



Cherryvale Completes Huge Remodeling of Armory As Community Building Thanks to KAN STEP Grant and Volunteer Services

Front approach of the remodeled National Guard Armory, now the Cherryvale Community Center.

The city of Cherryvale in Labette County in extreme southeast Kansas had a unique decision to make in 2010. The question: What to do with the National Guard Armory there that was being decommissioned. Originally constructed in the 1950's, the armory was among others across the state that was being sold back to local communities.

After much debate, the enthusiasm by citizens in Cherryvale grew to a groundswell of support for the city to acquire the building and to remodel it into a modern, multi-purpose community center.

As a result of their commitment to the project, the city applied for and was awarded \$296,622 in funding through the KAN STEP program by the Kansas Department of Commerce. This funding made it possible for the Cherryvale Armory Rehabilitation Project to proceed with a remodeling and updating. The project began in early 2012 and required more than two years to be completed.

The rehabilitation project included updating site concrete, replacing exterior windows and doors, furring of

exterior masonry walls with insulation, and creating a plywood and dry-walled exercise room. The hall and vestibule walls were also dry-walled. The kitchen was reconfigured; restrooms were also modified and updated. The former locker room was transformed into a new activity/meeting room. Three offices and a classroom were created. New plumbing, HVAC, gas and electrical upgrades were also included.

The tabulation of donated services shows that the project had more than \$218,000 in labor donated and approximately another \$37,000 in services donated. With the KAN STEP Grant of \$296,622, the total for the project was \$551,681. There were 182 different people who volunteered time over the construction period. The nine individuals who donated the most time were Ray Allison, Sam Atherton, Ron Burnor, David Coats, Linda Henson,



The kitchen measures 22 x 22 – a great workspace.



The project created two gyms; one measures 114 x 52; the other is 85 x 52.

Joe Long, Dale Rail, Nick Wadman and Sharon Wadman. The donated time of these individuals totaled 4,650 hours. Businesses that donated services included the following: Bruce Strickland, brick layer; Pillar to Post (Jason Adkison and Brody Dean) installed steel doors and frames; John Simmons poured concrete sidewalks; Ron Davis installed cabinets; Ed Hewlett and wife Connie installed the carpet; SEK Garage Doors (Jason Williams) installed garage doors; Bill Stockton and Steve Lain started AC and heating units; Joe Long of Newton's True Value was consultant on heating and air and bathrooms; Herman Veenstra did the taping of sheet rock; Jayhawk Glass installed front door glass.

The massive project was complicated as three different city managers, in addition to volunteering, worked with administrative issues. City Administrator Travis Goedken is the third city manager since project began. He comments that the community would never have been able to accomplish this task without the KAN STEP Grant. "We are lucky to have such a nice facility for the size of our community," he says.

Sparkplug Dale Rail who served from the start comments that he really enjoyed the work and working with the community residents in being able to help the community have such a nice building.

The project advisory board is developing a rate schedule for rental of the facility. KRWA director and volunteer Sam Atherton says the

opportunities are unlimited as to how the building can benefit the community.

The project was designed by Kyle Trendel of Devore and Associates, Ottawa. Clelia McCrory with Esstack, Sterling, KS, provided grant administrator. Inspection services and technical assistance was provided by the Kansas Rural Water Association.



This hallway corridor makes for a nice connecting lobby.