

The Press Dakotan

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OPINION

A Discussion About Yankton Co. Roads

Yankton County is about to have an interesting discussion on the condition of its roads and bridges, and how to pay for their repairs. And it's about time. What makes this interesting today is that the conversation is going to take the form of a public referendum. It's a show-down over the County Commission's decision last month to pass a levy increase feature that was approved during the last legislative session allowing counties to raise funds specifically for road and bridge maintenance.

The discussion is not going to center on whether the roads and bridges of this county need repairing — most people can generally agree on that statement to some degree — but whether there are better ways to pay for it, whether the county is better off vacating some of these roadways and crossings, and if the county acted properly in imposing this news tax on its constituency.

The issue on deteriorating roadways has been around for a long time and is long overdue. This county is not unique in that respect, as infrastructure issues are mounting for the nation as a whole. Roads are deteriorating and bridges are becoming dangerous. Doing nothing is a dangerous option.

The discussion that will be had here must first come to terms with the conditions of Yankton County's roadways. The commissioners need to make the case very clearly that the need is real and pressing.

During last month's public hearing on this levy, even those who were critical of the idea said that repairs to the roads should have been commenced more earnestly years ago.

The commissioners must, in turn, also sell residents on the fact that funding is tight. We've noticed a perception in some online comments and other missives that apparently casts the County Commission as being comprised of free-spending souls looking to milk a tapped-out tax base in order to fund more extravaganzas. If you've paid ANY attention to how the County Commission operated in recent memory, you know that such a perception is far from the truth. Commissioners have always been frugal, sometimes to a fault, and have been very careful with how they spend tax dollars. So, when current Commission Chairman Todd Woods said every possible nook and cranny in the budget had been scrutinized to squeeze out some funds to make these repairs, there are historical reasons to believe him.

However, the commission could have handled this matter a little better than it did. The public information meeting on the levy issue popped up on July 13, just two days before the deadline to apply for the levy with Pierre. (There have been some question floated about the legality of this meeting; all we can say for sure is that the meeting was announced — and the issue discussed at length — six days prior, during a regular County Commission meeting on July 7.) That was not an ideal turnaround by any means, and it may have contributed to the sparse attendance both for the information meeting and the special meeting that approved it.

That should not be the case this time around. A public forum will be held (as well as previously planned town hall meetings throughout the county) and the questions now being raised will have to be answered. Those answers will tell us a lot about how this county intends to deal with its infrastructure. The answers will not be easy — neither for the County Commission nor, frankly, for the opponents of the levy hike. But that's what our difficult road forward on this issue looks like.

kml

ABOUT THIS PAGE

The View page provides a forum for open discussion of issues and interests affecting our readers. Initialed editorials represent the opinion of the writer, but not necessarily that of the PRESS & DAKOTAN. Bylined columns represent the view of the author. We welcome letters on current topics. Questions regarding the Views page should be directed to Kelly Hertz at kelly.hertz@yankton.net/.

IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
Today is Wednesday, August 19, the 231st day of 2015. There are 134 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On August 19, 1955, torrential rains caused by Hurricane Diane resulted in severe flooding in the northeastern U.S., claiming some 200 lives.

On this date: In A.D. 14, Caesar Augustus, Rome's first emperor, died at age 76 after a reign lasting four decades; he was succeeded by his stepson Tiberius.

In 1812, the USS Constitution defeated the British frigate HMS Guerriere off Nova Scotia during the War of 1812, earning the nickname "Old Ironsides."

In 1814, during the War of 1812, British forces landed at Benedict, Maryland, with the objective of capturing Washington D.C.

In 1918, "Yip! Yip! Yaphank" a musical revue by Irving Berlin featuring Army recruits from Camp Upton in Yaphank, New York, opened on Broadway.

In 1934, a plebiscite in Germany approved the vesting of sole executive power in Adolf Hitler.

In 1936, the first of a series of show trials orchestrated by Soviet leader Josef Stalin began in Moscow as 16 defendants faced charges of conspiring against the government (all were convicted and executed).

In 1942, during World War II, about 6,000 Canadian and British soldiers launched a disastrous raid against the Germans at Dieppe, France, suffering more than 50-percent casualties.

In 1964, The Beatles opened their first full-fledged U.S. tour as they performed at San Francisco's Cow Palace.

In 1974, U.S. Ambassador Rodger P. Davies was fatally wounded by a bullet that penetrated the American embassy in Nicosia, Cyprus, during a protest by Greek Cypriots.

In 1976, President Gerald R. Ford won the Republican presidential nomination at the party's convention in Kansas City.

In 1980, 301 people aboard a Saudi Arabian L-1011 died as the jetliner made a fiery emergency return to the Riyadh airport.

