

Lower Sioux Community Tribal Chairman Roger Prescott hands Redwood County Board of Commissioner Chairman Brian Kietscher a check for \$80,000. The community and the county have come together to make the rebuilding of Highway 24 a showcase for public and private enterprise.

Lower Sioux Community, Redwood County combine efforts

By Daryl Thul
Managing Editor

It's not the road less travelled, although it maybe should be - for safety's sake.

With eleven-foot-wide lanes and three-foot-wide (and less in spots) shoulders, County State Aid Highway 24 between Redwood Falls and Jackpot Junction isn't on anybody's favorite road list.

That ought to change between now and Oct. 1, as the above-mentioned stretch will be completely rebuilt by Buffalo Bituminous.

The Redwood County Board approved the project and awarded the bid in recent months - the Gazette published articles on it, as well.

The purpose behind this story is to share the public-private cooperation that is making the road less safe

more safe.

Roger Prescott, Chairman of the Board of the Lower Sioux Community Tribal Council, presented a check for \$80,000 to the Redwood County Board of Commissioners Tuesday, the tribe's voluntary contribution to the work being completed.

"We welcome the opportunity to work together with the county to improve our local transportation system," Prescott said. "This shall serve as an example that local enterprises can work together with local agencies to address transportation needs and develop solutions that benefit all users of our local highway system."

Here's how the financing of the project works: Roughly four years ago, the Redwood County Highway Department developed the re-build plans as a federal project, and it was ultimately approved.

Of the \$1.114 million in construc-

tion costs, the federal government will pick up \$880,000. The state government, under a transportation improvement program, will contribute \$265,000.

While the two figures in the previous paragraph do add up to the full amount needed for construction of the project, neither the feds nor the state deal in design or project administration costs - hence the local need.

Normally, the county would eat the full design and administration costs - generally about 15 percent of the construction costs, but in this case, the Lower Sioux Community came forward and offered to help.

According to Redwood County Highway Engineer Ernie Fiala, the local responsibility will be \$160,000.

"Active involvement by local groups helps us to achieve our goals," Fiala said. "They didn't have to do this."

Redwood Falls City Council sells \$900,000 in g.o. bonds

By Daryl Thul
Managing Editor

If the Redwood Falls Community Center is nothing more than designs on pieces of paper at this stage, Tuesday afternoon's special Redwood Falls City Council meeting puts some money behind those plans.

The council, approved the sale of \$900,000 in general obligation bonds to Cronin & Company at a true interest cost of 5.2303 percent over the life of the 25-year indebtedness.

The city, which will actually receive \$889,200 for the bonds (according to City Bond Consultant Bill Fahey, the dis-

parity is due to issuance costs and the underwriter's discount - both standard in transactions such as these).

The funds, which will be deposited and draw interest until they are needed, will ultimately provide the project with \$903,382 in May 2000.

The city will make payments against the bonds every May, starting with \$41,337 in the year 2000 and roughly \$62,000 in subsequent years.

The interest rate will start at 4 percent and rise slowly to 5 percent by the year 2011, and then top out at 5.25 percent for the final five years of the contract.

Five companies bid on the

bonds, with three of the investment firms within three-one-thousandths of each other. Fahey said he was pleased with the bids.

When asked how close the bond sale came to projections, Fahey explained that the numbers for any given year are within \$500 to \$700 (very close), but that changing legislative changes to property tax laws and an increase in some credits could change what an individual property owner would pay in any given year.

The total amount of interest the city will pay over the life of the bonds is \$796,829.

Rural forum planned for Monday night

state organizations who named the social and economic crisis as a priority. A 14-member rural response team developed the forum.

"We want to figure out what are the best strategies and where we can go from here," said Spanier.

Governor Jesse Ventura and a representative of the U.S. Department of Agriculture are the expected special guests during the live broadcast.

People attending the forum in Redwood Falls may participate in the discussion, as questions may be called in to the program during the meeting. Extension educators Wayne Hansen and Mary Hedin will oversee the Redwood County forum.

"We still need to do some talking," said Spanier. "How do we handle rural response? How do we make rural communities resilient?"

many benefits. He likened the rural crisis to the Y2K issue in that plans should be in place for dealing with these situations.

"If we know they are going to happen, how do we prepare for those things?" questioned Spanier. "How do you help farmers best deal with the change and the shift with the ag situation?"

While the answers may not be available during Monday night's forum, it may be clear that the rural crisis is growing across the

state.

Future forums are planned at Farmfest, and Aug. 30 at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. Both of those forums may also be viewed from the Redwood County Extension Office.

The University of Minnesota Extension, Association of Minnesota Counties, Minnesota Department of Agriculture and Minnesota Bankers Association spearheaded the project.

WEATHER

Forecast: Brief respite as cool front lowers humidity

	Hi	Lo	Pcp.
Monday	87	57	.00
Tuesday	89	65	.22
Wednesday	92	67	.19
Thursday (8 a.m.)	67	66	.00
Year ago	70	52	.00

Record high this date: 103 in 1933
Record low this date: 41 in 1928
Most precip: 1.73 inches, 1977

Counties control state highway dollars for cities with populations of less than 5,000, and the Wabasso project will primarily utilize monies from the county's state-aid municipal account (a small portion of the project is actually outside of the municipal limits, and the county's state-aid county account will provide the funds).

Of the four companies bidding on the project, two came in below the engineer's estimate of \$739,031. Mathiowetz was low bidder.

The county has had to secure additional right-of-way and easements for the Highway 13 project, as to allow for a better ditch slope out into the fields, and a single hold-out remains.

According to Assistant County Attorney Tim Mellor, a meeting will be set up with the property owners later this month.

In other county news, the County Ditch 69 Improvement Project is nearing its completion, but not without some problems.

No less than eight individuals who own property adjacent to the buried tile system came to Tuesday's hearing, explaining that several things are out of line, from their point of view.

The county board, which will wait to make the final payment of \$25,500 to the contracting firm out of Iowa until the situation is resolved, asked Bolton & Menk Engineer Andy Kehren to look into the matter and report back at the hearing's continuance in early July.

At issue are a sink hole along a county road, a \$1,500 tile extension project that needed to be done after the contractor left and property not returned to the state that it was in after completion of the project, among other things.

Finally, the board authorized regular status to Public Health Nurse Michelle Stotesbury effective July 1 in a personnel action.

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