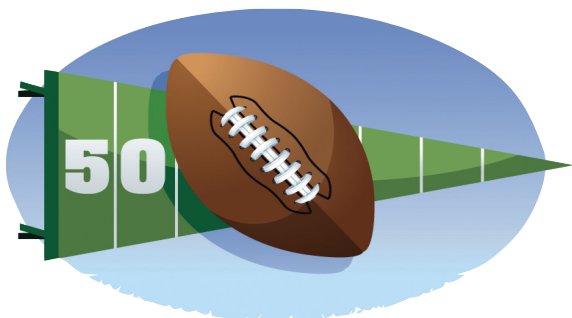




Partly Sunny And Mostly Pleasant

9 a.m.: **35** | 3 p.m.: **46** | DETAILS: PAGE 2



TODAY!

■ Join us for a special NCAA Signing Day chat at 3:30 p.m. today with Midco Sports broadcasters Jay Elsen and Tom Nieman. Go to www.yankton.net.



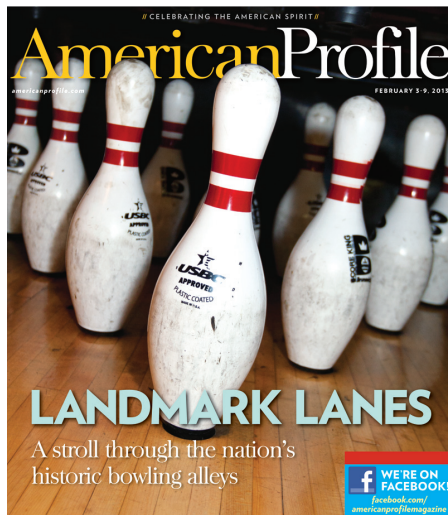
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American Profile

YANKTON DAILY PRESS & DAKOTAN

Auditor Goes On Medical Leave

State To Assist With Yankton Co. Taxes; Audit Sought

BY NATHAN JOHNSON

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With the announcement Tuesday afternoon that Yankton County Auditor Paula Jones is on an unexpected medical leave, the County Commission took steps to remedy the many challenges faced by her office.

"As of (Monday), our auditor has taken a leave of absence for medical reasons," Commission Chairman Bruce Jensen said. "I don't know how long it will be."

Jensen said he was notified by Larry Jones, Paula's husband, Tuesday morning that she would be taking the leave. The chairman had no more details on the matter.

Controversy has surrounded the auditor's office since it was revealed late last month that Jones had not yet gotten approval from the South Dakota Department of Revenue to issue property tax bills to county Treasurer Pam Marchand so they could be provided to taxpayers.

The numbers did finally receive approval last week. However, the South Dakota Department of Revenue discovered just before tax bills were to be made available to the public that the figure Jones had given to Marchand for the total amount of taxes to be collected did not much the number it had approved.

Unable to collect property taxes and with a variety of budgetary tasks typically carried out by the auditor's office left undone during the last month or so, the business of Yankton County is in danger of coming to a halt.

With that in mind, a trio of actions were taken by the County Commission at the beginning of the meeting Tuesday in an attempt to address the growing challenges.

The first action calls for the Department of Revenue to assist Yankton County with calculating its tax levies so property taxes can be paid.

"Tentatively, they will be coming down Feb. 14," Jensen said.

The second resolution requests the Department of Revenue and the South Dakota Department of Legislative Audit to complete an audit of Jones office, with the findings to be delivered to the County Commission.



Jones



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

Yankton County Commission Chairman Bruce Jensen, right, confers with Register of Deeds Brian Hunhoff about the agenda during Tuesday's County Commission meeting. Hunhoff was filling in for County Auditor Paula Jones, who it was announced has gone on medical leave.

Hutchinson Co. School Officials Leery Of Sentinels

BY ANDREW ATWAL

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Officials from Hutchinson County schools are expressing their disinterest in legislation making its way through the state Legislature that would allow local school boards to place armed, trained personnel in their school buildings.

