

Kodak breaks ground *for new Flexo manufacturing line*

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Staff Reporter

Thursday afternoon, Kodak CEO Jeff Clarke and numerous dignitaries celebrated a groundbreaking ceremony in Weatherford for the expansion of the Eastman Kodak manufacturing facility.

Kodak Flexographic Packaging Division President Chris Payne, CEO Jeff Clarke, Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin, Mayor Mike Brown and others spoke to everyone in attendance and celebrated the Kodak facility expansion with a ceremonial ribbon cutting.

"It's truly a special day," Mayor Brown said. "I am old enough to remember this facility and the first ground breaking 50 years ago."

Weatherford plant manager Gene Mejer was congratulated for his more than 40 years with the company and was called the guiding force in the decision to locate the manufacturing expansion here.

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Cutting a ribbon, from left, are Mayor Mike Brown, Boon Tien Pang, Kodak CEO Jeff Clarke, Rep. Harold Wright, Chris Payne, Gov. Mary Fallin, Deby Snodgrass and Gene Mejer.

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Audience members, including Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin, applaud during the ceremony at the Eastman Kodak manufacturing facility in Weatherford Thursday.

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Deby Snodgrass, Oklahoma's executive director and secretary of Commerce and Tourism, was pleased with the fact Kodak was eligible to receive an incentive from the state to help with the expansion.

The expansion will accommodate a new Flexo plate manufacturing line for the production of Kodak FLEXCEL NX plates, which is a sister operation to the existing plate manufacturing facility in Yamanashi, Japan.

Kodak is expected to hire an additional 20 employees with the new manufacturing line, with more jobs expected to be available once construction on the facility is finished.

The Flexo plate line is expected to be in full production by early 2019 and will initially focus on supply of FLEXCEL NX plates to customers in the United States, Canada and Latin America.

The event centered on Kodak's revitalization and investment of the Weatherford plant in its 50th anniversary year. Clarke said the Weatherford site was chosen for its "strong technical capabilities and existing skilled workforce."

The \$15 million investment represents one of the company's largest capital investments since 2000.

Members of the press, vendors from several companies and local officials were welcomed to a VIP tour of the facility where several areas were highlighted, such as distribution, imaging processing and the site of the upcoming expansion.

Kodak was founded in 1888 and is headquartered in Rochester, New York, and trades on the New York Stock Exchange as KODK.