

The Arnold Sentinel

“Serving the South Loup River Valley”

THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2022

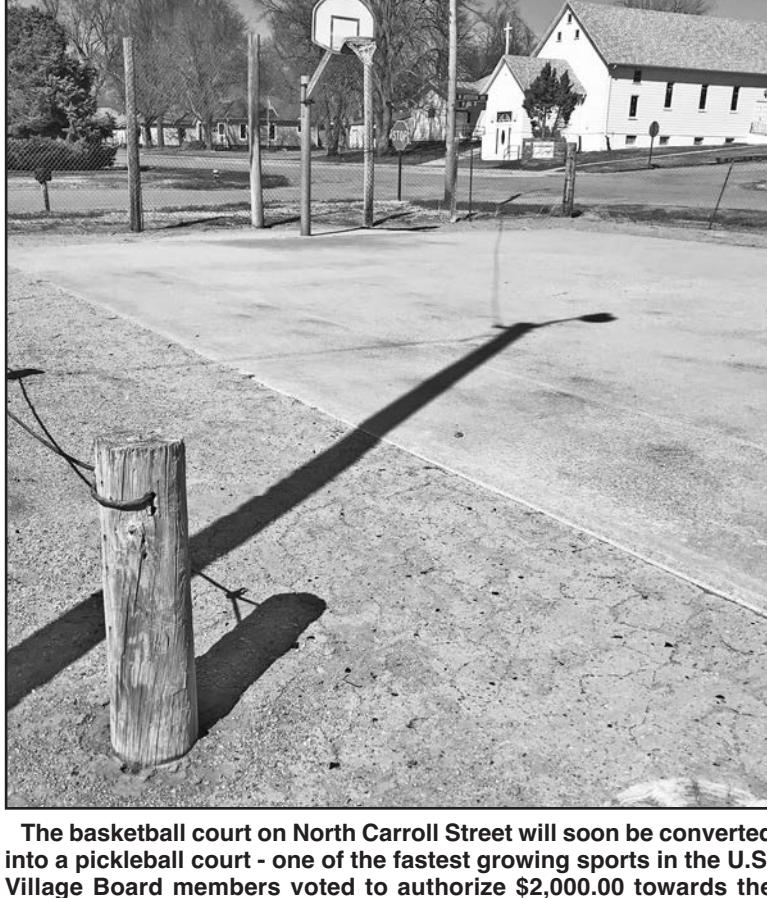
CUSTER COUNTY, ARNOLD, NEBRASKA 69120

(USPS 032480)

SINGLE COPY: 75 CENTS

VOLUME 105, NUMBER 45

Village Board Approves Two Projects at Regular Meeting



The basketball court on North Carroll Street will soon be converted into a pickleball court - one of the fastest growing sports in the U.S. Village Board members voted to authorize \$2,000.00 towards the project at their regular meeting held in April.

During the regular Village Board meeting held on April 11, Irv Jennings, representing Arnold Rotary, discussed the proposed project of an intermittent fence around the recycling trailer and dumpsters on West Washington Avenue. Board member Brent Kulp accompanied Tory Edwards on the trash truck and said that the fence would not cause any problems.

Irv said that he has concerns about the strength of an intermittent fence and would rather go with a continuous fence, which would be one foot from the ground to allow for snow to blow underneath it. He was looking for approval from the Board to proceed with the project and that he would bring specifics to the Board as the project progresses. Board members voted to approve the project, and gave Rotary authorization to proceed.

Discussion on Power Outage

Village Superintendent Doug DeLaune contacted Rich Eymann, Electrical Distribution O & M Specialist with NMPP Energy, about the power outage on Sunday, April 10. Eymann

spoke with Custer Public Power District and there were transmission issues. Discussion was held on automated generators that would provide power to the entire town.

Pickleball Courts

Jimi Cole and Pam Long were at the meeting to discuss converting the tennis courts to pickleball courts. Pickleball is a paddle sport created for all ages and skill levels and is the fastest growing sport in the U.S. Cole said they originally hoped to get permission to convert the tennis courts at Old Mill Park, but the concrete needs a lot of work. The concrete at the basketball court located at 100 Block of West Jefferson is in better shape. She presented quotes on materials to convert the basketball court to a pickleball court and stated that she and Long will donate their time to paint the court.

Board members voted to authorize up to \$2,000.00 from the Edna B. Peterson fund for the conversion.

CDBG Awarded/Steering Committee Formed

The Village has received a letter from the Department of Economic Development giving

notice of release of funds in the amount of \$37,500.00. The CDBG award funds can now be contracted as of March 24, 2022.

Cheryl Carson said the grant would be used for an updated comprehensive plan, zoning ordinances, and a comprehensive housing study. The next step is to put a steering committee together to begin the process and to send a request for proposals for a planning consultant. The following have agreed to be on the steering committee: Glen Bowers, Chairman of the Village Board; Doug DeLaune, Zoning Administrator; Mike Harvey, Planning Commission Member; Gary Larreau, Planning Commission Member, and Cheryl Carson, Economic Development Director.

The individuals are currently working with the comprehensive plan, have knowledge of building codes, zoning and working with ordinances. The steering committee will be responsible for working directly with CNEDD, the Village Board, Planning Commission and the planning consultant to help update the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances, as well as conducting a comprehensive Housing Study. Board members voted to appoint the individuals to the committee.

Consideration of the Request for Proposals for professional service to update the plans, as well as conducting a comprehensive Housing Study will be on the May 9 agenda.

WAPA Proposing Increases

The clerk reported that Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) is proposing a 18.1 percent increase in the firm demand rate and a 15.1 percent increase in the firm energy rate. The new rates would be in effect from January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2027.

