

City makes purchases

Kirksville buys maintenance equipment, upgrades infrastructure

BY SHIHARA MADUWAGE
Staff Reporter

The Kirksville City Council approved several new purchases during their meeting Monday through an agreement with the Bank of Kirksville for lease-purchase financing.

Municipalities use lease-purchase financing through banks to purchase property and maintenance equipment through installment lease payments.

The approved purchases include upgrading the computer infrastructure, new maintenance equipment for baseball and softball fields, a used ground power unit for the Kirksville Regional Airport and new backhoes, tractors and snow carts for the city's street and utility maintenance divisions.

Kirksville City Clerk Vickie Brumbaugh said any purchase over \$10,000 has to go through a process that includes calling a number of companies to bid and selecting the company with the lowest bid to purchase the item.

"Once the City Council has ap-

proved the bid, the department notifies the company to say they were the approved bidder," Brumbaugh said. "Then the purchase is made."

Brumbaugh said the purchases are on a rotation basis and some of the old items are sold as the Council approves the purchase of new ones.

"In some instances, they can be traded in," Brumbaugh said. "[But] sometimes there is no value to it to be traded."

Finance Director Laura Guy said she approved the agreement with the Bank of Kirksville for lease-purchase financing to allow for the upgrading of computer equipment.

"We have a computer network infrastructure that was last updated in the fall of 2005," Guy said. "This basic plan is to upgrade it, expand it. It is a watchful need."

She said the Council sought the company that could provide them with the lowest interest cost and lowest cost overall for the lease-purchase financing. She said they invited 12 local banks to bid and five responded.

"The bank that provided us with the lowest cost, lowest interest rate, was the Bank of Kirksville," Guy said.

She said the annual interest rate Bank of Kirksville provided them was 3 percent, meaning that for four years, the interest will be \$13,010.



Mayank Dhungana/ Index

With lease-purchase financing through the Bank of Kirksville, Kirksville City Council is buying maintenance equipment for parks and streets, as well as upgrading the computer infrastructure.

Truman prepares to distribute census packets

BY DAN WARNER
Staff reporter

The 2010 census is set to begin next month, and Truman and Kirksville are preparing to conduct an accurate count of residents.

Residence Life Director John Gardner said the task of counting the approximately 2,600 students living on campus is still in the planning stages, but it will be a collaborative effort between Residence Life and the census bureau conductors.

Gardner said Residence Life plans to have hall directors and student advisers distribute census packets to residents in early April, which they will then fill out and return. Gardner said he anticipates problems with people filling them out and returning them on time and with some students being confused by the wording on the 10-question census forms.

Gardner said Residence Life hopes student will see it as their responsibility to cooperate with the census.

He said Truman students are supposed to be counted in Kirksville rather than at their permanent residences.

Student Senator Junior Adam Crews said Truman currently is working to create a drop-off point for census packets on campus. He said he was told there will be a part of the census form that

asks if anyone in the household is living away from home at college. This way, students will still be listed on their parents' forms but will not actually be counted as living in their parents' homes.

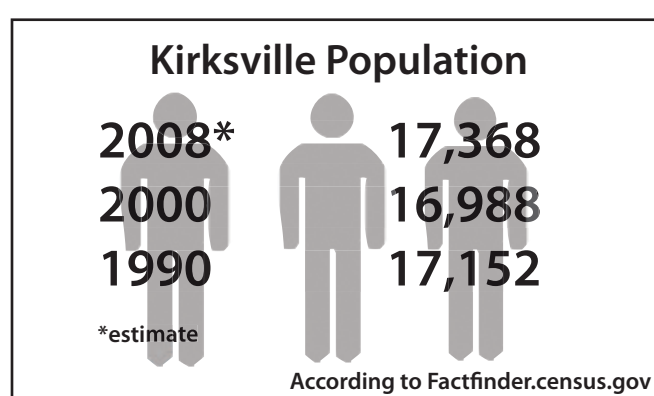
The census form will consist of 10 questions pertaining to residents of the home as of April 1, 2010, information on the type of home as well as age, gender and ethnic background of each resident in the home, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

City Council member Todd Kuhns said counting on-campus residents as Kirksville residents is not a new practice, but there still are difficulties in getting an accurate count of college students.

