

Santee

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"This is the first local agency that has had such a search-and-rescue boat in the 32 years that I have worked for Knox County law enforcement," he said. "In the past, we have paid a yearly fee to the Yankton Search and Rescue unit for its services. We have received a financial commitment from the (Knox County) Board of Supervisors to cover that fee."

The sheriff believes the tribal-county arrangement comes at an ideal time, with the Fourth of July usually signaling heavy lake and river use.

"With the Fourth of July on a Thursday, we have a lot of people who will also take off Friday to make a four-day weekend," he said. "We anticipate more boaters. I expect you will see two to three times the normal amount of people (out on the water) because of the long holiday weekend."

Besides the holiday activity, Police Chief Henry noted the village of Santee doesn't have a swimming pool at this time. As a result, more local residents are swimming in the Missouri River.

The Santee Sioux boat has undergone test runs, he said.

"We anticipate heavy activity, so we have taken (the boat) out for GPS (Global Positioning System) readings between Santee and the South Dakota side," he said. "We can reach Bon Homme

Colony in 10 minutes. We are tracking so we know which routes to take (around the sandbars)."

The Santee Sioux police department is prepared for any situation that arises, Henry said. The boat could provide faster transportation to some sites than traveling by land, he added.

"We haven't used the boat for law enforcement, at this point. We have used it just for response to emergencies. But we're ready to go wherever needed," he said.

"(The new boat) really cuts response time a lot. Before, we relied on the local boat and it took 25 to 30 minutes. Now, it takes us 10 minutes to get (our craft) into the water. That can be really crucial, especially if somebody is missing."

The Santee Sioux boat can hold an all-terrain vehicle, which provides another resource, Sheriff Henry said.

"It can really be helpful to have a four-wheeler when you start working the deltas by Santee," he said. "And in some areas, there's no road to the river. There's miles of river not accessible by roads."

The tribal boat's usage isn't limited to Lewis and Clark Lake or the Missouri River, the sheriff said.

"We also have the Niobrara River, where we just had a kayak rescue," he said. "You couldn't navigate a boat (in the Niobrara River), so we used an airboat for that rescue. We would have talked to Santee if there had been enough water."

In April, the Santee Sioux police department brought the boat to Center, Neb.,

where the Knox County sheriff's office hosted a "Law Enforcement Boater Safety Class." The class was taught by State of Nebraska Game & Parks Commission Boating Law Administrator Herb Angell.

Twelve officers, including the Knox County sheriff and deputies and the Santee Sioux police force, attended the class. Subject matter ranged from determining a proper floatation device to laws concerning boating, which included Boating Under the Influence of Alcohol. At the end of the day-long class, all officers involved were certified both statewide and on a national level in Boat Safety Enforcement.

The day-long class at Center provided hands-on learning experiences, with the Santee Sioux boat providing a valuable resource, Angell told the *Press & Dakotan* in a phone interview.

"With Knox County, you have the recreation on the Missouri River," he said. "(The training and boat) give them a heads-up in saving lives."

Angell said he was pleased to return to Knox County and train law enforcement officials, including usage of the Santee Sioux rescue boat. He hopes there's no need for rescuing boaters and swimmers this week and the rest of the summer.

"You need to be safe," he said. "The water is great, but do it safely."

You can follow Randy Dockendorf on Twitter at twitter.com/RDockendorf

Obama Admin. Delays Major Requirement Of Health Law

BY RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In a major concession to business groups, the Obama administration Tuesday unexpectedly announced a one-year delay, until after the 2014 elections, in a central requirement of the new health care law that many companies provide coverage for their workers or face fines.

The move sacrificed timely implementation of President Barack Obama's signature legislation but may help the administration politically by blunting an election-year line of attack Republicans were planning to use. The employer requirements are among the most complex parts of the health care law, which is designed to expand coverage for uninsured Americans.

"We have heard concerns about the complexity of the requirements and the need for more time to implement them effectively," Treasury Assistant Secretary Mark Mazur said in a blog post. "We have listened to your feedback and we are taking action."

Business groups were jubilant. "A pleasant surprise," said Randy Johnson, senior vice president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. There was no inkling in advance of the administration's action, he said.

"We commend the administration's wise move," said Neil Trautwein, a vice president of the National Retail Federation. It "will provide employers and businesses more time to update their health care coverage without

threat of arbitrary punishment."

