

KNRC is fighting to keep feds from listing prairie chicken as 'endangered'

By ELLY GRIMM

• Leader & Times

The Seward County Commission took on a busy agenda at its most recent meeting Monday night.

One of the main topics covered during the meeting was a recent issue concerning the method of procuring commercial tags for vehicles. It sparked some comments from commissioners C.J. Wettstein and Randy Malin.

"We've sold commercial tags in the past, I don't understand what's different now," Wettstein said.

"I remember I was sitting in front of my computer for three hours trying to find the form I needed, and I could not get it to open," Malin added.



Kitty Romine, who presented the matter on the agenda, admitted there are problems and said her department will work to fix the problems.

The commission voted to approve the funds for a new bulldozer as well as for repairs needed to the compactor for the landfill department. The dozer will cost \$368,038. and the repairs to the compacter will be \$258,972. According to landfill director Brock Theiner, both projects were included in the department's capital improvement plan.

The next item on the agenda concerned the matter of funds for Stage IV of the Kansas National Resources Coalition's plan to place the lesser prairie chicken on the endangered species list. Commissioner Jim Rice said the paperwork was all completed and after fixing some issues in other paperwork, KNRC is fixing them, which included adding Nebraska as part of the area. This also sparked a debate between commissioners Rice and Wettstein, who said the measure might open up several other restrictions throughout the state and could cause other problems.

"If we let it come at us, it's going to hurt industries," Wettstein said. "Pretty soon National Beef will be shut down and everyone's going to be off the road for fear of hitting a bunch of prairie chickens with one of their trucks."

Funding for continued membership in KNRC was approved 3-1-1 with Rice abstaining from the vote and Wettstein opposing. Rice has been made a board member of KNRC.

The commission later approved new appointments to the Southwest Medical Center Board for Ray Allen and the JEDC board for James Powell. Both appointments were approved unanimously.

The commission then went into three separate executive sessions for 10 minutes, five minutes and another five minutes. No action was taken after the sessions.

The last items on the agenda were administrative comments and commissioner comments. The meeting adjourned at 7 p.m.

County continues membership in KNRC

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