

County board eliminates grant writer to save money

Written by Deb Egenberger
Thursday, 30 June 2011 00:00 -

DAD will take over duties

LEXINGTON—A vote to sever contractual ties with Dawson County's grant writer has nothing to do with dissatisfaction and everything to do with saving money.

County commissioners voted 3-1 not to renew a \$45,000 annual contract with Janna Pierce, who was hired in August 2005 to write grants for county offices and organizations.

"This is not coming from a dissatisfaction stand point," said board chairman Dean Kugler of Gothenburg. "It's a budget issue."

Commissioners discussed the contract renewal during their regular bimonthly meeting on June 22.

"I've talked to Jen Wolf from Dawson Area Development," Kugler said. "DAD does a lot of grants in the county and I asked if they could pick up the slack if we decide to go without a grant writer."

Wolf assured commissioners her office could continue the grant writing with no lapse in service.

But everyone was not convinced.

"There are some people in the Lexington area who would like to see us continue this contract because of the money Janna has brought in," said Lexington commissioner Bill Stewart, who cast the lone vote against the proposal to discontinue the contract.

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Stewart questioned whether the county would end up paying more to DAD because of a need for additional help to handle the added work load.

Wolf said she has no way of knowing yet if more help would be necessary.

“We’d have to take a look at that over a period of a year,” she said. “My guess is it won’t require that much additional time.”

So far this year, grants written by Pierce have brought \$190,000 into Dawson County, Kugler said.

In other business, commissioners:

authorized, as the board of equalization, deputy county attorney Kurt McBride to negotiate settlement of a 2010 Tax Equalization and Review Commission appeal by John Kreuscher of Gothenburg.

received the monthly crime report from sheriff Gary Reiber, who stated there were 1,440 total calls to dispatch with 910 calls for service. Reiber said criminal mischief complaints are up but those crimes are generally small in comparison to other investigations.

listened to a presentation by Mike Jones of Vision Care Direct to offer individualized vision care plans to county employees.

approved the transfer of owner names for Big E’s in Cozad to Travis and Stacy Munster for the purposes of a keno license.

voted to pay a \$1,450 claim for reimbursement of burial costs for Jay Buss. Jason Tickle of

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Berryman Funeral Home in Cozad told the board Buss qualified for burial benefit through Health and Human Services but the application materials did not get filled out prior to the deadline.

authorized the board chairman to sign the final operating cost agreement for Dawson County Transit. The federal contribution for next year will be \$59,978 with the state and county each contributing \$28,489.

adopted a resolution setting the Railroad Transportation Safety District tax levy at one cent for the next tax year.

accepted a lease agreement with Ameritas to pay for three sheriff's department vehicles previously approved for purchase. Reiber said the pickups will be delivered in mid-July.

discussed frustrations with the Dawson County Transit system and requested transportation reports which include numbers of passengers, where they are picked up, where they are transported to and how much they pay for the service. Commissioners said they need more information to evaluate the efficiency of the program.