The Sheriff anticipates that the new vehicle will be delivered and ready for service in September or October.

The current pickup is a 2002 model with 138,000 miles. Once the new vehicle is replaced the current pickup will be the Village of Wauneta's to use or dispose of as it sees fit.

Dukes was asked to keep a special eye on the gazebo on Tecumseh. There have been reports of damage to the gazebo and trees around it. Dukes indicated that the Sheriff's office staff will keep an eye on the area.

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CDBG Funds

The village board revisited the previous request by the Department of Economic Development to return the unspent Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. The letter received from the Department of Economic Development indicated that the money must be returned or the village’s usage of the funds would be audited.

During the June meeting the board moved to return the funds with the understanding that the Department of Economic Development will acknowledge receiving the funds back, assume liability of current CDBG loans and release the village from liability in the program.

Other business

Paul Kunneemann presented the 2012 Chase County Local Emergency Operations Plan to the village board for their approval. The board approved the plan.

Kunneemann also notified the village board that the Code Red system used throughout the county, which was funded by the state of Nebraska the past two years, will not be funded by the state next year.

He indicated that the system will cost the Village of Wauneta \$750 per year. The County will pay the entire fee and then bill Wauneta for its portion. The Code Red system will be on the agenda at the July village board meeting.

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The village board approved invoices from Pivot Electric (\$15,961) and BJ Harris (\$5,937.54) for work relating to the variable frequency drives, a part of the water project.

Next, the board approved a renewal of the maintenance contract with S.D. Myers to test the transformer banks every three years.

Bischoff informed the board the lease of the skid loader used by the village has expired. The board approved renewing the one-year lease for \$3,750.

The board also approved a request from the Wauneta Chamber for a special designated liquor license for the Harvest Fest Dance which will be held on July 28 at the American Legion building from 9:00 p.m. MT to 1:00 a.m. MT.

The Wauneta Village board’s regular meeting time is the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. MT. The public is welcome to attend Village board meetings.