

Village receives \$186,000 owner-occupied housing grant

Written by Wauneta Breeze
Thursday, 17 October 2013 18:29 -

By Sheri Hink-Wagner

The Wauneta Breeze

The Village of Wauneta recently learned they have been awarded a \$186,000 owner-occupied housing rehab grant from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development as part of the 2013 Nebraska Affordable Housing Program.

Wauneta was one of nine communities to receive such grants. The nine grants given throughout the state totaled \$2.325 million.

Wauneta's grant is intended to rehabilitate six owner-occupied homes in Wauneta. To qualify for the funds, owners must earn at or below 80 percent of the area median family income.

Those interested in more information about Wauneta's project are asked to contact the village office.

Amy Thelander with Southwest Nebraska Community Betterment Corporation (SWNCBC) attended last week's village board meeting to share the news with board members.

Thelander completed the grant application for the owner-occupied housing grant for the village.

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At the board meeting last Tuesday, board members voted to pay SWNCBC up to \$12,000 for general administration of the grant and up to \$15,000 for housing management.

Village approves eminent domain action

Last month village board members approved an agreement to trade services for a tract of land owned by Glen Yoder for the water main project on Cheyenne Street.

After further investigation into the purchase process, it was determined that a traditional land purchase would not be possible for the land needed for the project.

Village board members went into executive session to discuss possible eminent domain action to acquire the land for the project.

Upon return to regular session, the board made and passed a motion to proceed with an eminent domain action to acquire the property. The motion was made contingent on council finding the action to be in concert with the eminent domain statute.

LMI survey results

Board members reviewed the results of the recent survey completed by village residents. The survey was completed as part of the process of applying for grant funds to complete a new

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comprehensive plan for the village.

Community Development Block Grants require that a certain percentage of village residents fall within the low to moderate income level in order to apply.

The survey revealed that 45.99 percent of Wauneta's residents are within LMI levels, which would not allow the village to apply for CDBG funds for the comprehensive plan.

However, the village can still apply for Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) funds for the project. The biggest difference between CDBG funds and NIFA funds is the larger match required by NIFA, 50 percent.

Miller and Associates of Kearney has offered to write the grant for the village, if they decide to move forward.

After discussion, board members stated they would like to proceed with the comprehensive plan, but would be more comfortable in doing so if they knew the exact cost of completion of the plan.

The board directed Clerk Evelyn Skelton to move forward with application for a NIFA grant with the provision that the application can be withdrawn at the board's direction. Board members would like the option of withdrawing the application if it appears the match required for the comprehensive plan is too great.

Chateau Theatre investment account

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The Village Board meeting last Tuesday, Oct. 8 had one more visitor from out of town. Sharleen Riemenschneider with Edward Jones in McCook attended the meeting to review the performance of the Chateau Theatre's investment account.

The funds in the investment account were donated to the village by Dr. Frank Rider and family for maintenance of the Chateau Theatre.

The Riders made a stipulation on the donation, citing a restriction that funds from the account must not be spent unless a \$100,000 balance can be maintained after spending.

In Oct. 2011 the village moved the fund to Edward Jones. When the funds were transferred to Edward Jones on Oct. 5, 2011 they totaled \$96,832.63.

Since the funds were first invested with Edward Jones a total of \$12,089.51 have been withdrawn from the account for various theatre repairs and maintenance.

At last week's village board meeting, Riemenschneider informed the board the balance of the investment account was \$102,181.90 as of Oct. 8, meaning the fund has grown just over 16 percent, when withdraws are taken into account, since transferred to Edward Jones.

"I'm thrilled with the performance," said Riemenschneider.

The other purpose of Riemenschneider's visit was to review investment options with board members.

She advised board members to leave the investment portfolio as it is if their goals for the fund were unchanged—meaning its purpose is to provide occasional income for the theatre.

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After a detailed discussion with Riemenschneider, village board members decided to leave the investment portfolio where it is.

ATV/UTV ordinance

Under old business, board members reviewed a draft village ordinance for operating ATV/UTVs within village limits.

Village Clerk Evelyn Skelton drafted the ordinance with assistance of Village Superintendent Bill Bischoff and Sheriff's Deputy Mike Dukes.

The draft ordinance, which has not yet been adopted by the village, would require ATVs and UTVs operated in the village limits to be inspected prior to operation in the village limits. It would also require liability insurance.

No action was taken at the October meeting, the village board will review the draft ordinance again at the November meeting.

Nursing home report

Village board members reviewed financial reports for Sunrise Heights of Wauneta at the October meeting.

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Nursing home committee member Lloyd Sinner informed the board that he, Skelton and Tony Cribelli had met with representatives from Rural Health Development (RHD). In their meeting, RHD representatives indicated everything was in order at the nursing home and did not express any issues.

It was noted that there were 34 residents at the nursing home as of Oct. 8. and that the balance sheet was up for August from July.

Committee member Page Johnston added that the nursing home had received their annual Health and Human Services survey in September and that the survey indicated no care issues, but did have a few citations.

Johnston stated that one of the citations was for a sewage smell in one of the laundry rooms. After inspection by nursing home staff, it was determined that the issue was a cast iron pipe that had corroded.

Johnston said the pipe had been repaired by Snell Services and that the nursing home plans to continue to do routine inspections of the plumbing to ascertain other potential issues.

Skateboard complaints

The sheriff's report for September was pretty routine, said Deputy Dukes, with exception of four complaints of skateboarders.

Dukes explained the skateboarder complaints are new and that he and other deputies have been talking with the youth riding skateboards around town and asked them to be careful. The complaints were initiated by motorists who complained they could not see the skateboarders.

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Other business

Other business items discussed at the October meeting included approval of a designated liquor licence to the Wauneta Volunteer Fire Department for the Firemen's Ball.

The Firemen's Ball will be held on Saturday, Nov. 2 from 9 p.m. MT/10 p.m. CT until 1 a.m. MT/2 a.m. CT at the Wauneta American Legion Hall.

Village board members once again proclaimed October as "Domestic Violence Awareness Month" for the Village of Wauneta.

Also discussed at the October meeting were decisions to transfer funds for future purchases of a police vehicle and fire truck. After discussion, board members decided to transfer \$4,000 for future police vehicle purchases and \$5,000 for future fire truck purchases.

Possible dump truck purchase

Village board members approved spending up to \$18,000 on a used dump truck at auction in Lincoln.

Bischoff had been to Lincoln to inspect the trucks available for auction the prior weekend. He told the board that the trucks have all been used in salt but by sandblasting the bed and putting

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a fresh coat of paint on them they should serve the village's purposes well.

The funds to purchase the used dump truck would come from highway allocation funds.

Superintendent's report

Under his report to the board, Bischoff asked the board for their input on winterization of the village trailer park.

After discussion, it was determined that the village will winterize the water lines at the trailer park for winter, to prevent possible freezing of water lines. However, the village will still allow trailers to park at the trailer park and use electricity throughout the winter.

Board members noted the trailer park may be addressed in the comprehensive plan when it is revised.

Repainting the lines on Tecumseh was also addressed during the Superintendent's report. It was decided to hold off on the fresh coat of paint until spring.

The next regular village board meeting will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 12 at 7 p.m. MT/8 p.m. CT at the village office. The public is welcome to attend village board meetings.