



THE CITIZEN TELEGRAM

The Voice of the Rifle Area



Rifle's Paper for More than 100 Years

Re-2 seeking comments on four-day week plan

2012 calendar to be presented April 24

John Stroud
Citizen Telegram

RIFLE — Garfield School District Re-2 officials continue to gather input from parents, district staff and community organizations about the best way to approach a four-day school week come next school year.

A parent survey and public comment board on the home page of the district's website (www.garfieldre2.k12.co.us) will remain open through next week. Meetings and surveys among district staff are also ongoing, said Re-2 Director of Districtwide Services Theresa Hamilton.

A major decision for the Re-2 School Board later this month is whether the day off for students will be Monday or Friday.

"We are continuing to talk with staff about their concerns and thoughts around which day would be best," Hamilton said. "In making this transition, the two primary objectives are to maintain the integrity of the academic day, and to achieve the best cost savings."

In speaking with parent groups, howev-

er, Hamilton said there does seem to be a preference for Friday to be the day off.

Anyone in the community with other ideas for outside programs to be offered on the day students are out of school is encouraged to share them with the district.

The district itself cannot provide services on that day, or it would defeat the cost-saving purpose, Hamilton said.

So, the district is talking with various organizations about arranging a set schedule of age-appropriate activities on the students' day off. Among the groups involved in the discussions are Access Roaring Fork, which runs the current "Second Shift" after-school programs in schools from Rifle to Carbondale, as well as local recreation departments and libraries.

"We hope to have a detailed picture of what fifth-day services will look like by the end of May," Hamilton said.

Meanwhile, the school board met Tuesday night for the first time since its March 13 decision to adopt a four-day week with the 2012-13 school year. The new arrangement will affect Re-2 schools in Rifle, Silt and New Castle.

No decisions were made, but the school board is expected to consider a draft

FOUR-DAY WEEK PAGE 15



Kelley Cox Citizen Telegram

Linda Osiecki teaches a sewing class to students, such as fifth-grader Kaitlyn DeLage, at Rifle Middle School on Tuesdays after school through the Access Roaring Fork program. With a four-day-week schedule to begin next school year, Garfield School District Re-2 officials are discussing the possibility of having classes such as this take place on Fridays through a proposed extended partnership with organizations such as Access Roaring Fork.

Design Academy debates transit, downtown development

"3DA" session features education, brainstorming on new initiatives

Nelson Harvey
Special to the Citizen Telegram

Rifle citizens have already balked at the idea of joining RFTA, but if they want expanded transit service, partnering with the regional agency may be far cheaper than building a system from the ground up.

That was a central message of transportation planner Jim Charlier's presentation on April 5, at the first event of the Downtown Development and Design Academy (3DA).

The academy is a six-week public outreach effort by the city to garner feedback

on transit and economic revitalization opportunities in Rifle.

"If we want transit in Rifle we have to think regionally, about Glenwood Springs, Silt, New Castle and Grand Junction," he said.

According to Charlier, teaming up with a regional transit agency is likely to be cheaper for Rifle than founding its own local service, since the city's small population likely wouldn't yield the ridership necessary to support an independent bus system.

"Carbondale and Basalt would not have transit if not for their inclusion in a regional system," he said, referring to towns in the nearby Roaring Fork Valley that are members of the Roaring Fork Transit Agency (RFTA).

Charlier, who is based in Boulder, was in Rifle to kick off the design academy, one aspect of a larger economic study he is managing for the city. The study, funded

by a 2011 federal grant for \$806,000, will help city officials identify specific ways to improve local transit, create livable streetscapes downtown, and strengthen the city's core through redevelopment of selected sites.

Sixteen people — local business owners, public officials and municipal employees — are participating in the 3DA program. After Charlier's presentation, most seemed to agree that some form of in-town transit will be vital for Rifle's future.

"There is a huge need for transit in Rifle," said Helen Rogers of the Downtown Development Authority. "Without it, we can't connect to places like CMC, the airport or the hospital without driving."

City Councilman Keith Lambert, however, questioned how a system would be funded, noting that Rifle voters have already rejected the idea of joining RFTA. A cost analysis of that option, he said,

showed that "for the cost of service between Rifle and Glenwood Springs, we could have bought each rider a car."

The current RFTA Grand Hogback bus service between Rifle and Glenwood Springs is paid for by a combination of funds from Garfield County, RFTA itself, and the city of Rifle.

Strengths and weaknesses

In addition to addressing transit issues, participants in the inaugural 3DA event also huddled over maps of Rifle's downtown core, brainstorming the city's strengths and weaknesses as a venue for redevelopment.

Assets they identified included Rifle's intact downtown grid, its wealth of historic buildings, the presence of some housing near the downtown core, and the city's proximity to the Colorado River.

DESIGN ACADEMY PAGE 9



SPORTS Page 14

2 New editor

Mike McKibbin takes the reins as the editor of The Citizen Telegram. "Mike knows Rifle, and he knows how to run a newspaper," said publisher Jenna Weathered.

4 Business

Julie Snyder's business, J&J Courtesy Carriers, offers affordable community transportation service for Rifle and surrounding areas.

6 City Council

The Rifle City Council took up water rates, oil shale development, and the annexation of land in South Rifle at its April 4 meeting.

14 Sports

Josiah Rider and Myles Wilson are steadfast partners on the wrestling mat as they gain experience through club wrestling. Josiah's dad, Trevor Rider, is their coach.

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