

New livestock building considered at fairgrounds

Written by Darci Tomky

A fairgrounds building committee has been formed for the consideration of a new building at Phillips County Fairgrounds, reported county commissioners at their Oct. 31 meeting.

The committee will be meeting Wednesday, Nov. 13 to discuss possibilities for a multiple-use building that could replace the two livestock sheds used at the fair for steers, chickens, rabbits, etc.

Committee members will be taking a needs assessment and are simply exploring potential building options and ways to get grant funding.

In addition to the fair, a new building could be used for things like bull sales and therapy riding, as well as housing animals. "You don't build a big building for four days out of the year," said commissioner Joe Kinnie.

Construction projects progress

Phillips County is continuing work on the new storage building to the east of the courthouse on South Campbell Avenue.

The county road and bridge crew was set to finish the sewer system, and the plan was to spread crushed concrete for the parking lot. The laying of sod has been delayed until the spring.

One of the reasons the new building was constructed was to provide space for county records. Since the county sheriff's department can park vehicles in the new building, their former garage next to the courthouse can now be remodeled to house records.

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Commissioners have also approved a \$300 project to install a fence for the waste containers by the sheriff's office at the courthouse square.

At the fairgrounds, a little bit of construction needed to be completed on the bike path in the next week or two. The bike path was extended along the north side of the fairgrounds with Sterling's McAtee Paving completing much of the project Oct. 23.

Commissioners explained the bike path slope down to Frenchman Creek next to Highway 385 will also need to be modified to fulfill ADA requirements for handicapped users.

Commissioners reported lights in the Event Center parking lot at the fairgrounds will be installed in the near future, as the dark parking lot is one of the biggest complaints they get about the new Event Center.

Representation issues continue

Local commissioners continue to look at how to give rural Coloradans more representation in the state legislature.

While the Phillips Plan suggests the Colorado House switches to one representative from each county, Rep. Jerry Sonnenberg has announced a new plan. It is focused on the Senate, giving one state senator to each of the six largest counties by land mass and then pairing the rest of the counties to keep the total number of senators at 35.

"There's two sides to it," said Kinnie.

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Phillips County Administrator Randy Schafer, the initiator of the Phillips Plan, said they were pushing for the House because the numbers were closer between the number of counties and the number of representatives.

“To get anything like that accomplished, there needs to be compromise,” said commissioner Harlan Stern.

Other business

In other business at their October meeting, commissioners:

—approved an annual land lease of 50.5 acres to Duane Harms to farm near the county landfill.

—noted an ambulance study group will take place Wednesday, Nov. 13 to assess what the needs of the county are. The study is provided by a \$10,000 grant from Regional Emergency Medical and Trauma Advisory Council.

—reported they will be signing a petition distributed by Dale Vieselmeyer asking Colorado Department of Transportation for improvements to Highway 23.

—noted an access utility easement as the county decided to vacate 30 feet of the access road that lines up with South Worley Avenue on the south edge of Holyoke. Land on both sides of the access road is now owned by Aaron Worley.

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—noted hours for the road and bridge department switched back to five eight-hour days per week beginning Nov. 4.

—announced the courthouse will be closed until 9:30 a.m. Friday, Nov. 8 for the annual county employee meeting, as well as all day Nov. 11 and 28-29.

—approved the county holiday schedule for next year.

Holyoke Enterprise November 7, 2013