

## City

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button to talk into a microphone, and we try to keep things moving along because we often have members of the public waiting for different agenda items. Study sessions provide a more relaxed atmosphere that encourages discussion. Furthermore, I find that opportunities to discuss ideas among commissioners are limited. We take open meeting laws very seriously. Study sessions would be a place where a commissioner could raise a question or idea to the entire commission and get immediate feedback to flesh it out before bringing it forward during a regular meeting.”

City Manager Amy Nelson told the *Press & Dakotan* that these meetings have been used to cover many large topics over the years.

“We’ve held work sessions in the past when we’ve needed them,” she said. “We do that for budgets and when we have certain topics we need to dive into a little further such as the water treatment plant. We’ve had them before when we’ve had a major ordinance rewritten like the sign ordinance or the animal ordinance, which we updated recently.”

If the City of Yankton would adopt regular work session meetings, they wouldn’t be alone in the

state.

Nelson said the city is studying the practices of other cities such as Brookings and Vermillion.

“Brookings City Council holds regular meetings at 6 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month and they hold their study sessions at 5 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month,” she said. “Vermillion holds meetings on the first and third Monday at 7 p.m. and their special study meetings are held at noon the same day as their regular meeting days. Each of those communities does it pretty differently.”

She added the city will explore the best way to go about it.

“We can do whatever works for Yankton,” she said. “We don’t have to follow one of their models. If the commission decides to do a regular study session, we can do it at any time we can do it.”

Johnson, who said he’d prefer to see monthly meetings, said the public would be welcome to attend and that they wouldn’t be used to set policy outside of a normal meeting.

“If a member of the public sees a topic on our agenda in which they have an interest, they should definitely attend and learn more about it,” he said. “However, they can be assured that no action will be taken on the subject until it is considered on the agenda of one of our regular Monday night meetings held

twice a month.”

All meetings would be announced as per state law, an agenda would be provided and minutes of the meeting would be available.

Nelson added she and City Attorney Ross Den Herder are also exploring whether any changes to the commission’s meeting bylaws will need to be changed in order to facilitate potential regular work sessions.

“It’s probably a good idea that we take that formal action and establish the regular meeting times by location and time by resolution,” she said. “Then I want to consult with the city attorney about changing the ordinance.”

Nelson said a formal proposal will be set out during the commission’s regular meeting Oct. 12.

Johnson said he sees the meetings as a way to enhance communication amongst the commissioners.

“I think these meetings would enrich communication between commissioners, provide good information and serve as a place to discuss certain ideas on a more informal level before putting them on the regular meeting agenda,” he said. “In short, I think these sessions would make us a stronger commission.”

Follow @RobNielsen-PandD on Twitter.

## Beatrice Officials Write Off \$880K In Bad Debt

BEATRICE, Neb. (AP) — The Beatrice City Council has written off collecting \$880,000 in outstanding balances on three loans with companies that are no longer operating, but it’s not giving up hope that it eventually could recoup the money, an official said.

Council members addressed the balances Monday night after city auditors expressed concern over the debt. The city wrote off a \$250,000 loan to Store Kraft, \$330,000 of a \$600,000 loan to 5Stat, and a \$300,000 loan to Blue Valley Automation, the *Beatrice Sun* reported.

“Based upon their recommendation and the current status of these loans, we’re recommending that we write off the remaining portion of this debt,” City Administrator Tobias Tempelmeyer said. “It doesn’t mean we give up collecting on it, but it’s an accounting procedure that we do here.”

Community Development Block Grant loans are meant to support business and activities that stimulate job creation and

economic expansion.

In May 2014, the council approved the loan for Store Kraft at 3 percent interest for job creation and retention purposes. The company defaulted on the loan without any payment of principal or interest after Meridian Bank of Texas foreclosed on its assets last November.

A loan agreement with 5Stat, a Store Kraft subsidiary, was approved by the council in November 2009 for research and development, which would result in additional jobs. The city forgave \$150,000 of the loan, the company made payments totaling \$120,000 over two years, and the rest was written off Monday night.

The council approved a loan for Blue Valley Automation in April 2009 under an agreement with the company to add 10 full-time employees within a year.

Blue Valley Automation filed for bankruptcy in August 2010.

## Flood

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fares worse.

“Cars were stalled everywhere,” Primmer told the newspaper about part of her commute. “There was water all the way up to the windows.”

“Any additional rain they get is going to cause a problem,” National Weather Service forecaster Van DeWald said.

In northeastern Ne-

braska, Coleridge, Nebraska, reported 5.31 inches falling early Wednesday, with 2.53 recorded in Crofton. Butte in Boyd County measured 2.72 inches. Bancroft, Nebraska, recorded 4.10.

In South Dakota, 3.28 inches was reported near Tyndall early Wednesday. Mof the heavier rain was in the south-central portion of the state. The Yankton Middle School had record .44 as of 6 p.m. Wednesday.

The Council Bluffs and St. Albert Catholic school districts both canceled classed Wednesday because

of concerns about road conditions.

During the storm, more than 5,000 people lost power, but utilities were able to restore service to most customers during the morning Wednesday.

The weather service predicts the area could receive 2 inches to 3 inches more rain Wednesday night before the storms diminish on Thursday. DeWald said that hopefully the areas that received the most rain Wednesday morning will be spared by some of the later storms.

## Camp

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Missouri River dams.

“We are just asking visitors to be respectful and give them their space,” Hartman said.

Even though these parks are not seeing as many visitors as in the popular summer months, park employees are still seeing a new excitement in guests trying their hand at fall camping.

“I think the shift in weather we are experiencing might have something to do with it,” Hartman said. “Our falls are a little milder at times. A lot of people enjoy the fall camping because there are fewer people around and it’s a lot quieter.”

All areas encompassing Chief White Crane will be available for recreational use. Bathrooms will be closing periodically until November but, as far as certain aspects of the park, visitors can feel free to savor the last month of the camping season.

The broadened time frame could extend to future years at the park if visitors continue to express interest in the months following the summer season.

“I think it will continue, based on more evaluations,” Hartman said, “not only to make sure it is beneficial for the park system, but also to see that it is not having an impact on eagle roosting.”

Follow @alwooc01 on Twitter.

## Drugs

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to hand over drugs and medications that are not essential to everyday life.

It will be the fifth year Yankton has participated in the initiative.

“We found that there is a lot of unused drug being left in people’s cabinets and sometimes people who shouldn’t get their hands on it do,” said local Drug Take-Back Day manager Lt. Mike Bergeson of the YPD. “We’re trying to help them clean out their cabinets and protect the environment.”

Many times, people try to dispose of their unused drugs by flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the garbage, which are not proper disposal methods. The DEA has certain guidelines for safely disposing of medications.

Once the Yankton Police Department became aware of the Drug Take-Back Day, “We got on board with what the DEA was doing because we wanted to give the same opportunity to the citizens of Yankton,” said Bergeson.

According to a recent press release, on the last Drug Take-Back Day, 309 tons of prescription drugs combined was turned in at DEA-operated sites throughout the country.

“I hope people use the police department as a place to get rid of unwanted drugs and medications,” Bergeson said.

For more information, go to the DEA office or contact the Yankton Police Department at 605-668-5210.

Follow @ReillyBiel on Twitter.

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