

Thursday, April 28, 2005

THE HUTCHINSON NEWS

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Community Page	Lottery Numbers	Newspaper in Education	Search	Subscribe	Featured Ads
--------------------------------	---------------------------------	--	------------------------	---------------------------	------------------------------

FRONT PAGE

LOCAL

[Briefs](#)

[Transcript](#)

REGIONAL

OPINION

OBITUARIES

SPORTS

HEALTH &

FITNESS

CLASSIFIED

SPECIAL

SECTIONS

PAST ISSUES

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[Send this page to a friend](#)

Developer: 17 committed to buying golf course community lots

By [Mary Clarkin](#)

Cottonwood Hills President Lane Neville said 17 buyers are "committed to move forward" and buy lots in the golf course development when the platting process concludes and lots can be sold.

Neville hopes the project reaches that milestone "within the next 30 days."

About half of those prospective buyers are from outside Reno County, he said, and most of those outside the county also are from outside Kansas.

The Arizona-based Neville came to the Reno County Commission meeting Wednesday to provide an update on the master planned golf community at East 4th Avenue and Buhler Road.

The first individual committing to a town home, Neville said, was a 35-year-old bone surgeon hired in Hutchinson and moving from Tucson, Ariz. Some Southern Californians also want to move to Cottonwood Hills, he said.

About 600 people have expressed interest in possibly moving to the golf-residential-business development being created east of Hutchinson and about 80 of those, Neville said, live in the Wichita area.

The interest in Wichita is coming primarily from younger families, he said, who find the prospect of living in Buhler USD 313 another attraction.

Cottonwood Hills will be developed in phases. The initial phase, expected to unfold over five to six years, will contain 148 lots. Housing construction could be visible by December 2005, Neville said.

"I predict once it starts, it's going to explode," Commissioner Francis "Shep" Schoepf said.

Workers have begun building paved golf cart paths at the site, and all the grass will be installed by this summer. Limited play on nine holes will be offered in September, and the full 18-hole nonmembership course will open in spring 2006.

Neville has his eye on another key golfing event in 2006 in Reno County: the U.S. Senior Open in July at Prairie Dunes Country Club.

"It's something we shoot for in every way," Neville said, anticipating golf fans drawn to Hutchinson for the Open will check out Cottonwood Hills, too.

Commission Chairman Larry Sharp said July 2006 would double as a target deadline for planned, county-financed improvements on roads adjacent to the development.

Earlier this year, Cottonwood Hills acquired about 18.5 acres adjacent to its northeast corner. It intends to install an activated sludge wastewater treatment plant and pond there. The sewage treatment proposal has been sent to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment for approval.

Plans call for Cottonwood Hills' water to be supplied by a rural water district, which Reno County would help organize but not control, and a sewer district that would fall under county auspices.

Reno County has about six sewer districts, with lagoons the most common treatment process, said Dave McComb, director of planning, zoning and utilities for the county.

McComb will travel to Gardner next week to learn about the activated sludge plant operation there that would be similar to one planned at Cottonwood Hills.

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