



Inside Today

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Kerrey Declines Bid For Senate

MARGERY A. BECK
Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Former Sen. Bob Kerrey on Tuesday rejected a comeback run for Senate, dashing Democrats' hopes of holding a coveted Nebraska seat and leaving the party to scramble for a race all



Kerry

but guaranteed to go Republicans' way.

Many saw Kerrey, a 1992 presidential candidate and former governor, as Nebraska Democrats' only chance to avoid delivering Republicans one of four seats they must net in November to take control of the Senate.

Kerrey kept Democrats on hold for more than a month while contemplating whether to seek the seat being vacated at the end of the year by Ben Nelson, the lone remaining Democrat in the state congressional delegation.

"I have given the decision of becoming a candidate for the U.S. Senate very serious thought and prayer," Kerrey said in an email announcing his decision. "To those who urged me to do so, I am sorry, very sorry to have disappointed you. I hope you understand that I have chosen what I believe is best for my family and me."

He also said he was "very sorry to have disappointed" those who urged him to run, but later rejected the assertion that his decision essentially ceded the seat to the GOP in the increasingly conservative state.

"Do the odds favor whoever wins the Republican primary winning the general election? The answer is yes. The numbers show that. Does that mean that absolutely that they're going to win? No," Kerry said in a telephone interview from his office in New York City.

Democratic strategist Doug Schoen, who worked for President Bill Clinton, flatly disagreed.

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NATHAN JOHNSON/P&D

Lucas Lentsch, the director of agricultural development with the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, was among the many state officials who spoke with a local officials Monday during Yankton Day at the Legislature. The annual event is organized by the Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce. Lentsch said he is particularly excited about the potential of value added agriculture to aid the future economic growth of the state.

Officials Get Updates At Yankton Day

City's History, Parks Discussed
By State Department Heads

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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PIERRE — During a day of meetings with state department heads, Yankton officials received updates Monday on a wide variety of issues ranging from the hopes for the historic Human Services Center campus to the reconstruction of Fourth Street.

A couple dozen individuals represented the community for Yankton Day at the Legislature, an annual event organized by the Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce. Yankton city and county government officials, as well as employees of the National Park Service and various local businesses, made the trip.

The group met with Gov. Dennis Daugaard, the Department of Tourism, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Governor's Office of Economic Development and was recognized in the House and Senate chambers of the Legislature, as well as other things.

Some of the highlights of those meetings are presented below.

HISTORY IS PART OF YANKTON'S FUTURE

Yankton's history is providing some excitement about its future, according to Jay Vogt, the director of the South Dakota State Historical

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County Holds First Reading Of Drainage Ordinance

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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The Yankton County Commission held the first reading Tuesday of a drainage ordinance that commissioners believe is a necessary tool to avoid future conflict among landowners.

A task force was appointed last year to compose an ordinance. Public hearings on the proposed document in November and December proved uncontroversial.

The ordinance would create a nine-member drainage commission appointed by the County Commission. It would also define situations in which adjoining landowners must be notified of drainage projects.

In some cases, a permit could be issued by the zoning administrator, acting as the drainage administrator, and not require the

involvement of the drainage commission and other bodies.

"At a time when a lot of counties are stepping back from this, I'm glad that we're taking this step," said John Gunderson, the vice chairman of the drainage task force appointed by the county.

As an example of why drainage is becoming more common, Gunderson said the land his family owns wasn't worth enough to drain until recently. Improved crop genetics and farming practices suddenly made it feasible.

"I think we have a system where a small operator is going to be protected and a large operator is going to be able to put a drainage system in, and do it in a fair and

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Our Towns | Hutchinson County

Freeman Opens Community Center

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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FREEMAN — After seeing little use for months, the former Freeman Public elementary school gymnasium-annex has gained new life as the Freeman Community Center.

The public can tour the facility during Sunday's open house from 1:30-4 p.m. The event will celebrate the conversion of the gym-annex into a multi-use community center. The facility is located at 224 South Wipf Street.

The restoration work on the 16,000-square-foot facility has included the installation of a geothermal heating-cooling system. The community center project has drawn upon grants, city funds and private donations totaling about \$600,000.

The facility is now available for rental purposes by contacting the city office, said Mayor Lonnie Tjaden.

At Monday night's meeting, the city council officially named the facility as the Freeman Community Center, Tjaden said.



PHOTO COURTESY FREEMAN COURIER

This shot, taken in September 2011, shows the exterior of the Freeman Community Center. The renovated facility, which features a geothermal heating-cooling system, formerly served as the Freeman Public elementary gym-annex. An open house will be held Sunday afternoon for the general public.

The name was chosen for a specific reason, using "community" rather than "city" in the title, he said.

"We are a town of 1,300 residents, and a lot of our (support) is the rural community," he said. "We chose 'community' center over 'city' center because we felt that

'city' implies it's just for city residents. That's not how Freeman operates. We embrace our rural community, so we want to make sure that it's known as a community center serving not only the town but the

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READY TO ROLL



COURTESY IMAGE

Members of the Vermillion City Council debated Monday the merits and costs of including the exterior pillars in the final design of the Vermillion City Library expansion before awarding the bids for the project to Welf Construction of Yankton.

Yankton Firm Awarded Bid For VPL Expansion

BY TRAVIS GULBRANDSON
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VERMILLION — Vermillion City Council members moved to award the bid for the Vermillion Public Library expansion project to Welf Construction of Yankton. The decision was made at the council's regular meeting Monday night.

Bids were opened Jan. 19 for the project, which has been in the works for several years.

"We had strong interest going into the bid opening, and we were fortunate to receive eight bids, which tells us what we're going to be paying to have this project done at this point in time," said City Manager John Prescott.

Welf submitted the lowest base bid of \$2,298,000. The architect — Architecture Incorporated of Sioux Falls — estimates the project will cost approximately \$2,662,696.

The contract completion date is April 1, 2013.

The bid included three alternates that were not mandatory for the completion of the project — HVAC manufactured by Johnson Controls, the addition of four brick columns to the exterior of the library and five skylights.

Welf bid \$4,900, \$28,000 and \$44,300, respectively, for these alternates.

If all three alternates were approved, it would leave the project with an approximately \$43,000 budget shortfall, Prescott said.

Prescott recommended alternates one and three, stating that most city buildings have HVAC controls, and the five skylights will "add a lot of natural light to the building."

The columns, however, would not add to the "critical mission of what the library does," Prescott said.

"Their main function is to complete the architectural design of the outside of the building," he said. "There are two that are part of the entry feature, and there were to be five to the south of there. One of those was removed before we put the bids out. It was basically going to be on the sidewalk."

Prescott did add that he thought the city could support all the alternates, with money for the columns possibly coming from the second penny fund.

Jon Flanagan, chair of the Library Board of Trustees, said including the

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