

NEWS

School Board Okays Wind Consultant Deal

The Archbold Area School Board voted to pay Aaron Godwin of The Renaissance Group up to \$80,000 for consulting services in connection with the ongoing study of wind energy at its Monday, Jan. 11 board meeting.

The vote came after a long discussion and review of the wind project, which started in 2006.

Four members of the wind team— Paul Nafziger, engineer, Bob Aschliman, former school board president, Laura Bickel, teacher in the school district, and Bea Briggs, a retired teacher—discussed the workings of the team.

The group has been working with Godwin, but the school district has no contract for his services. David Deskins, school district superintendent, said Godwin had been paid as the group has moved along.

In a special meeting, Wednesday, Jan. 6, the board approved a contract with The Renaissance Group to act as a consultant during the construction of a wind turbine, and authorized a spending limit of \$80,000.

The board passed the measure as an emergency action because of time restraints imposed by some grants the school has received. If the issue had not been passed as an emergency, consulting services would have been bid. If bidding was required, the district could not meet the deadlines.

But, while the school board has grants for about \$1.1 million of the \$1.5-million cost of a wind turbine, an actual decision to go ahead with the project has not been made.

Warncke

Tony Warncke, board member, had several questions about the decision-making process. He outlined three criteria to use in making the decision whether or not to build a wind turbine.

Financial issues were the first area, which he described as “more cut and dried.”

Education issues were the second area. He asked how a wind turbine would fit into the school’s educational plans.

The third issue was how the wind turbine would fit in the school’s “brand,” or “image.”

Briggs said a new initiative from the state will include requirements for teaching alternative energy topics to students, and a wind turbine would fit.

“Educationally, we’re headed down that road,” Briggs said.

In addressing the branding issue, Briggs said Archbold schools have always been a leader in new teaching techniques and new technologies.

Deskins said the district cannot continue to explore the wind turbine option without Godwin’s help, and Godwin needs a contract in place to continue working with the district.

“He holds the key,” Deskins said.

He said Pettisville, which also is investigating a wind turbine, has set aside \$10,000 to pay Godwin.

Honor Students

Logan Stuckey, AHS ‘07, was named to the dean’s list for the 2009 fall semester at the Ferris State University College of Engineering Technology, Big Rapids, Mich.

Students must have a minimum 3.5 gpa to qualify.

Stuckey is a son of Brian and Lori Aeschliman, Archbold.

Sarah Stuckey, AHS ‘09, was named to the dean’s honor list for the 2009 fall semester at Cedarville University.

She is the daughter of Dan and Julie, Archbold.

Students must earn at least a 3.75 gpa and have no grade lower than a B to qualify.

Andrew Wilhelm, AHS ‘07, was named to the 2009 fall dean’s list at Wheaton (Ill.) College.

He is the son of Julie Wilhelm.

Students must have a minimum 3.5 gpa to qualify.

Library Board Expects Another Funding Cut

The Archbold Community Library Board ended 2009 with \$34,094.73 to carry into 2010, which, with an additional \$18,000 in state funding, should be enough.

The amount will carry the library through until February or March, when the library will receive property tax money from the county.

“I think we’ll be all right,” Joyce Klingelsmith, library director, told board members at the board’s Wednesday, Jan. 13, meeting.

Jennifer Harkey, library fiscal officer, told board members she was able to meet all payroll expenses, and close all purchase orders at the end of the year.

The board won’t receive revenue from the new property tax levy approved by voters last year until February or March.

State Support

Klingelsmith told board members that state support for libraries in Ohio during 2009 was 18.12% less than in 2008. The original estimate was for a 20% reduction.

For 2010, Klingelsmith said she was told libraries can expect a 6% cut from what was received in 2009.

In January 2009, the Archbold Community Library received \$21,327 from the State of Ohio. The January 2010 payment was \$18,251.

The library is expecting about \$210,000 from the State of Ohio for 2010.

In 2008, the library received about \$271,000; in 2009, it was around \$221,000.

Klingelsmith told the board recent legislation to delay the last cut in the state income tax resulted in an additional \$5,300 for the Archbold Community Library.

Electricity

Harkey said the electric bill was down \$1,715 in 2009. The 2008 bill was \$19,404; in 2009, it was \$17,689.

Klingelsmith said the reduction was the result of lights being turned off on Wednesday evenings, Fridays, and Sundays, when the library was closed.

The library closed those days to cut costs.

She said the closures went into effect July 6 of last year, so the cost savings only represent six months of reduced hours.

