

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

Kimball has approached members of the SPVA Conference of its interest in being a seventh SPVA member.

At a meeting last week, Chase County Schools Athletic Director Troy Hauxwell told board members that Kimball school officials attended the last SPVA conference meeting and expressed interest in joining.

Current SPVA conference schools, which include Chase County and Perkins County, will vote on the request in April.

“I think there’s a pretty good chance (of it),” he said of Kimball coming into the SPVA.

And, according to Hauxwell, a favorable vote on Kimball may lead to more schools asking to join.

There are six SPVA schools now. In addition to Chase County and Perkins County, others include Hershey, Sutherland, North Platte St. Pat’s and Maxwell.

Kimball is currently a member of the Western Trails Conference.

“Kimball would make a logical addition to our conference,” said Chip Kay, athletic director for Perkins County Schools. “They are now C2 in most conference activities and currently a regular season opponent for us.”

Kay said it will be important to begin looking to add an eighth team to join the SPVA if Kimball is approved in order to make some improvements to the conference tournaments. “There are other schools in this part of the state that would be a great fit for the SPVA, we hope that they will look at the option of becoming the eighth member of our conference,” said Kay.

If Kimball is voted into the SPVA, Hauxwell said school officials at Bridgeport, also in the Western Trails Conference, have indicated they would also be interested. The conference has also received communication from Ogallala of its interest in joining the SPVA, as well.

On a question from Chase County Schools board member Sheila Stromberger on why schools want to leave their conferences, Hauxwell said it sometimes comes down to the fact the conference they may be leaving has smaller schools and cannot offer some of the conference-level activities larger ones can, such as music and speech.

It also may come down to wanting closer opponents, such as in the case of Ogallala, now a member of the Southwest Conference, which spreads as far east as Minden.