



Isolated Thunderstorms Possible

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City OKs Consultant For CM Search

BY NATHAN JOHNSON
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The Yankton City Commission decided to move forward with negotiating a contract with a consultant to find a new city manager Monday.

Doug Russell will serve his last day as Yankton's city manager Friday, after which he will fill that role in Kalispell, Mont.



Lowrie

A four-member committee of city commissioners reviewed several options and is recommending that the Atlanta-based Mercer Group be selected for the process. The cost of their recruitment services would not exceed \$19,500.

Mayor Nancy Wenande said that cost fell between two other firms that had submitted proposals. "There was one around the \$17,900 mark, and the other one was around \$21,500," she stated.

The committee is recommending the Mercer Group because of the personable attitude of its representatives, and the fact that it has a relationship with Russell and is familiar with his positive attributes, according to Wenande.

"We felt the list of communities they had worked with is very reputable," she continued. "They've also worked within Yankton before, so they are familiar with the Yankton community."

The *Press & Dakotan* covered the Yankton County Commission's interaction with the firm beginning in 2008 when the Mercer Group was hired to do a wage study. The commission expressed dissatisfaction with the final result of that relationship at the time.

Wenande said during a media briefing last week that the committee was aware of that history with the County Commission but was confident with the Mercer Group's ability to provide quality service for the city.

Commissioner Paul Lowrie said Monday that the committee was looking for a consultant that would cast a wide net and seek candidates that weren't necessarily just from this region.

"Do they work with clients they have worked with before? Or do they broaden it out there as much as possible?" he added. "(Mercer) definitely broadens it out as much as possible, so we feel pretty confident with this firm."

According to documents provided by the company, it aims to have a manager working for the city within 110 days of beginning.

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Dream Sees The Light



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

ABOVE: Shown at Monday's "Northern Lights" ground-breaking at Avera Sacred Heart Hospital are, from left Doug Ekeren, Vice President of Planning and Development; Pam Rezac, President and CEO; Sister Penny Bingham, OSB, Prioress of Sacred Heart Monastery; Dr. Michael Pietila, Chief of Staff; Rob Stephenson, Board Vice Chair; Nancy Wenande, Mayor of Yankton; Amy Freeburg, Board Chair. RIGHT: Pietila speaks during Monday's ceremony



KELLY HERTZ/P&D

"We believe that ... we will be in a better position to meet important immediate health care needs, and also we will be more responsive to the changes that are yet to be evolving in health care on our horizon."

PAM REZAC

Ground Is Broken On \$17M 'Northern Lights' Project

BY DEREK BARTOS
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Avera Sacred Heart Hospital is one step closer to shining a new light on health care and expanding its healing services.

The Yankton hospital broke ground Monday afternoon on its \$17.1 million "Northern Lights" project. Located on the northwest corner of the existing hospital, the three-story addition will house a new kitchen, cafeteria, pharmacy, laboratory, sleep lab, physician amenities, environmental services space and meeting areas.

"This project is going to be really good for Yankton, but it's also going to be very good for the service area that we serve and our regional area," said Amy Freeburg, chair of the ASHH board of directors. "It'll be especially nice for our patients and their families, but it's also going to be really good for our employees and doctors, and I think it's even going to help for physician recruitment."

Named for its location and the fact that it will feature many windows to allow in natural light, the focus of the "Northern Lights" project is to provide a warm, healing environment, said ASHH president and CEO Pam Rezac.

"There are many studies that have been done that will provide evidence that a proper healing environment does much to the medical services," she said. "We believe that by doing this that we will facilitate the important work of our medical teams. They are improving the health and the lives of the people we serve, and they're doing it through patient-centered care, which this project will enhance."

To help provide that healing environment, the "Northern Lights" addition will upgrade the hospital's food preparations, a process that has been on hold for decades.

"Food service and the kitchen has always been part of our long-term discussion, so it's really exciting to see us get to that point

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House Panel Sets Contempt Vote On Attorney General

BY PETE YOST
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A House committee looking into a flawed gun-smuggling probe in Arizona announced Monday that it will consider holding Attorney General Eric Holder in contempt of Congress next week for failing to produce some documents the panel is seeking.

The committee has scheduled a contempt vote for June 20.

To date, the Justice Department has

produced 7,600 pages of material to the committee.

Darrell Issa, chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, says Congress needs to examine records regarding the Justice Department's conduct following public disclosures in early 2011 that hundreds of guns illicitly purchased at gun shops on the U.S. side of the border wound up in Mexico, many of them at crime scenes.

The Justice Department says many

of the documents being sought deal with open criminal investigations and prosecutions — matters relating to sensitive law enforcement activities that cannot be disclosed.

"The Justice Department is out of excuses," House Speaker John Boehner said Monday. "Congress has given At-



Holder

torney General Holder more than enough time to fully cooperate with its investigation into Fast and Furious," the name of the flawed law enforcement operation.

Issa said Congress has an obligation "to investigate unanswered questions about attempts to smear whistleblowers, failures by Justice Department officials to be truthful and candid with the

HOLDER | PAGE 11

South Dakota To Implement Emergency Rule For 85-Octane Gas

PIERRE (AP) — South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard says he's directed the Department of Public Safety to implement an emergency rule allowing the sale of 85-octane gasoline with mandatory cautionary labels while permanent rules are debated and adopted.

The emergency rules will require South Dakota retailers who choose to sell 85-octane gas to label their fuel pumps to caution consumers to check their vehicle owner's manuals to determine what grade of motor fuel is appropriate.

Octane is a measure of fuel performance, with a higher octane level indicates better performance. Many manufacturers recommend a minimum of 87 octane fuel.

Daugaard says he's asked Attorney General Marty Jackley for an official opinion on whether 85-octane fuel may be sold legally in all or any part of South Dakota.



SHAUNA MARLETTE/P&D

Yankton High School Principal Dr. Wayne Kindle addresses the audience during Monday night's Yankton School Board meeting. The board announced it was hiring a drug/alcohol counselor due to the recent rise in the use of those substances among students.

YSD To 'Build A Bridge'

School District To Hire Drug/Alcohol Counselor Through LCBHS

BY ANDREW ATWAL
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The Yankton School District has formed a relationship with the Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Center that provides a drug and alcohol counselor for the high school and middle school.

The school board announced the plan at its meeting on Monday.

The objective is to have the counselor hired in July, train the person in August and have the counselor be ready to start for the new school year.

One of the goals of the program is to "build a bridge" between the community, school and school district, and Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Center to prevent and reduce the use of

drugs and alcohol.

Superintendent Dr. Joseph Gertsema echoed a similar belief when he stated, "The program is building a bridge for our children's future."

The funding for the new position will be from the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Block Grant, which runs year-to-year. But the school board is optimistic the funding will be available for a number of years.

The program will also help in fostering educational programs and activities that will increase prevention and awareness of drugs and alcohol.

Members of the board noted the new hire will be an employee of the Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Center.

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