



By ELLY GRIMM

• Leader & Times

After many months and several upcoming renovations, Liberal's public shooting range will soon have its grand re-opening.

The range was originally closed by the city commission when it was found that the range no longer had required liability insurance.

"I should say, we had liability insurance until they determined that we didn't and they gave us a cancellation notice. So we had it and then we didn't have it so that's when we closed the range," explained part-time Public Works Director Joe Sealey.

Sealey said they then determined renovations that needed to be done on the range. A concept was then sent to the insurance company.

“We said, ‘Here’s what we want to do, and here’s what it will look like when we get finished,’ Sealey said. “The insurance company then reviewed it and said, ‘Fine, if you do this and operate it in a manner that you so state you’re going to operate it, then we’ll provide liability insurance.’”

Sealey said the renovations are indeed extensive. Before, the range was more of an open space and after the renovations, there will be 15 lanes of shooting opportunities, with eight dedicated to pistol and seven dedicated to multi-purpose pistol or rifle.

“We’ll have five or six different shooting distances on the pistol, and then we’ll have nine different on the pistol/combination side where you can move your target stand from three yards to nine yards or whatever the interval,” Sealey said. “And they’ll be lane-specific so you’ll be in your lane so it’ll allow you to consistently shoot in your lane. So if they want to have competitions, there’ll be... It’s kind of like a bowling alley-type thing, you know, you’ll hear lane one is your target and stuff like that.”

While the renovations are not quite finished, yet, Sealey said much of the work has been completed, including all the dirt work.

“All we’ve got to do is get our lanes done, our target stanchings placed and our shooting houses placed and then our video system (we’re going to have video security, a 24/7 live feed) so it can be monitored,” Sealey said of the remainder of the project.

Sealey confirmed, weather permitting, the ribbon cutting on the new range will happen in the next few weeks. He added that the shooting public will be pleased with the renovations and that it will even be easier to get onto the range

“You’ll be able to set an amount of time either 24 or 48 hours so if you’re off on Wednesday, you could go out to the range and say ‘I want to reserve the range from 2 to 4 on Wednesday,’ and it will give the shooting public an opportunity to schedule a time specific for them, and we didn’t have that before,” he said.

Patrons will be able to either call at the golf course (open seven days a week) to check out a key or to reserve a time specific to go out to the range.