"In most communities with universities, the population ends up getting undercounted because the student body does not get accurately counted," Kuhns said. "We're going to struggle to get an accurate count so that [Kirksville's population] stays where it is."

Kuhns said the reason for counting Truman students as Kirksville residents is because the census tries to get an accurate count of where people are living at the moment the count is taken. Achieving this accurate count takes a lot of coordination, Kuhns said.

"The city is putting quite a bit of effort into the census,



and they have pre-coordinated efforts they are tackling," Kuhns said.

He said City Council has regular updates on the progress of the census, but because there is an assigned committee for the task of conducting the census they have not focused on the updates directly.

City Finance Director Laura Guy said the census is important to Kirksville's funding because the city receives some state distributions as a proportion of Kirksville's population compared to the entire population of Missouri.

Guy said some distributions such as sales tax, field tax and licensing fees are not based on what is sold in Kirksville, but on population proportion. Because of this, Kirksville does not want residents to be mistakenly counted in other states or cities, which would then receive Kirksville's fair share of money.

Guy said Kirksville would prefer to see a growth in population because businesses looking to start in or relocate to Kirksville want to see a population increase. An accurate count also is important to incoming businesses because

it provides them with a clearer picture of the labor market, Guy said.

Guy said that because of such considerations, there is an important non-financial impact on the city that will come from the census. She said funding for the census does not come out of Kirksville's budget but is provided separately.

Crews said there will be a census kickoff event March 4 in Georgian Room C of the Student Union Building, at which speakers will discuss the importance of the census.

Census representative Ronnie Watkins will speak about the overall importance of the census, Kirksville Mayor Martha Rowe will discuss the effect of the census on the city, and Provost Troy Paino will explain why it is important to Truman.

Crews said the event should last less than an hour and is open to the public. Refreshments and attendance prizes will be provided.

Junior Joey Shelton, Student Senate chairman of External Affairs, said the event is customary for the census and is meant to show community leaders that Truman wants to support them in endeavors such as the census.

Students receive tax credits for flood

BY DAN WARNER
Staff Reporter

If money is tight for Truman students, the federal government can save the day with tax credits to help them continue their education.

Floods in 2008 made Adair County an official disaster area and made Truman students eligible for twice the amount of money offered in the Hope Tax Credit and Lifetime Learning credit.

The double-credit stems from the Midwestern Disaster Tax Relief Act of 2008, according to the IRS. This act made relief that was available to the Hurricane Katrina disaster area also available to Midwestern areas affected by presidentially-declared natural disasters. These disasters were specifically flooding that took place between May 20 and August 1, 2008, and Adair County was included on the list of disaster area counties.

The Hope Credit is normally worth up to \$1,800, and the Lifetime Learning credit is worth up to \$2,000, according to the Internal Revenue Service.

Alan Davis, associate professor of accounting, said the double-credits lasted only through 2009, but people filing their tax returns for 2009 can still count it. Davis said most students cannot claim tax credits, but their parents or legal guardians can.

Davis also said the

double-credits can only be used for those two existing credits and not the American Opportunity Credit, which the stimulus plan created last year.

Professor of Accounting Scott Fouch said the American Opportunity Credit is worth up to \$2,500 and is 40 percent refundable, which means up to \$1,000 returned to the taxpayer.

"Normally you can only get back from taxes what you've paid in," Fouch said. "But a refundable credit allows [you] to potentially get back more money than you [initially paid]."

Fouch said the full American Opportunity Credit is available to any student in their first four years of college if their parents or legal guardians have a combined income of \$160,000 or less, and the credit is then phased out up to \$180,000.

"It's a much higher phase-out range than what [was available before]," Fouch said.

Fouch said the credit counts for the 2009-10 school year, but it might be extended. He said this credit is better than the Hope Credit, and it is unique in the wide range of incomes eligible for credit.

Fouch said the credit is defensible even considering the federal government's budget woes.

"I think anything that makes college education more affordable long-term is probably good for the country," Fouch said.



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