

Prepare

Continued from Page A1

nage related to parking regulations during snow events.

"We need to make sure that we have signage appropriately placed throughout the city to be able to properly enforce certain codes. We want to make sure that the community understands their role in snow removal as well because we can't remove the snow without their assistance," Banfill said.

"We're not going to be going out and ticketing and towing immediately," City Manager Harold Stewart added. "But we will be working towards that in the future because if those vehicles are out there, it slows down our ability to clear snow quickly, and our goal is to do it as quickly as possible."

Among preparations made by Public Works has been to stage equipment at the airport that will enable crews to more quickly repair snow removal equipment on the north side of town rather than travel to the Public Works building in the southeast, Banfill said. The

Council to renegotiate land lease

Managing potential liability for a lagoon system that someday will need attention dominated the Minot City Council's discussion Monday regarding the lease of its adjacent land.

The city is leasing land next to the lagoon to Laverne Mikkelson for agricultural purposes at about \$50 an acre. Utilities Director Jason Sorenson presented information indicating lagoon leakage is occurring, not only onto the city's land but onto other adjacent land belonging to Mikkelson.

The council voted to renegotiate the expiring lease with Mikkelson rather than seek quotes, with the understanding that the City of Minot will not be held liable for leakage damage as long as the lease is in effect. The proposal is for the new lease to run for five years with an opt-out with a year's notice.

Sorenson said the cost of repairing the lagoon cells would be in excess of \$2 million. The city is looking at a potential need to construct a mechanical wastewater treatment facility in the future, which Sorenson estimated at about \$90 million.

— Jill Schramm

rental budget also was increased for 2025 to allow the renting of additional wings for a couple pieces of equipment, mainly the graders, to move snow faster.

"From a schedule standpoint, really it's nothing different than what we've done in previous years. The team will run 24-hour operations," Banfill said. "Rather than wait until the four inches of snow accumula-

tion, as has been done in previous years, we're going to dispatch early, meaning we're going to get the salt and sand trucks out there to go and make sure that the roadways are clear. Once that's complete, we'll go ahead and put out the rest of our bigger equipment to ensure that the snow is removed quickly.

"On the residential side, again we're going to be look-

ing at implementing third party snow removal services when the cost benefit is in our favor. In other words, if we're going to take just as many manpower hours to go out there and move it as a city — from a city worker standpoint — then we're going to start looking at utilizing third party snow removal services to give us a leg up on the snowstorm itself," he said.

Public Works will be using new software that will provide an online portal for the public, giving residents the opportunity to see the city's snow removal progress and obtain information about where plows are going to be when it comes to residential areas.

Regarding the downtown, Stewart said the emphasis will be on communicating more quickly with downtown businesses using a communication matrix developed by the downtown association. The city also wants to be responsive to the business owners' request for more enforcement in instances in which certain property owners aren't abiding by ordinances, he said.

Rice

Continued from Page A1

tion for a continuance for the trial formerly scheduled to begin Jan. 6, citing a number of emergent factors.

Rice's attorney Richard Sand articulated the defense's reasons for the continuance at the hearing, with the first being a change in representation for Rice. Defense attorney Philip Becher informed the Sand Law Firm he would be leaving the firm Nov. 1. Sand, who has been substituted as counsel for Rice, said it was determined after a case review process that a continuance would be appropriate to familiarize himself with the case.

Another factor is related to an expert report regarding the growth of blow fly eggs on Knutson's body, which Sand said had only been shared by the State's Attorney's office after it had denied his request for a stipulation agreeing to a continuance at the end of October.

Sand said this report could "potentially provide significant and independent support" for the defense's theory regarding the involvement of an alternative suspect in the case named Devin Hall. Sand said he, Becher and the Ward County State's Attorney's office had deposed Hall after he was arrested on the Fort Peck Reservation in Montana.

"The fact of whether they are going to use this report or not, we very much want to use it," Sand said. "This report turns the case on its head."

The motion filed with the court also cited the announcement that Minot Police Chief John Klug has been placed on administrative leave pending the completion of an investigation into disciplinary inconsistencies and ongoing turnover facing the department. No timeline has been given by the City of Minot for the investigation, and Klug was set to be a witness in the case.

"The revelation that a major witness in the case is under internal investigation cannot be overstated in its significance," the motion stated.