In 1991, Soviet hard-liners made the stunning announcement that President Mikhail S. Gorbachev had been removed from power. (The coup attempt collapsed two days later.)

Ten years ago: A Texas jury found pharmaceutical giant Merck and Co. liable for the death of a man who'd taken the once-popular painkiller Vioxx, awarding his widow \$253.4 million in damages. (Texas caps on punitive damages reduced that figure to about \$26 million; a Texas court overturned the verdict in May 2008, but the widow has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to hear her case.) Attackers firing Katyusha rockets narrowly missed a U.S. amphibious assault ship

docked at the Red Sea resort of Aqaba, but killed a Jordanian soldier. Britain's former Northern Ireland chief, Mo Mowlam, died in Canterbury, England; she was 55.

Five years ago: The last American combat brigade exited Iraq, seven years and five months after the U.S.-led invasion began. A federal grand jury in Washington indicted seven-time Cy Young Award winner Roger Clemens for allegedly lying to Congress about steroid use. (However, Clemens' trial in 2011 ended in a mistrial when the jury was shown inadmissible evidence by prosecutors; Clemens was acquitted in a retrial in 2012.)

One year ago: A video released by Islamic State militants purported to show the beheading of American journalist James Foley as retribution for U.S. airstrikes in Iraq. The New York Islanders announced the team had been sold to a former Washington Capitals co-owner Jon Ledecky and London-based investor Scott Malkin.

Today's Birthdays: Actor L.Q. Jones is 88. Actress Debra Paget is 82. USTA Eastern Tennis Hall of Famer Renee Richards is 81. Former MLB All-Star Bobby Richardson is 80. Actress Diana Muldaur is 77. Rock musician Ginger Baker (Cream, Blind Faith) is 76. Singer Johnny Nash is 75. Actress Jill St. John is 75. Actor and former U.S. senator Fred Thompson is 73. Singer Billy J. Kramer is 72. Country singer-songwriter Eddy Raven is 71. Rock singer Ian Gillan (Deep Purple) is 70. Former President Bill Clinton is 69. Actor Gerald McRaney is 68. Tipper Gore, wife of former Vice President Al Gore, is 67. Actor Jim Carter is 67. Rock musician John Deacon (Queen) is 64. Actor-director Jonathan Frakes is 63. Political consultant Mary Matalin is 62. Actor Peter Gallagher is 60. Actor Adam Arkin is 59. Singer-songwriter Gary Chapman is 58. Actor Martin Donovan is 58. Pro Football Hall-of-Famer Anthony Munoz is 57. Rhythm-and-blues singer Ivan Neville is 56. Actor Eric Lutes is 53. Actor John Stamos is 52. Actress Kyra Sedgwick is 50. Actor Kevin Dillon is 50. Country singer Lee Ann Womack is 49. TV reporter Tabitha Soran is 48. Country singer-songwriter Mark McGuinn is 47. Actor Matthew Perry is 46. Country singer Clay Walker is 46. Rapper Fat Joe is 45. Olympic gold medal tennis player Mary Joe Fernandez is 44. Actress Tracie Thoms is 40. Actor Callum Blue is 38. Country singer Rissi Palmer is 34. Actress Erika Christensen is 33. Actress Melissa Fumero is 33. Pop singer Missy Higgins is 32. Actor Peter Mooney is 32. Actress Tammin Sursok is 32. Country singer Karli Osborn is 31. Olympic silver medal snowboarder Lindsey Jacobellis is 30. Actor J. Evan Bonifant is 30. Rapper Romeo is 26.

Thought for Today: "Cheer up! The worst is yet to come!" — Philander Chase Johnson, American author (1866-1939).

FROM THE BIBLE

The baby in my womb leaped with joy. Luke 1:44. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

HILLARY'S EMAILS,
BENGHAZI, LACK OF TRUST,
"NO MORE CLINTONS", BERNIE,
JOE BIDEN, EVEN AL GORE!
**REMAIN CALM!
ALL IS WELL!**



Pierre Report

Changes For Eagles, Schools, Powerball

BY REP. JEAN HUNHOFF
R-District 18 (Yankton)

The Interim Rules Committee met on Aug. 17 with a short agenda.

• The Department of Agriculture presented rules to adoption to establish a Water Drainage Mediation Program. This program resulted from legislation passed during the 2015 session. The rules are similar to what is already in rules for mediation.

An intervener was included in the rules. This is an individual, group, or entity who is not a requesting party or non-requesting party to the mediation and may be impacted by the dispute. The department will provide training for the mediator. Currently, the department has five mediators but none trained for the Water Drainage program.

The committee approved the rule making process.

