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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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County Board at odds over property proposal

By Brad Kuhn

Sod flew Tuesday at the Lancaster County Board meeting.

Commissioner Stephanie Armitage expressed her strong objection to the proposed purchase by the county of an 8.6 acre tract of land owned by the state. The state has placed a \$100,000 price tag on the undeveloped land located south of Van Dorn in the Wilderness Park area.

Lobbyists for the proposal included Joe R. Seacrest, chairman of the Crescent Greens Park committee. Seacrest sponsored a luncheon for commissioners and state officials to discuss the proposal just prior to the 1:30 board meeting.

The proposal is controversial because the county had voted to purchase the land in 1977. At that time the land was valued at \$20,000. The land was to be added to Wilderness Park.

State officials asked the county to wait until a lawsuit regarding the state acquisition of park land was resolved, because the state might need to change the route of the proposed West Bypass connecting Highway 77 with Interstate 80.

The county agreed to wait. In 1979,

the land was rezoned from rural-public use to industrial use causing the value of the property to soar.

At the luncheon, Mike DeKalb, city planner, showed maps of the area and explained that the area was rezoned to more accurately reflect the possible usage of the land. He said that the zone change was part of a routine update of Lincoln's Comprehensive Plan and was not proposed by the owner of the property.

The state resolved its lawsuit last year and purchased the 8.6 acre tract in December for \$151,350, based on a verbal agreement with the county agreeing to then purchase the land from the state.

The county commissioners signed a written confirmation in April 1983 of their intent to buy the property. No price was agreed upon.

All of the commissioners said that if they had been confronted with the \$100,000 price before the state purchased the land, they would have reconsidered their offer.

Armitage claims that she was coerced into signing the agreement.

"I was told I had no choice," she said.

Continued on Page 2

Hoch: NU is best investment

By Gene Gentrup

The University of Nebraska is the most important investment the state makes in itself, NU Regent Nancy Hoch said Tuesday.

Hoch spoke at a forum in the Nebraska Union honoring students, faculty and outstanding alumni of UNL's Teachers College. Her speech was one of several activities of the first annual Teachers College Day, sponsored by students in the college.

A recent survey conducted by the University of Northern Illinois indicated that the UNL student teachers program was first among 902 programs at institutions across the United States.

Emphasizing the importance of a "positive approach" toward the productivity of UNL's student body, Hoch told students that they represent the university everywhere and are the ones who must tell others of its merits.

Hoch said that after attending a recent conference of land grant universities, she believes many other schools face more critical issues than UNL.

"I think we have something to be proud of," she said. "There are many institutions worse off than us."

Hoch said that although the general approach toward colleges and universities focuses on the word "merit," she believes more emphasis should be placed on the word "product."

"The people in this state are proud of this institution and most of them are yet unaware of many other great things this school has to offer. The students who graduate from this school are the examples of the 'finished product,'" she said.

The federal government's recent cutbacks in research are hurting education at a time when a serious commitment to it needs to be made, Hoch said.

The state's leaders need to make such a commitment, she said.

"Governor Bob Kerrey should be the No. 1 supporter of education," Hoch said. "I was encouraged by his support for the new food production processing center at UNL. He must realize that education is the best tool for strengthening this nation," she said.



Staff photo by Craig Anderson

Makin' Moonshine

A full November moon rises over Lincoln in clear skies. But as the Huskers prepare to go "stormin' into Norman," Nebraskans get ready for gray skies and snowstorms.

Holiday travelers advised of safety precautions

By Kema Soderberg

When winter punches in as you clock out for Thanksgiving, traveling there is not as much fun as being there.

As winter's first major storm blows into Nebraska this week, holiday travelers should take measures to ensure a safe trip through hazardous conditions, said two state travel officials.

Robert Clark, manager of the Cornhusker Motor Club, said people should take extra food and clothing and keep plenty of gas in their cars in case they are stranded. In addition, he said, drivers should maintain the same speed limits as other and be aware of the effects of being overtired.

Clark said closed windows, crowded cars and heaters can cause fatigue. A tired driver should crack a window or stop the car and take a walk, he said.

Fred Zwonechek, administrator of the Nebraska Office of Highway Safety, said people should be conscious of their driving at all times. He said drivers constantly make several major decisions and warned that alcohol and drugs can dull common sense.

Zwonechek said people have to accept that they can be involved in a fatal or injurious accident. He said travelers should wear seat belts and be sure their cars are in proper condition.

Planning ahead also is important so that travelers aren't delayed by weather, Clark said. He said road conditions can vary within a 40-mile radius and traveling a longer route sometimes can be quicker.

Travelers can call 477-4533 in Lincoln and 553-5000 in Omaha for state road reports. If en route, they can contact a local state patrol office.

Weather today promises to be cold and snowy, and roads in western Nebraska are reported to be snow packed with more on the way.

However, the weather on Thanksgiving will probably be clear and cold.

According to the United States Weather Bureau there is 60 percent chance of snow today with accumulations of one to two inches. The high temperature should be around 30.

The weather on Turkey Day will be mostly sunny and cold with the high in the low to middle '30s.

A check of Nebraska's road conditions Tuesday night revealed that most of the western and northern areas of the state had snow-packed roads with more snow on the way.



Staff photo by Craig Anderson

NU Regent Nancy Hoch

Wednesday

Inside

• Administration officials approve a new plan for distributing grade reports Page 2

• UNL students react to the television movie "The Day After" in today's Campus Quotes Page 4

• Wrestling coach Bob Fehrs hopes his Huskers can bounce back from their worst defeat in four years Page 10

Index

Arts and Entertainment 8
Classified 12
Crossword 12
Editorial 4
Off The Wire 2
Sports 10