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CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

(USPS 032480)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2016

VOLUME 100, NUMBER 14

# The Arnold Sentinel

## Landscaping Project Completed at School

A two-month landscaping project on the west side of the high school has been completed, coming in nearly \$10,000.00 under budget.

Superintendent Dr. Dawn Lewis said the total cost of the project, which started in late June and was finished with laying of sod on August 22, was projected to come in at approximately \$80,000.00, but was actually completed for less than \$70,000.00.

The west side of the building was in need of some TLC for appearance and safety sake, said Dr. Lewis. The side hill was too steep to mow safely, the sidewalks were buckling, the tree roots were damaging the lawn and the ornamental benches around them, and the area where the street met the side hill was damaged and breaking up due to the problems with water run-off and drainage issues.

The project started out with removing the trees and roots, all of the old side walk and damaged staircases. The slope of the lawn was leveled to ensure that the school would be able to properly care for the grass in the future. A retaining wall with a fence was built to prevent possible injury, and the sidewalks were relocated to below the retaining wall.

Dr. Lewis said the school worked with the Village of Arnold to install new culverts and run water lines up to the school in the event that sprinklers would ever need added to the buildings per fire code in the future. In addition, a concrete gutter was added along the sidewalk to direct water away properly.

Crushed concrete was brought in from the edge of the street up to the edge of the sidewalks.

"We have yet to seal that with armor coat, which we will work with the village on as well,"



A new landscaping project on the west side of Arnold School has made a number of improvements, including safety for patrons using the sidewalk and the aesthetic appearance of the building. (APS photos)

said Dr. Lewis. "The improvement has increased the safety for patrons using the sidewalks, increased the amount of parking on the west of the building, improved the handicap access-

bility to our facility, improved the flow of rainwater on the entire block, and greatly improved the aesthetic appearance of the building. We have received many positive

comments from many patrons regarding the appearance and functionality of the project."

Dr. Lewis added that the school would like to extend a huge thank you to Village of Arnold board members for

meeting and working with the school board to complete the project. "The teamwork and support made the project go smoothly!" she said.



Workers complete the final stages of the landscaping project before sod is laid.



Students were involved in laying sod to complete the project.

## Landowners Learn About Proposed Wind Energy Farm

### About 40 Landowners Attend Meeting



Arnold Renewable Energy, LLC, board member Joe Bob Atkins gives a Powerpoint presentation to about 40 landowners at a meeting held last week. (Kendra Veirs photo)

Approximately 40 landowners met at the Arnold Community Center on Wednesday, September 14, at 6:30 p.m., to learn more about Arnold Renewable Energy, LLC, (referred to as the Association), a limited liability company for the purpose of developing a wind energy farm on land located within Arnold School District #89, focusing on an area both north and south of Highway 92 in Logan County.

The board, made up of Joe Bob Atkins, Allen Conner, Craig Halstead, Dave Smith, Eldon Christensen and Renee Bubak, presented information to landowners on the Association.

Payment structure of the Association is spread to all the mem-

bers on a share basis with 50% direct impact acres for the turbines, 25% indirect impact acres for roads and underground wiring, 20% for no impact acres (members and investors) and 5% for the Arnold community fund. Under this rationale, benefits are spread to those directly and indirectly impacted as well as neighbors who will have wind turbines in their view, along with funds to the community.

Landowners can become a part of the Association by contributing \$3.00 per acre for 100 or more acres of ground; and/or a minimum of a \$5,000 investment.

The Association is looking for

25,000 acres of membership and will contribute approximately \$100,000 to the project. Sandhills Wind Energy, LLC is in the process of putting in a MET Tower at their expense.

"The original idea of the AEDC was to have a community-based owned project. That has never left our mind and therefore, Arnold Renewable Energy, LLC was developed to make it a reality," member Joe Bob Atkins said.

Atkins emphasized that uniform payments are beneficial so as to not put people against one another and all land owners sign lease agreements with the Association and the Association signs the lease agreement with the Developer. All members have a vote and input on the project. He also mentioned that there are two local solar projects that have been completed and two separate wind developers who have leased land in the area already.

"Not everyone will have turbines on their property. The Association is a way to get a little return for the people who are not directly impacted but still have to see and hear them," Atkins stated. "Without the Association, only a few people benefit and receive payments."

The initial wind study was completed by the AEDC in 2009 with Wind Energy Consulting and Contracting (WECC), at the cost of \$34,000, paid for by the Arnold City Sales Tax, and is owned by AEDC. The study is the foundation for the current project, with Sandhills Wind Energy, LLC showing interest in this project after WECC put other projects as a priority due to transmission lines being a downside in the area.

"Renewed interest has been

## School Board Adopts Budget, Passes Tax Levy

At last Tuesday night's regular meeting, the Arnold Board of Education unanimously adopted a budget of \$2,817,987.90 and passed a tax request resolution, setting the tax rate at \$.6335 for the 2016-2017 school year.

During the Budget Hearing, Dr. Dawn Lewis compared the last two years to the proposed budget. She said the budget increases have remained quite consistent over the past three years. The majority of the budget increase was due to the addition of a staff member for Title I, and the necessary increases in the veteran staff members' salaries and benefit costs, for a total budget increase of slightly over \$166,000.00 in tax asking.

At the Tax Resolution Request Hearing, Dr. Lewis presented the comparison from last year's tax levy to this year. She informed the board that in order to adopt the presented budget, the necessary general fund and building fund combined levy will be \$.6335, lowered from about \$.65. Due to valuation increases, the lower levy is generating more funds.

No public comment was heard at either hearing.

**Initial Transgender Ruling**  
Information regarding an initial ruling in the transgender case filed by the attorney general was presented, indicating the district court has granted an injunction, halting the federal government from withholding Title IX funds from schools for not complying with the directive to allow transgender students to choose whichever restroom or locker room they prefer. Dr. Lewis said this was an initial "win" for the filers of the lawsuit.

**Legal Counsel Memo**

A memo was presented from legal counsel regarding how schools should respond if students choose to protest during

the National Anthem. The memo stated that freedom of speech is protected, and as long as students are not disruptive to the anthem with their actions, and they respectfully decline to participate, the school is to allow that right. Dr. Lewis compared this to the requirement to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Again, students cannot be forced to participate, and should be allowed to sit quietly while others say the pledge if they so choose.

**Principal's Report**

Principal Joel Morgan reported that the teacher inservice went well. The staff is becoming more familiar with Schoology - an online course management system that allows teachers to create and manage academic courses for their students. He has asked that teachers choose one class to utilize Schoology as they learn the new system. He has also created a student and parent group on Schoology to send out information and announcements.

Staff members also completed the yearly required Suicide Prevention Training through an online program called Kognito.

The ACT report was released for the class of 2016. The class had an average score of 20.2, compared to the state average of 21.4. The ACT is also the new Junior assessment beginning the Spring of 2016.

Current enrollment is 160, compared to 143 one year ago at this time.

Mr. Morgan said the school will be recognizing one elementary and one high school student for going above and beyond in helping others on F'REAL Friday. Teachers will submit nominations on a weekly basis through Schoology.

Part of the focus on promot-

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