Some officials believe the bill has raised more questions than it answers.

Chris Christensen, Menno's superintendent, said he doesn't think some of the legislatures around the nation have thought through all the implications that the bill would cause.

"There would be liability issues with the training," he said. "Would schools be able to get liability insurance to cover accidental shootings or students killed from friendly fire? Do guns only go off when they are supposed to, and do they always hit only the intended target?"

He added that he doesn't think they do, so one can not conclusively say that guns are safe.



Hutchinson County

HB 1087, which passed the House last week, says that the school board must obtain the approval of the local law enforcement official who has jurisdiction over the school

campus before implementing the sentinel program. In addition, any person who is hired for the position must complete a school sentinel training course and nothing in the bill authorizes any person to carry a concealed weapon without a permit.

The bill also states that any discussion by a school board regarding the program will be conducted in a closed meeting without any printed materials or record available to the public.

Pam Tieszen, principal and superintendent at Freeman Academy, a private, Mennonite school, said the core values at her school teach service, nonviolence and respect for all people.

"There would be liability issues with the training. Would schools be able to get liability insurance to cover accidental shootings or students killed from friendly fire? Do guns only go off when they are supposed to, and do they always hit only the intended target?"

CHRIS CHRISTENSEN | MENNO

"I do not anticipate our board considering the idea of placing a sentinel in our school," she said. "We feel as if it's more appropriate to discuss and train staff to be aware and recognize community members who are in need, or facing mental crises, rather than placing a sentinel in the school."

SENTINELS | PAGE 11

COUNTY | PAGE 12

INSIDE TODAY



Viborg-Hurley, Avon Split Hoops Twin Bill • 8

BY NATHAN JOHNSON

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PIERRE — For any potential developers who would like to examine the abandoned buildings at the South Dakota Human Services Center (HSC), Gov. Dennis Daugaard said this week he is open to ideas.

"I told (District 18 Rep. Bernie Hunhoff) that if he can find somebody, or anyone else can find a private developer, that would like to look at some of these buildings to think of ways they can be re-used, great. I'm for that," Daugaard said. "But I think it's highly unlikely, and I'm not going to wait forever. That's why this plan is set up to try and do something over the next several years. Maybe sooner, if the demolition is easily done and not too expensive."

Daugaard had a question-and-answer session with a delegation of Yankton officials in Pierre for Yankton Day at the Legislature. The annual trip is organized by the Yankton Area Chamber of Commerce.

House Bill 1033 would authorize the Department of Social Services to dismantle, demolish, preserve or rehabilitate buildings on the HSC campus and ap-



Daugaard

propriate \$6 million to carry out that work. Daugaard's plan calls for the demolition of 13 structures and an effort to preserve four others.

The legislation was approved in the House on a 64-6 vote, with District 18 representatives Hunhoff and Michael Stevens offering support. The Senate Appropriations Committee is now considering the bill.

"I don't want to rush to (carry out demolition) if there are people who genuinely have a credible willingness to look at re-use," Daugaard said. "I'd be more than happy to come back to the Legislature next year and say, 'You said we could sell the Mead Building to the Yankton County Historical Society. Here is another developer. Let's sell another building to them.' That would be great, but I'm very doubtful that will happen."

He stated that he is trying to strike a balance when it comes to using assets collected from state



NATHAN JOHNSON/P&D

Jeff Vonk, secretary of the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, along with Doug Hofer, director of state parks, spoke with Yankton officials in Pierre Monday during Yankton Day at the Legislature.

PIERRE | PAGE 11



REGION 2 | MIDWEST 3 | OBITUARIES 3 | VIEWS 4 | LIFE 5 | WORLD 7 | SPORTS 8 | CLASSIFIEDS 10

TOMORROW: Local Cancer Center Expanding Treatment

YANKTON RECYCLING THIS WEEK:

NORTH
OF 15TH STREET