• Game Fish and Parks amended the Waterfowl Hunting seasons rules to decrease the daily bag limit for scaup from three to two and increase canvasback from one to two contingent upon approval by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The number of hunting days for white-fronted geese increased from 72 to 86 consecutive days, also contingent on approval by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The bald eagle was removed the list of state threatened birds. The department clarified that the bald eagle was still a protected species by federal and state acts. Removal from a threatened list signifies that, for management purposes, the population exceeds the thresholds. The management plan for bald eagles in South Dakota calls for a minimum of 25 sited nestings. The state has documented more than 100 nesting sites. The site numbers are lists to protect the need for recover to enhance the species population.

The rules process was approved.

• The Department of Transportation proposed rules to adopt Movement of Oversize or Overweight Vehicles permits during an emergency declaration period and to an extended period of emergency declaration fleet permit.

The emergency declaration permit would be declared upon consultation with the Department of Public Safety, Department of Transportation and the Office of the Governor. The permit-issuing authority may allow the movement of the vehicle any time of the day. The duration of the permit issued shall one be for the amount of time necessary to alleviate the public emergency. No permit may be issued under this rule for the movement of a load that could be readily reduced in size or weight except as provided by the rule.

The permit-issuing authority may specify additional requirements on this permit as to signing, flagging, lighting, escort, special traffic control and any other operational or safety requirement. Any permit issued under this rule shall be issued at no cost.

The Committee questioned the types of emergency declarations that would result in these permits. Most examples were of major

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Question Of Compassion

Carol Ackerman, Yankton

This is in response to Kim Dale's letter (Press & Dakotan, Aug. 3, 2015):

Kim, I felt as you did: The Bible says it and that is it.

Then I learned my brother is gay. OK, where do I go from there? He is a wonderful individual, a fine musician and has a sensitivity to others that is admirable.

All of a sudden, my world (and my thinking) changed. He's my brother — do I not love and accept him for who he is?

Could we as a people concentrate on the positives? God's love is present and we need to keep that grace in mind. Where is love thy neighbor as thyself?

LGBT is out there and includes people you

P&D LETTER POLICY

The PRESS & DAKOTAN invites its readers to write letters to the editor. We ask that a few simple guidelines be followed:

• Please limit letters to 300 words or less. Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind.

• In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the PRESS & DAKOTAN will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses.



J. Hunhoff

weather related impacts as floods, tornadoes, etc. This could also apply to the agricultural sector in regards to moving of equipment or feed supplies when weather has impacted crop production.

The rules process was approved.

• The Department of Education proposed rules that

amended a Career and Technical Education rules to increase the postsecondary technical institute per-student allocation to the level set for the fiscal year 2016 by the Legislature. The per student allocation increased from \$3,329.12 to \$3,395.71. They also proposed a mathematics endorsement and create a grades 7-12 intermediate mathematics endorsement. The minutes reflected that, at the public hearing, there was no opposition to the rule proposal.

The discussion among the committee was the reducing the content competency for the certification for the math major. The board stated this was an option for teachers to pass and receive this certification. This would provide the math major the ability to teach beginning math courses. It was not clear as why the certifications were not able to be achieved with the current preparation of math majors and/or testing content.

The committee approved the process; I was the lone no vote. There were unanswered questions as to what other options were available to improve the process for the achievement of the highest level of certification.

The South Dakota Lottery Commission asked to amend a rule to allow change to the Powerball game matrix and include the 10x multiplier for the Power Play in certain defined instances. Sales for Powerball are down 16.7 percent. Powerball represents 50 percent of our lotto style games matrix. The new changes will go into effect Oct. 4, 2015, and the new drawings will occur on Oct. 7, 2015. The committee was told that the Powerball change was forecasted to grow by 3 percent. This equates to a projected increase in net come for the new game to be \$128,000.

The process was approved.

• The Department of Public Safety proposed to increase the time frame for an appeal for administrative driver license action from 10 to 15 days. It repealed unnecessary driver license rules, updated commercial driver license language to conform to federal standards and the 2015 legislation, updated the prorated fees for licenses or identifications cards issued to those under 21 and updated the adoption of Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance Standards.

For upcoming public rules hearings, go the Legislative Research Council website at Legis.sd.gov and click on Administrative Rules and Daily Register.

Please contact me if you have questions or concerns: Rep. Jean Hunhoff, 665-1463.

know. Where is our compassion for others? God loves us all.

Flag Concern

Robert Parry, Yankton

I noticed they are working on the tower at the Yankton Middle School that serves as the flag pole.

When the Stars and Stripes are once again raised, I would like to see a new flag of appropriate dimensions. The pole should not upstage the American Flag. When not unfurled, the flag should hang down one-third the length of the pole.

I believe the school district is getting paid sufficiently well as per the tower lease agreement to purchase a flag that will make us all proud.

• Specific individuals or entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.

• Only signed letters with writer's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email us at kelly.hertz@yankton.net/.