Circulation

In the circulation report, Helen Rowe, board member, said with reduced hours there were about the same number of patrons visiting the library per day.

The average number per day was 452 for 2008 and 2009, even though the library was open 38 fewer days.

The library issued 133,284 items during 2009, which was down about 11% from 2008.

The number of visitors was down by 20,344, to 76,260.

However, Klingelsmith

said she believes the new patron counter at the front door undercounts the number of visitors.

The old counter was suspected of over-counting. For example, one day, it recorded 572,000 visitors. That’s more than the population of Cleveland.

The number of Internet uses increased by 31, to 9,407.

Insurance

The board approved a change in employee health insurance that did not increase premium costs, but did institute a co-pay for prescriptions once the deductible was met.

Klingelsmith said no one will notice the change unless they suffer a major illness.

The cost to insure the building went up \$109, to \$4,305.

Board members were told the value of the building, about \$1.78 million, was inflated by 4% to arrive at the new premium. Klingelsmith said 15 years ago, the building was constructed for \$1.2 million.

The only way to know the value of the building is to have it appraised, which would cost about \$1,000. Board members approved the new premium.

During the meeting, Judi Rupp was voted board president; Jed Grisez, vice president; and Corinna Miller, secretary. Miller was absent.

Klingelsmith said the Archbold Area School Board appointed Grisez to a third term.

The next meeting is Wednesday, March 10, 7 pm.—David Pugh

Soto Is February Kid Of The Month

Carlos Soto is the February Kid of the Month at Fairlawn Haven Nursing Home, Archbold.

He is the son of Cynthia Ledesma and is a sixth grader at Archbold Middle School. He has a younger sister, Alayna.

Carlos enjoys playing games and soccer when he’s not in school. In school, his favorite subject is science.

Carlos enjoys visiting and playing games with the residents at Fairlawn Haven Nursing Home. He said that “coming to Fairlawn and playing games gives his resident something to enjoy and look forward to.”

Sales Tax Revenue Continues Slide

Sales tax revenue collected by Fulton County vendors continued a downward trend, generating \$281,436.38 in January.

Compared to January 2009, that result is off by \$24,320.67, or 7.95%. In January 2009, Fulton County sales tax generated \$305,757.05.

It’s the second straight January sales tax revenue was down. During the record year of 2008, the sales tax generated \$313,008.42. The 2009 collection was off about 2.3%, and the 2010 collection was down 10% from January 2008.

However, the amount received by Fulton County in January 2010 does not include the one-half of one percent (.5%) increase in the sales tax implemented by the Fulton County Commissioners last September.

Ohio Department of Taxation officials said the county won’t see revenue from the increase until April.

When a person purchases taxable goods and services in Fulton County, vendors collect 7% in sales tax (up from 6.5%).

The vendor sends the tax

Fulton County Sales Tax Revenue

Jan., 2009	\$305,757.05
Jan., 2010	\$281,436.38
Difference (\$)	-\$24,320.67
Difference (%)	-8.0%

Year-to-date, 2009	\$305,757.05
Year-to-date, 2010	\$281,436.38
Difference (\$)	-\$24,320.67
Difference (%)	-8.0%

Information provided by Fulton County Commissioners office. Figures represent sales tax revenue received by Fulton County from the Ohio Department of Taxation, for Fulton County’s 1% share of revenue generated by sales taxes on goods and services in Fulton County. Monthly figure represents money received that month; year-to-date money received from Jan. 1 of that year through the month indicated. Archbold Buckeye chart.

money to the Ohio Department of Taxation, which calculates Fulton County’s 1.5% share, then returns the amount to Fulton County. The process takes about three months.

County vendors began collecting the new, higher sales tax Jan. 1.

Fairlawn Hosts Heart Carnival

Martha Armstrong, activities director at the Fairlawn Haven retirement campus, said Fairlawn will again host the annual Heart Carnival from 7 pm to 8:30 pm, Thursday, Feb. 11.

The event features games, with several activities for young children.

The event is in conjunction with the annual Fulton County Heart Radiothon fund drive. Money raised goes to the Radiothon.

Armstrong said among the more popular games is a cakewalk. Persons walk around a segmented circle. Each segment has a number.

Everyone is told to stop on a number, and then a number is drawn. The person standing on that number is the winner of a cake.

“I don’t know why,” she said, “People just want to win a cake.”

The majority of cakes come from area high schools, and are baked by groups such as the FFA and the Future Career and Community Leaders of America.

How many cakes are given away?

“I’ve never really counted. Probably 40 to 50. I just know it’s stacks and stacks,” Armstrong said.

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