

The Press & Dakotan

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OPINION

Onward Campaign Hits Home Stretch

An encouragingly large crowd turned out Monday night for the penultimate, public presentation on the six finalists for Onward Yankton's "Next Big Idea" campaign. It was the latest chapter in a process that has promised much and could potentially deliver a lot. It is a quest for a vision – not the one defining vision for this community – but one vision among many, and hopefully, many more.

Along the way, there has been a little controversy and criticism tied to the process, which has been aired on this page in the last month. But that kind of adversity happens in projects like this. Hopefully, the matter has moved on from that turbulence.

More than 200 people were on hand Monday to hear the presentations, all of which offered hopeful visions that could be pursued with hard work, both from the private and public sectors.

The Onward Yankton campaign has been an intriguing project ever since it was announced last spring. It generated more than 500 proposals, and the six that were showcased Monday night were all good ones. (Kudos to everyone who submitted their proposals, and a special thanks goes out to the six parties who presented their proposals during Monday's meeting.)

Hopefully, the quest for forward visions doesn't end here. Bear in mind that the process will not end with the eventual selection of a winner. On the contrary, that's when the real work begins. It's going to take an effort from both the private and public sectors to turn whatever idea is chosen into a real, tangible plus for Yankton. Otherwise, this has all been a \$10,000 exercise in wishful thinking. It has to be more than that.

Perhaps the best barometer of this entire process was demonstrated in Monday's turnout at Discovery Church. The crowd seemed genuinely interested in hearing what these proposed "big ideas" were all about. That spoke well of this entire process, and bodes well for the looming conclusion of this intriguing and hopeful campaign.

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OUR LETTER POLICY

The PRESS & DAKOTAN invites its readers to write letters to the editor. We ask that a few simple guidelines be followed:

- Please limit letters to 300 words or less. Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind.
- In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the PRESS & DAKOTAN will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses.
- Specific individuals or entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.
- Only signed letters with writer's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email us at kelly.hertz@yankton.net/.

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IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
Today is Wednesday, September 2, the 245th day of 2015. There are 120 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On September 2, 1945, Japan formally surrendered in ceremonies aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, ending World War II.

On this date: In 1666, the Great Fire of London broke out.
In 1789, the United States Treasury Department was established.

In 1864, during the Civil War, Union Gen. William T. Sherman's forces occupied Atlanta.

In 1901, Vice President Theodore Roosevelt offered the advice, "Speak softly and carry a big stick" in a speech at the Minnesota State Fair.

In 1924, the Rudolf Friml operetta "Rose Marie" opened on Broadway.
In 1935, a Labor Day hurricane slammed into the Florida Keys, claiming more than 400 lives.

In 1945, Ho Chi Minh declared Vietnam an independent republic. (Ho died on this date in 1969.)

In 1963, Alabama Gov. George C. Wallace prevented the integration of Tuskegee High School by encircling the building with state troopers. "The CBS Evening News" with Walter Cronkite was lengthened from 15 to 30 minutes, becoming network television's first half-hour nightly newscast.

In 1969, in what some regard as the birth of the Internet, two connected computers at the University of California, Los Angeles, passed test data through a 15-foot cable.

In 1972, Dave Wottle of the United States won the men's 800-meter race at the Munich Summer Olympics.

In 1986, a judge in Los Angeles sentenced Cathy Evelyn Smith to three years in prison for involuntary manslaughter for her role in the 1982 drug overdose death of comedian John Belushi. (Smith served 18 months.)

In 1998, a Swissair MD-11 jetliner crashed off Nova Scotia, killing all 229 people aboard.

Ten years ago: A National Guard convoy packed with food, water and medicine rolled into New Orleans four days after Hurricane Katrina. Scorched by criticism about sluggish federal help, President George W. Bush toured the Gulf Coast and met with state and local officials, including New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin; at one point, Bush praised FEMA Director Michael Brown, telling him, "Brownie, you're doing a heck of a job." During a live TV benefit concert, rapper Kanye West went off-script to sharply criticize President Bush, saying he "doesn't care about black people." The Labor Department reported the August unemployment rate was 4.9 percent, a four-year low. Machinists at Boeing Co. went on a nearly month-long strike. Actor Bob Denver, 70, died in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Five years ago: Israeli and Palestinian leaders pledged in a first round of renewed peace talks in Washington to meet regularly in regular intervals. Seattle Storm forward Lauren Jackson was selected the WNBA's most valuable player for the third time in her career.

One year ago: Islamic State group extremists released a video showing the beheading of American journalist Steven Sotloff, and warned President Barack Obama against further U.S. airstrikes on the group. Apple said that hackers had obtained nude photos of actress Jennifer Lawrence and other female celebrities by pilfering images from individual accounts rather than through a broader attack on the company's services.

