Bonds will pay for resurfacing project.

LEXINGTON—Interest rates have dropped in a little more than a month since Dawson County commissioners began considering bonds to pay for road improvement projects.

In hopes that percentages might fall again over the next four months, county board members decided to hold off locking into a bond rate right now.

During the regular bimonthly meeting on June 15, the board instructed Andy Snyder of Smith Hayes Co. to keep a close eye on rates over the next couple of months and lock in when the county can get the best deal.

The five-year bonds will be used to pay for resurfacing 15 miles of highway from Overton to Sumner on Road 444.

According to county clerk Karla Zlatkovsky, the project does not have to be paid for until it is complete in October.

"The board decided we might be able to get an even better interest rate if we wait until closer to the due date," Zlatkovsky said.

The project bid for $2,692,941 was awarded to Paulsen Inc. of Cozad.

In other action, board members voted to renew the county's health insurance contract with OCI Insurance of Omaha.

Mark Schlange, OCI representative, gave commissioners some options to save money since premium costs are going up.

He said eliminating lasering of plan participants—pinpointing an insured employee or family member as a possible high expense—may cost slightly more initially but will save dollars in the long run.

Zlatkovsky gave an example of a current employee who is ill and has surpassed the $45,000 stop-loss point.

She said because that employee was lasered at the last renewal, the county will have to pay far more than the $45,000 limit.

"With the new option," Zlatkovsky said, "no one will be lasered, no matter how sick they are."

Zlatkovsky said the county and OCI are still working out details of the renewal and final cost estimates are not available.

"Premiums will go up for the county," she said. "We just don't know for sure yet how much."

In other county business, commissioners:

heard an agency update from Terry Krohn, director of Two Rivers Public Health Department. Krohn said the H1N1 virus is still a threat and she expects the H1N1 vaccine to be combined with the regular influenza shot this fall.

voted unanimously following a public hearing to vacate Road 756 between Road 423 and Road 425 as well as portions of 423 and 425 north and south of 756.

Landowner John Mundorf agreed not to disturb the county surveyor’s section corners already in place.

The board also voted to vacate Road 45. It is plotted as a road on county maps but has not been used as one since the early 1960s.

approved upon recommendation of the planning and zoning board six conservation easements between Central Platte Natural Resources District and property owners.

authorized lease agreements for three sheriff’s department vehicles approved earlier this spring.

gave deputy county attorney Kurt McBride authority following a brief closed session to proceed with the bidding process on a tax foreclosure sale.

reappointed Barry McDiarmid of Gothenburg to the Dawson County Visitors Committee.

on the advice of county attorney Liz Waterman, affirmed the denial of county general assistance benefits for Paula Brittain of Cozad. Brittain had a public hearing before the board last month and is in the process of appealing a denial for Social Security benefits.