But the delay could also undermine the law's main goal of covering the nearly 50 million Americans without health insurance. Already, Republican resistance in the states will deny access to a planned Medicaid expansion — at least for next year — to millions of low-income people.

Under the health law, companies with 50 or more workers must provide affordable coverage to their full-time employees or risk a series of escalating tax penalties if just one worker ends up getting government-subsidized insurance. Originally, that requirement was supposed to take effect Jan. 1. It will now be delayed to 2015.

Most medium-sized and large businesses already offer health insurance and the requirement was expected to have the biggest consequences for major chain hotels, restaurants and retail stores that employ many low-wage workers. Some had threatened to cut workers' hours, and others said they were putting off hiring.

Business groups complained since the law passed that the provision was too complicated. For instance, the law created a new definition of full-time workers, those putting in 30 hours or more. It also included two separate requirements, one to provide coverage and another that coverage be deemed "affordable" under the law. Violations of either one exposed employers to fines. But such complaints until now seemed to be going unheeded.

Study

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The state is looking for sites that comply with local zoning and aquifer protection guidelines, are in proximity to the infrastructure necessary to support development and have a buildable lot area of at least 40 acres. The research will identify what are called good, better and the best development sites.

In addition to being used for marketing, it is believed such information could minimize landowner conflicts and be used for comprehensive zoning plan updates.

However, PDIII also acknowledges the information could raise issues where none currently exist, lead to assumptions that are incorrect and be taken as the whole story when other facts are needed to make a decision.

Commissioner Allen Sinclair cited such concerns in opposing the idea of PDIII conducting the study on behalf of the state.

"I don't think that a County Commission should be out there identifying sites for any commercial activity," he said. "It's for the people doing the activity to do their own homework. They should be the ones identifying sites. I'm going to have a real problem endorsing a County Commission activity of this nature."

Sinclair said the County Commission should become only become involved through the zoning process. Even if it is only giving permission for a study, that could be seen by some as an endorsement of sites identified in the research during a zoning dispute in the future.

"It's a business deal, and the business people behind it, whether they are banks or the Ag Department, can do any type of study they want

to do," Sinclair said. "But don't involve the County Commission until you're bringing it to us for a thumbs up or down based on our rules and regulations."

At some points, the exchange between Sinclair and Henderson bordered on the contentious — although the debate ended on a friendly note with Henderson inviting Sinclair to coffee to discuss the matter.

For some time, especially after being told by at least one Department of Ag official that Yankton County is viewed as unfriendly to agricultural development, the commission has been sensitive to its relationship with agriculture.

Commission Chairman Bruce Jensen made a point Tuesday to say that the commission is not anti-agriculture.

"I'm not trying to put you in a corner, and I hope you're not trying to put me in a corner. I'm not advocating anything," Henderson said. "Don't take this as something we're supporting. We're doing it because some of the counties we work for are interested. If all 16 counties had said, 'Absolutely not,' I wouldn't be having this conversation. We're sensitive to your wishes, so we're not going to do work in this county that we feel could be a problem. Just from our conversation, to me it is a problem."

Sinclair made a motion to decline the offer from PDIII to conduct the feasibility analysis.

It was approved in a 3-1 vote, with Commissioner Mark Johnson dissenting. He indicated during the discussion that he wanted more time to consider the subject.

Commissioner Garry Moore did not arrive until later in the meeting.

In other business Tuesday, the commission:

- decided it will have an auction to sell the former Yankton County Highway Shop and an abandoned

ethanol plant on the southeast side of Yankton the county acquired due to delinquent taxes on Aug. 19, 21 or 22. The date will be established once the auctioneer decided which day will work for him;

- agreed that it would like to ask the South Dakota Association of County Commissioners to lobby the state Legislature to change the rules regarding the uses of 911 funds;

- agreed to get six credit cards, one for each county department, with a limit of \$1,500; and

- agreed to pay County Commission meeting videographer River Rat Productions \$225 per meeting rather than \$175.

You can follow Nathan Johnson on Twitter at twitter.com/AnInlandVoyage

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Left to right: Ashley Schweitzer, Tyler Kozak, Cody Griffith, Alexa Griffith, and Rachel Wood

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"It has truly been an honor and a privilege to practice ophthalmology at Willcockson Eye Associates, P.C. I wish to express my gratitude to my colleagues, Drs. Hicks, Kouri and Dickes; my staff, and area physicians, all with whom I have enjoyed practicing medicine these many years. Special thanks to my patients who trusted me with their vision care." Patrick King, M.D.



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