



Ainsworth Bridges Summer School Visits Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park Ainsworth City Council Discuss JEO Sewer Study

By Sarah Carpenter

On Friday, July 14th, Ainsworth Community Schools Bridges Summer School students and staff visited Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park in Royal, NE, thanks to a grant from the Brown County Community Foundation. Driver Joey Finley had a full bus with 31 students and 12 Bridges staff. The students spent the week prior to the trip studying fossils.

The week began with Secondary Principal Bill Lentz sharing some fossils from his personal collection. Students also toured the Sellors-Barton Museum, where tour guide Wendy Smith guided students through the local collection of fossils. In order to be prepared for Friday's field trip, students explored the Ashfall Fossil Beds' website.

Students and staff were greeted at Ashfall Fossil Beds by Park Superintendent Rick Otto. Otto provided a brief explanation of what created the Ashfall Fossil Beds. Students viewed a picture of animals surrounding a waterhole to get an idea of what they would be seeing.

While on the tour, students were given the opportunity to ask college student interns questions about the fossils and the site.

McAndrew Elementary student Jace Johnson, who wants to be a paleontologist someday, asked one of the interns how he got a job working at Ashfall Fossil Beds. Johnson learned that you must have at least one year of college in the department of either geology or biology.

"Paleontology is a marriage of the two sciences," said intern Colton Snyder.

Snyder explained it will probably take another 15 to 20 summers to

complete the work of digging at the Hubbard Rhino Barn.

Zoey O'Dea enjoyed "going back in time" as she walked down the hill to the rhino barn. Denyon Peacock reported his favorite thing to see was the skeleton of the unborn baby rhino.

Students found it funny that the interns working on the excavation floor were barefoot. Denyon Peacock asked and learned why. Shoes can pick up ash and may destroy the bones. Intern Raymond told

students that with bare feet, they can just brush off the ash using one of the brushes. Peacock also asked what workers do with the ash. The ash is put in a bucket, taken to a small loader and later buried.

Some students had the privilege of visiting with intern Raymond, who was working on excavating a newly-found bone. He had only worked for about three hours on his project at the time of our visit, so not much had been uncovered.

Because of this, interns were unable to determine what the fossil was a part of yet.

McAndrew Elementary student Chris Fernandez enjoyed watching Raymond dig up his newly found fossil. Conner Hollenbeck enjoyed looking down over the Hubbard Rhino Barn excavation site from the upper level balcony.

Along with visiting the Hubbard Rhino Barn and visitor center, students explored the heritage center,

where they dug for pretend fossils using brushes and practiced assembling skeletons. Morgan Kinney, Willie Biltoft, Ryan Salzman, Trevor Johnson, Kaden Evans, Brayden Lawrenz and Chris Fernandez worked as a great future paleontology team as they dug for bones. For more information on

Ashfall Fossil Beds, visit ashfall.unl.edu.

The Ainsworth City Council discussed a Wastewater Facility Plan conducted by JEO Consulting Group, Inc. The City of Ainsworth had received a grant to pay for the study of Ainsworth's waste water system.

The plan presented by JEO was broken into three priority segments, covering lift station repairs and modifications, backup power for lift stations, radio read meters to replace present water meters, sewer main replacement and CIPP lining improvements (cured-in-place-pipe which is a lining for sewer lines to be used instead of replacing the lines).

City Administrator Lisa Schroedl said the council should decide if they want to pursue any of the funding options for any of the projects or if the council wants to close the project and not pursue anything at this time.

Councilman Deb Hurless commented, "Since we have money in the city's accounts from sewer, water and streets, we should go ahead and do something."

Schroedl said that many of the city's sewer lines are in bad shape. The city spends approximately \$30,000.00 per year to have sewer lines cleaned of roots either by cutting or foaming.

According to Schroedl, foaming the lines works but causes problems for the waste treatment plant.

This is a bandaid fix for the sewer lines and maybe should be a priority.

Schroedl said that the money in the various accounts must be used by those departments, i.e. street funds for streets, water funds for water and such.

After further discussion, Hurless

made a motion to have JEO pursue funding options for CIPP lining improvements and radio read water meters.

Consent Agenda

The council opened the meeting with all councilmen present. They approved the Consent Agenda, which included approval of minutes, claims, treasurer's report and department head reports.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Rice offered his report, which covered the Board of Adjustment and Planning Commission.

The Council approved appointing Avery Gurnsey as the legal service provider for the City of Ainsworth LB840 funds. The council will consider appointing a backup provider for Gurnsey in case there is a conflict of interest.

The council voted to appoint John Pierce to the Economic Reuse Plan Review Committee / LB 840 Loan Committee and reappoint

Greg Soles to the same committee.

Alley Problem

Rich Goochey met with the council to discuss an alley problem behind his business located on 2nd Street in Ainsworth.

Goochey said that presently he has problems accessing the back of his building from the alley.

The city's alley runs directed behind the buildings from east to west, but currently the driving lane for the alley cuts across private property.

According to Goochey, the Ainsworth Fire Department had a problem getting its equipment down the alley when there was a fire at the Shawn Fernau building.

City crews have smoothed the area now being used as an alley, but it goes on to private property.

Councilman Greg Soles said that the City of Ainsworth shouldn't be maintaining private property for an alley and should be using the

actual alley.

Schroedl said she would contact building owners and renters to get vehicles and such moved off the alley so it can be used.

Insurance

The council approved renewal coverage for insurance by the League Association of Risk Management (LARM) for the 2017-18 Pool Year.

Budget Workshop

The council set Wednesday, August 16th as the date for the 2017-18 Budget Workshop. The workshop will start at 2:00 p.m. in the conference center.

Schroedl said she gave department heads until July 21st to get their budget requests presented for the council review at the workshop.

The next regular meeting of the Ainsworth City Council will be held on August 9th at the Ainsworth Conference Center.



Summer school students watch as University of Nebraska-Lincoln intern Raymond works at one of the fossil digs.



Enjoying the field trip to Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park were Wanda Raymond, Vanessa Taylor, Abby Holmes, Andrew Miller, Brock Contreras, Payton Sorensen, Lauren Allen, Holly Esterly, Conner Hollenbeck, Denyon Peacock, Everleigh Olinger, Graham Duester, Haley Happold, Kyle Fernandez, Raylynn Reagan, Zaine Evans, Jace Kremer, Macey Flynn, Ryan Happold, Zoey O'Dea, Miranda Raymond, Hayes Chohon, Chris Fernandez, Jace Johnson, Kaden Evans, Tatum Sorensen, Trevor Pike, William Biltoft, William Reagan, Morgan Kinney, Ryan Salzman, Kortney Kronhoffman, Cheyan Temple, Kathy Jeffers, Scott Fernandez, Adriana Llano, Jean Hunt, Brayden Lawrenz, Levi Truitt-Cole, Trevor Johnson and Shari Johnson.



Brock Contreras gets a closer look at some fossils.