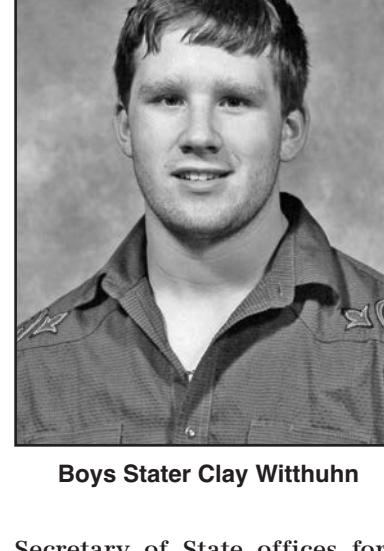
The annual impact to Arnold with the new rates would be approximately \$23,700.00. In addition, Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (MEAN) Board of Directors approved a 6 percent increase in MEAN's energy rate and a 2 percent increase in the wind energy rate for energy sales from MEAN's wind-generation resources. There will be a 2 percent reduction in the overall fixed cost recovery charge allocation to participants. The annual impact to Arnold will be approximately \$3,900.00.

American Legion Post 130 Sending Two to Boys' State

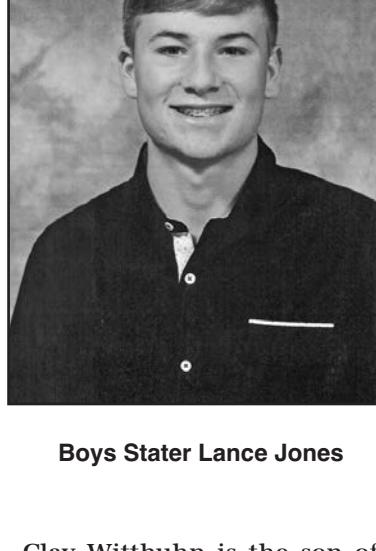
The American Legion Post #130 is pleased to announce that Clay Withuhn and Lance Jones of Arnold were generously sponsored by American Legion Post #130 and will join nearly 225 other high school juniors from across Nebraska participating in the American Legion Cornhusker Boys' State Program, June 5-11, 2022, at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln downtown campus. The annual citizenship program, sponsored by the Nebraska American Legion, is designed to provide youths with a better understanding of how city, county and state governments operate.

American Legion Cornhusker Boys' State is set up as a functional "51st state" and each boy learns how governments subdivisions operate by actually doing the job. Participants will campaign for offices, hold offices, hold elections, take part in band and chorus, compete in athletics, and be involved in other varied activities as part of the citizenship training program.

Special lectures and addresses will be delivered by experienced public officials and professional leaders throughout Nebraska. Invitations have been sent to the Governor and



Boys Stater Clay Withuhn



Boys Stater Lance Jones

Secretary of State offices for special appearances at this year's program. National acclaimed motivational speakers are also scheduled to address the entire group.

Since its inception 1919, The American Legion has been a key advocate for veterans' benefits, patriotic American values, instilling values in young people through numerous programs, and a strong nation defense with focus on quality-of-life issues for those serving in today's armed forces.

Clay Withuhn is the son of Michelene and Ken Withuhn and participants in: football, wrestling, National Honor Society, One Act, Quiz Bowl, and Bible Study Youth Group.

Lance Jones is the son of Suanne and Robert Jones and participates in: football, basketball, track, One Act, National Honor Society, Quiz Bowl, Unified Bowling, 4-H, Methodist Church - Bible Study, Community Service, SORC, Alumni banquet, and Operation Christmas Child.

Nebraska Receives Grade of A+ for Coronavirus Pandemic Response

Receives top marks in *Politico* study, mentioned in *Wall Street Journal*

By Janet Larreau

Governor Pete Ricketts issued a statement on April 13 following news that the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) had graded Nebraska's pandemic response as an A+. Nebraska ranked second nationally on the evaluation, which the *Wall Street Journal's* Editorial Board featured on April 10.

"In Nebraska, we allowed people to live a more normal life, while working together to keep people healthy," said Gov. Ricketts. "We avoided mask mandates, vaccine passports, and lockdowns, and instead trusted the good sense of Nebraskans to do the right thing. Our pandemic approach helped slow the spread of the virus to protect hospitals. At the same time, it provided students the opportunity for in-person learning, gave businesses the freedom to serve customers, and allowed people to stay connected in our communities."

In December, *Politico* gave Nebraska the top marks in the nation on its State Pandemic Scorecard.

Politico's scorecard pulled together what they know so far about how states fared during the pandemic, and how the choices each made impacted its residents, businesses and schools. The scorecard grouped available data for policy outcomes into four categories -

health, economy, social well-being and education - and generates scores in each area between zero and 100.

According to *Politico's* report, if every category were given equal weight - which assumes each priority was of equivalent importance, a policy choice in itself - the top scorer overall would be Nebraska, with an average of 73 out of 100, despite scoring below the national average in the social well-being category (food insecurity, households' economic hardship and violent crime). Nebraska scored a 56/100 in Health, 90/100 in Economy, 49/100 in Social, 95/100 in Education, for an average of 73.

In their editorial, the *Wall Street Journal's* Editorial Board mentioned Nebraska's 2nd place NBER ranking (behind Utah), and said the paper released by the NBER is "the most comprehensive comparative study we've seen to date...and it deserves wide attention... The NBER working paper presents the data straight without policy conclusions, but here's one of ours: The severe lockdown states suffered much more on overall social well-being in return for relatively little comparative benefit on health."

In conclusion the editorial board wrote, "Let's hope we absorb the lessons of these state outcomes for how to respond to the next pandemic - and there will be a next one."