Today's Birthdays: Dancer-actress Marge Champion is 96. Former Sen. Alan K. Simpson, R-Wyo., is 84. Actor-comedian Chuck McCann is 81. Former United States Olympic Committee Chairman Peter Ueberroth is 78. Actor Derek Fowlis (TV: "Yes, Minister"; "Yes, Prime Minister") is 78. Singer Jimmy Clanton is 77. Rhythm-and-blues singer Sam Gooden (The Impressions) is 76. Rhythm-and-blues singer Rosalind Ashford (Martha and the Vandellas) is 72. Singer Joe Simon is 72. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Terry Bradshaw is 67. Basketball Hall of Famer Nate Archibald is 67. Actor Mark Harmon is 64. Former Sen. Jim DeMint, R-S.C., is 64. International Tennis Hall of Famer Jimmy Connors is 63. Actress Linda Purl is 60. Rock musician Jerry Augustyniak (10,000 Maniacs) is 57. Country musician Paul Deakin (The Mavericks) is 56. Pro Football Hall of Famer Eric Dickerson is 55. Actor Keanu Reeves is 51. International Boxing Hall of Famer Lennox Lewis is 50. Actress Salma Hayek is 49. Actor Tuc Watkins is 49. Actress Kristen Cloke is 47. Actress Cynthia Watros is 47. Rhythm-and-blues singer K-Ci is 46. Actor-comedian Katt Williams is 42. Actor Michael Lombardi is 41. Actress Tiffany Hines is 38. Rock musician Sam Rivers (Limp Bizkit) is 38. Actor Jonathan Kite is 36. Actress Allison Miller is 30. Rock musician Spencer Smith is 28. Electronic music DJ/producer Zedd is 26.

Thought for Today: "Always remember that you are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else." — Margaret Mead, American anthropologist (1901-1978).

FROM THE BIBLE

If I have made gold my trust or called fine gold my confidence ... this also would be an iniquity to be punished by the judges, for I would have been false to God above. Job 31:24, 28. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.



Point Of View

SD And Wind Energy: Where Do We Stand?

BY DAVID GANJE
Rapid City

South Dakota has enormous potential for wind energy development. It ranks sixth in the United States for potential in generating electricity from wind, according to a laboratory associated with the Department of Energy. Just step out onto the plains and observe. The state is using only less than a fraction of a percent of this total capacity (.17 percent to be exact). This fraction of a percent produced 26 percent of all electricity produced in South Dakota in 2013 — only Iowa produces a larger share of its total electricity from wind.

Facts suggest South Dakota is wind's friend. It is a simple reality that wind is available. In 2014, it is estimated that wind paid out \$2.4 million in lease payments to landowners. Assuming this payout is steady throughout growth, if South Dakota maximized its wind generation, it could expect lease payouts to reach \$1.395 billion annually to landowners alone. An article published in the *Argus Leader*, covering a study by a national laboratory concluded that during the time studied "each megawatt of installed wind power led to an additional \$11,000 in personal income and .5 jobs per county." While this may be too optimistic, it highlights the benefits the state stands to gain by embracing wind.

Wind energy development has been impeded by an uncertain and stupid taxation environment in the nation. For 23 years, the federal government has provided a tax credit for wind development, but it is always uncertain if the credit will be renewed from year to year. The tax credit expired in 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2014, for example, but was then renewed retroactively. In yet other years, whether the credit would be renewed was a question Congress left on the table until the very last minute. This uncertainty causes what some call the "boom-bust" cycle. When developers know the tax credit is secure, they develop, but when they are uncertain, they stop. In 2013 for example, uncertainty in the credit's renewal was accompanied by a 92 percent decline in new wind projects. Similarly, in 2014, Congress didn't enact a statute extending the credit until December 2014, but the effective date was retroactive to Jan. 1, 2014. Wind developers then had no assurances from Congress for almost the entire 2014 year. 2015 may be no different: the credit has not yet been extended for new projects. For all we know, it may not be.

During this past legislative session, the South Dakota Legislature revised the taxing procedure for wind production. This was a good first step. The prior taxation scheme was complicated and had a provision to increase the tax rate each year. In 2014, the last effective year of the old scheme, wind was taxed at \$.0551 per kilowatt hour (pkh), but projects within their first 10 years of production could file for a rebate on this tax. There were two levels of rebate: in a project's first five years, it was eligible for a 90 percent rebate, while in years 6-10, it was eligible for a 50 percent rebate. Under the new scheme, the Legislature eliminated the entire rebate program and established two different tax rates — one for projects existing before April 1, 2015 (\$.00065 pkh), and one for projects existing after (\$.00045 pkh). This new scheme is steadier (there is no rate variation based on either mandated increases or project year) and also supposedly cheaper in the long run for wind projects (particularly new wind projects). The *Rapid City Journal* reports that without this tax break, wind projects were paying about \$5 million more over their life spans to operate in South Dakota rather than elsewhere.

While the tax break is helpful, another difficulty wind projects face is the relatively low price of purchased electricity in South Dakota. The region has comparatively little demand for electricity and new projects would only drive prices lower. Some states resolve this by requiring utilities purchase and distribute energy produced by wind. South Dakota's program is only voluntary, so wind does not have a guaranteed feasible market here. For good or ill, govern-

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Safety Issue

Ron Dertien, Avon

The fine merchants of Yankton are in for a surprise. Someday a senior citizen will pull out in front of a truck. The truck, being unable to stop on a dime, will hit the car, possibly injuring or killing the person in it. All this because the merchants of Yankton want to make an extra dollar off the truckers.

This almost happened to me on numerous occasions. I drove truck for 27 years, traveling through Yankton two or three times a day.

There is a great need for a bypass around Yankton to avoid tragedies involving trucks, cars, school busses, motorcycles, bicycles and pedestrians. If a truck route were in place, it would greatly improve the safety for everyone.

A New Choice?

Michael F. McDonald, Yankton

I ran over to my folks' place after I finished mowing lawns recently. My Dad asked me if I'd had a chance to read that day's *Press & Dakotan* story about all the folks who asked for consideration for being appointed to City Commission spot that was vacated.

My Dad asked me how could the City Commission consider selecting Ms. Wenande to fill that spot when the voters in the last election made a definite decision NOT to re-elect her.

I think my Dad has a valid point here, and it should be made public.

David Ganje of Ganje Law Offices practices in the area of natural resources, environmental and commercial law in South and North Dakota.