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# Different Horizons

## Bon Homme Co. Seeks New Opportunities For Development

BY **RANDY DOCKENDORF**  
 randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

TABOR — Bon Homme County officials aren't letting the apparent loss of a proposed grain facility stop their economic development efforts.

The Bon Homme County Commission has held discussions with Parkston-based Dakota Plains Ag Center about building the grain-handling facility near Tabor.

However, those talks have turned silent in recent months.

"They (Dakota Plains) haven't come back or approached up whatsoever," said Bon Homme County Commission chairman Russ Jelsma following Tuesday's regular meeting.

Auditor Tammy Brunken noted she hasn't received correspondence from the company, either.

The county took steps to lay the

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Bon Homme County

foundation for the project, she added. "We did some zoning (changes) to open up the field," she said.

Meanwhile,

Dakota Plains has renewed negotiations with Yankton County for a grain facility. The process moved forward Tuesday when the Yankton County Commission and Dakota Plains moved forward with a developer's agreement for the proposed Napa Junction grain facility.



RANDY DOCKENDORF/P&D  
**Bon Homme County Commission Chairman Russ Jelsma and County Auditor Tammy Brunken study figures during Tuesday's regular meeting. The commission approved Article 17, a zoning amendment which regulates wind farms in the county.**

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Yankton native and current mayor of Sioux Falls Mike Huether addresses a Historic Downtown Yankton Association Think Tank session at Discovery Church Wednesday morning. Huether was on hand to offer advice to local officials on how to improve Yankton's downtown district. (Rob Nielsen/P&D)

## Huether Shares Passion About Leadership With His Hometown

BY **RANDY DOCKENDORF**  
 randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

He's not clergy, but Mike Huether looked right at home talking at Discovery Church in Yankton.

That's because the two-term Sioux Falls mayor — and Yankton native — showed almost a religious fervor speaking Wednesday to downtown Yankton business leaders.

"I read the *Press & Dakotan* every day," he said. "I'm following my (home) town."

Huether talked about the importance of faith, passion, using your God-given talents and embracing others. "Mayor Mike" said he uses those qualities to guide the state's largest city of 166,000 residents. He's also been tabbed as a possible contender for governor or other higher office.

However, he said he's not focused beyond serving as the best possible mayor before he's term-limited out of office in 2018.

That sounds like typical political coyness. Huether quickly turned to a very personal reason for his belief in never planning too far ahead in life.

"My dad passed away of cancer. He was diagnosed and died 10 days later," he said. "I'm not going to make any life decisions that are 2 1/2 years away."

He pointed to an incident last week showing why not to take things for granted. He was standing on a ladder trimming a tree at his in-laws' house in Yankton. A limb hit him in the face and knocked him off the ladder.

"I knew I was going to fall, so I jumped and

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Sioux Falls mayor and Yankton native Mike Huether greets an audience member following his Wednesday talk before downtown Yankton business leaders. Huether, who has been mentioned as a possible governor candidate, believes Yankton has many resources for a strong quality of life. (Randy Dockendorf/P&D)

## Athletes Seeking Transgender Status Would Now Get Independent Hearing

BY **BOB MERCER**  
 State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — High school athletes who believe they are transgender and want to play on the opposite gender's teams should make their cases to an independent hearing officer in the future, the South Dakota High School Activities Association's board decided Wednesday.

The student could appeal the hearing officer's decision to the association's board.

The board of directors voted 8-1 for the policy change.

The decision also removed some language from the policy that opponents of transgender participation said offended them.

### also

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The hearing officer would be required to be a lawyer with expertise in transgender matters. The officer would replace the panel that was in the policy.

There hasn't been an application for transgender athlete status in the year since the original policy took effect.

No one from the public or any school asked to testify to the board Wednesday.

The directors kept, at least for now, the requirement that transgender status for athletic competition must continue through the end of high school.

Director Sandy Klatt, a school board

member from Brandon, cast the dissenting vote. She said the policy should allow a transgender athlete to return to his or her original gender.

Klatt made a motion to amend the policy but withdrew because she wasn't comfortable offering the wording.

"I just have a problem with a policy that doesn't offer any options," Klatt said.

James Weaver of Sioux Falls, who previously worked for the association and developed much of the original policy, was at the meeting Wednesday.

He said the purpose was to help students and their families understand the gravity of seeking transgender status.

"That part was written in it spe-

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# Taking It To Heart

## S.F. Mayor Offers Critique, Advice On Downtown

BY **ROB NIELSEN**  
 rob.nielsen@yankton.net

As a Yankton native, Mike Huether grew up with a very different downtown Yankton.

"It was back in the '80s of course, but Yankton's downtown was one of the places to be," Huether, who is now mayor of Sioux Falls, said. "You shopped here, you worked there and you played there, and I still believe that downtown Yankton can bring it back, and more."

However, Huether, community leaders and others have noticed that, as Yankton has expanded, grown to the north and set its sights to the west, the once-vibrant downtown area has lost momentum. Local officials are looking to turn that trend around.

Downtown business leaders, officials and others were invited to a Historic Downtown Yankton Association "Think Tank" session Wednesday where Huether spoke on recommendations on how to revitalize the downtown district based on his experience as mayor of the state's largest city.

Huether described the downtown area of any city as absolutely vital.

"The heartbeat of any town — whether it's Tripp, South Dakota, whether it's Eureka, whether it's Rapid City, whether it's Sioux Falls or whether it's Yankton — is your downtown," he told an audience of around 40 at the Discovery Church Wednesday. "As you come into Yankton and you look at our downtown here, this is the reflection, in my mind, of your entire city. This is where it starts. ... That heartbeat has to be pumping at the highest level."

Huether presented an eight-step plan as to how the city could revamp its downtown district and draw residents and visitors alike back to the riverside.

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