

Effective in May, the Auburn Board of Public Works (BPW) monthly meetings will move to evenings, pending Auburn City Council approval.

Meetings are planned to be the second Thursday each month at 6 p.m. The BPW will seek permission to meet at Auburn City Hall. The board's meeting time needed to be approved by the council in accordance with city ordinance.

The board previously discussed moving to City Hall, but at the time it was difficult to access BPW records. Melissa Sierks, accounting and finance manager, said Internet access was needed because most items are on a network.

The evening meetings would be more accommodating to the public. Chuck Knipe, board member, said he understood why people cannot attend noon meetings.

The board currently meets the second Monday each noon. An evening meeting cannot be the second Monday because the Auburn City Council meets that night. The second Tuesday was discussed, but village boards of Brownville, Johnson and Nemaha, who are served by Auburn BPW, meet that night. It was determined the first Tuesday would be too early. Sierks said some information was not available before the 10th of each month.

### Commercial Lawn Mower Bid Accepted

A Cub Cadet Tank LZ 60 KH commercial lawn mower bid from Mellage Truck & Tractor Inc., Auburn, was accepted for \$6,950. It has a three-year warranty, and all parts and service were available in Auburn.

Other bids received were: \$6,656 for a Grasshopper from Merz Farm Equipment, Falls City; \$7,549 for a Grasshopper from Landis Engine Co. Inc., Nebraska City and \$9,400 for a John Deere from Stutheit Implement, Auburn. The Grasshopper bids did not meet specifications.

### Support Regional Water Study

BPW will submit a letter of support to Nemaha village officials. Nemaha officials are applying for a \$29,000 grant for a regional rural water study. BPW officials will supply information as needed.

There is no financial commitment from BPW. Peru city officials, Johnson village officials and officials of two rural water districts have indicated support of the regional study. Dave Hunter, BPW general manager, presented the proposal to Nemaha village officials Tuesday, March 12. Hunter said he is working with Nemaha village officials, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and JEO on the proposed study.

### Renew Annual Service Agreement For Wastewater Treatment Plant Blowers

The annual service agreement with Gardner Denver was renewed at \$4,912.02. That is a slight increase over \$4,907.11 last year.

The agreement covers the three blowers of the aeration basin at the wastewater treatment plant. Gardner Denver staff will come to the plant to inspect, replace one set of bearings and give BPW a one-year warranty on the three aeration basin blowers. Gardner Denver staff also service blowers at Tecumseh at the same time they are in Auburn.

Hunter called it a good deal and an inexpensive insurance policy. One set of bearings in the blowers is changed annually. The equipment cannot be repaired in house or in Auburn, and would have to be removed and shipped to Gardner Denver for repairs, Hunter said.

Approve Seeking Bids For Trailer to Haul Backhoe,  
Take No Action On Remodeling Office

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Hunter was allowed to advertise for bids on a 20-ton trailer to haul the backhoe. When bids were received, BPW will decide whether to spend the money.

The general manager said he contacted a couple of suppliers and costs for a new trailer were comparable. Quotes were in the range of \$15,000 to \$18,000. Hunter also contacted the State Purchasing Department but no 20-ton trailers were listed.

After discussion, no action was taken on the one bid received for remodeling the BPW office. Terry Fulton, on behalf of TCB Contracting/Lavigne Construction, bid \$18,290 for carpet and \$19,075 for tile. Fulton recommended tile because of the planned use for the board room/office. The only additional expense was about \$1,000 for the electrical work on outlets. Because the office is a public site, a licensed electrician would need to do the work. BPW employees would be able to do demo electrical work.

The board has discussed expanding its board room to accommodate employee safety and employee staff meetings. It was determined there would be less deterioration on tile than carpet.

Dick Hahn, board chair, asked if the board could survive without remodeling the office. He also asked about a possible move of monthly board meetings to City Hall and changing the board's meeting time. By meeting at City Hall, the board members would be looking out at those attending instead of some having their backs to the public, Hahn said.

Chuck Knipe, another board member, asked how pertinent the project was.

Hunter said expanding the board room would help accommodate a larger attendance at board meetings. He said he was unsure how long a remodeling project would take. A safety issue was also involved, he said.

Sierks said the remodeling would limit access to the office staff to those coming in from outside. Hunter and Sierks will continue to address the safety issue.

Tom Gulizia, board member, asked if it was wise to spend money on a remodeling that was not necessary, as the board is trying to hold down rates.

Rich Wilson, board member, said the board needed to prioritize whether it needed a trailer to haul the backhoe or to remodel the office.

Jeff Jeanneret, Auburn City Council member, said the BPW could address the safety issue for the office staff at a lower cost.

### Miscellaneous

A consultant efficiency study proposal from Baker and Associates was tabled to allow BPW to address other issues.

Gulizia said Baker and Associates gave BPW a good scope of services but was disappointed that fees kept increasing, from \$9,000 to \$11,000.

The 2012 financial audit was approved after it was reviewed from representatives of Hamilton and Associates. The board praised Sierks for her work.

A dress code for BPW employees was approved.

As of March 11, BPW summer hours are in effect. Crews will work from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. weekdays. The office is open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.