

Midland Steel
PO BOX 527
WATHENA KS 66090-0527

The Kansas CHIEF

Oldest newspaper in the state of Kansas (established in 1857)

CONSOLIDATED WITH HIGHLAND VIDETTE AND WATHENA TIMES
DONIPHAN COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER



Proud to be
American!

Remember those who are serving our country!

75¢ per copy

Board members okay 50-cent employee pay hike

We also have a lot of people on the verge of retirement, and it may be hard to replace them."

Geiger added, "It would behoove the future, to spend some time reviewing salaries. It would not hurt to review/discuss this issue."

Geiger then commented, "To cut the chase, the biggest problem would be with the Road and Bridge Department -- with the people who operate machinery, run a truck or grader, etc. Maybe it's time to raise an operator wage."

Geiger then remarked, "We would probably have to take some heat. But a discussion that needs to be

County Attorney Charles Baskins indicated one problem is that the cost of (not taking) insurance has been adjusted in 10 years. Employees get paid a little more if they don't take the county insurance.

For those employees not taking insurance, the county allows a \$1.50 per salary increase.

Geiger then questioned, "Do we have any other ideas that could be beneficial to our employees?" Geiger suggested a January meeting to have all department heads in, at the time, "to share some thoughts." Geiger reasoned, "This would be a good way to save the county some money, but to operate better."

While discussing the insurance issue, it was said that the county now

spends about \$700,000 for employee insurance."

This quickly led to Collins adding, "The law says we must provide insurance." And County Clerk Peggy Franken offered, "it must be affordable."

Geiger stressed that the county "is fairly low on salaries."

When he questioned what percentage of employees live in the county, the county clerk indicated all but one.

Geiger then remarked, "Then that 50-cent raise is going to come back to the county."

"I don't like across-the-board raises. But, we don't have an alternative right now."

It was indicated the county presently has 88 employees. With the average insurance costing \$1,000 a month, it was said the county pays \$700 and the employee pays \$300.

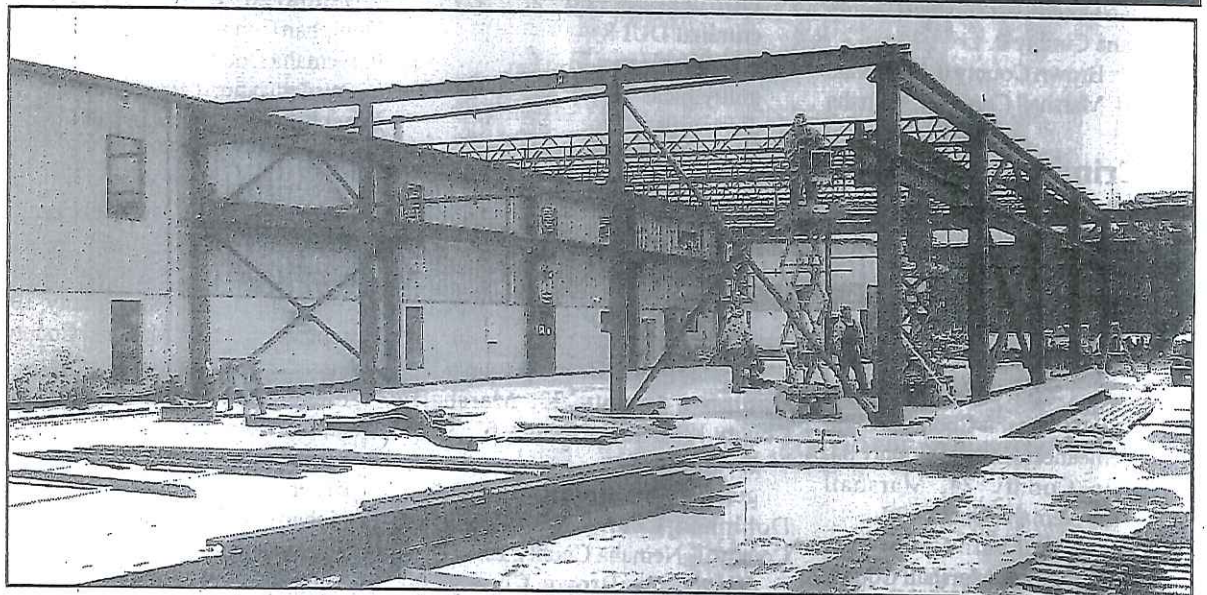
Geiger said he would support having a committee, composed of de-

See County, page 2

Riverside Board meeting changed

The Riverside USD 114 January Board of Education meeting has been postponed until Monday, Jan. 22 at 6:30 P.M. at the Riverside District Office, 1409 Vermont, Elwood.

Judicial District caseload report



Expansion underway at Midland Steel

By Paul Stewart
Chief reporter

An expansion project is underway at Midland Steel Co., located at 202 Boeh Lane at the eastern edge of Wathena, just to the south of Highway 36.

The 50-by-90 foot shop addition will house the handrail and lightweight architectural items, which have been in the main production space.

The current site work and framing is being done for the parent company by Midland Steel Erection, of Riverside, Mo.

A history of the company, available at www.midlandsteelco.com, states:

The founders of Midland Steel Co. were looking for a life change in the early 1960s.

They were working at St. Joseph Structural Steel, in St. Joseph, Mo., and decided they would strike out on their own and create a structural steel company.

In January of 1965 they purchased an existing fabrication steel shop and created Midland Steel Co.

In 1980, Midland Steel moved its headquarters to a new, custom-constructed building in Wathena.

One of Midland Steel's first large jobs was to erect the buildings on the new campus of Missouri Western State College (now university) in St. Joseph. Through the years, Midland Steel has continued to help the campus develop new buildings, and make renovations, including recent improvements to the football stadium.

If there is one theme that has remained a constant at Midland Steel, it's consistency of growth.

When new railroad access came (to the Wathena area), Midland Steel was able to buy steel directly from the steel mill. And, as the company grew, they began landing contracts for strip malls, schools, and other structures within the local community.

Midland Steel's craftsmanship also expanded from the local community and into the Kansas City region, working on projects for the Kansas Speedway, Kansas City Chiefs, Nelson-Atkins Art Gallery, Hollywood Casino, Harley Davidson, Kansas City Zoo, Kansas University Lied Center, the Sprint campus, Staley High School, Olathe Northwest High School, and many more.

Like other construction companies, Midland Steel has weathered recessions and down times, but has continued to offer excellent fabrication and erection services, both locally and regionally.

One setback came with the flood of 1993, which saw the Missouri River spill over the levees and eventually envelop the company's headquarters. The founders of the company had to take a boat in to assess the damage, wading through waist-high water. But even that couldn't hold the company back.

Midland Steel continued to grow. Bolstered by the strong work ethic of its 65 employees, many who come from an agricultural background, Midland Steel has earned a reputation for getting the job done on time, and with an eye on excellence.

Today, the company continues to thrive, and now includes Midland Steel Erection, close to downtown Kansas City, which keeps them in close proximity to all the renovation projects Midland Steel has become involved with in Kansas City's downtown district.