Sand said Klug's testimony regarding the evidence related to Hall is integral to the defense's case, and the investigation into Klug is going to be critical to their questioning of him at the trial.

"Our understanding of what comes out in this report is going to be very important as we cross-examine him, and for issues regarding Giglio and his truth and honesty based on that initial arrest of Mr. Hall," Sand said. "We have been flummoxed the entire time as to why the investigation has taken the route it has the last 15 years. A big piece of this is timing, and why the FBI report was sent out and why the investigators of this county and this city had a lot to do with timing."

Sand concluded by asserting the request was not being made to create a delay. He argued a continuance was essential to preserve Rice's constitutional rights.

"There's a lot going on here, but all three of these aren't the fault of Mrs. Rice," Sand said.

Assistant Ward County State's Attorney Christopher Nelson filed a response to the motion on Oct. 30, arguing the analysis of the blow fly eggs was unlikely to be useful to either the prosecution or the defense. He also pointed out the defense waited four weeks after receiving notice of the investigation into Klug to raise their concerns.

Nelson took issue with Sands' request, saying he has always been involved in the case and had a full three months to prepare after he was made aware he'd be the attorney of record at the trial.

Nelson questioned the importance of Hall's deposition, saying he had executed his right to remain silent and didn't answer questions. Sand pushed back, saying Hall's silence was only invoked after the questions shifted to the murder weapon in the case.

Nelson called Minot City Attorney Stefanie Stalheim to testify regarding the investigation into Klug. She confirmed the city expected to receive the report of its findings as early as Sunday. Stalheim testified the investigation was concerned with Klug's management style and that while she was privy to some of its findings, she would not be sharing them publicly. Nelson asserted the nature of the investigation had no bearing on Klug's honesty or truthfulness.

Nelson further cited Marsy's Law rights held by Knutson's family, which enshrine the right to proceedings free of unreasonable delay. A statement from Knutson's sister was included in the response, stating the family has already invested significant time and resources preparing to attend the trial, which was previously moved to Grand Forks. Her statement further faulted Becher and the Sand Law Firm, saying the reasons cited in their motion appear "neither unexpected or unavoidable."

"My family should not face further hardship because of Philip Becher's poor planning," her statement concluded.

Nelson said the prosecution is in agreement with the position and sentiment of Knutson family. He cited five previous requests for continuances filed by Rice during the proceedings.

"All previous continuances were made at the request of the defendant and granted by the court. By the time trial is scheduled to commence on January 6, 2025, 17 years, seven months and two days will have elapsed since the murder was discovered. The time for justice is now," the response concluded.

Judge Richard Hagar ultimately ruled to grant the motion, and parties agreed to a new date of March 17-April 4 in Grand Forks.

"I think this is the right decision to make in regard to a continuance. I know a lot of arrangements have been made with your experts and witnesses and so forth, but this is the process that we have," Hagar said.

Honor

Continued from Page A1

World War II and Korean War veterans or those diagnosed with a terminal illness are moved up on the list, according to Western N.D. Honor Flight information.

An Honor Flight trip is at no cost to a veteran, according to Western N.D. Honor Flight. The cost covered for each veteran is about \$1,800 and includes the flight, hotel, meals and special clothing.

Masters was on an Honor Flight in October 2023.

"It was wonderful. They treat you like a king. You can go with \$20 in your wallet and you'll come back with \$20 in your wallet. It costs you zero," he said.

Masters said the trip involves meeting at the airport early on a Sunday morning to leave on the flight, arriving in Washington about mid or later in the morning and then boarding buses to travel to the various sites.

A meal is waiting for them when they board the



Submitted Photo

North Dakota veterans visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., during a Western North Dakota Honor Flight in April.

buses.

"When you get on the bus there's a boxed lunch on the seat. The efficiency is in those boxed lunches," Masters said. Typically, about 100 veterans are on an Honor Flight.

In early September, Western N.D. Honor Flight, a nonprofit organization based in Bismarck, re-

ceived a unique donation when an anonymous donor gifted 20,000 bushels of grain that produced a donation of \$106,735.18, according to the organization.

"It's tremendous," Masters said of the visits to the national memorials in Washington.

A recent Western N.D. Honor Flight took place

Sept. 29-30 from Bismarck and included Honor Flight board members, volunteers and medical staff who traveled with the veterans on the two-day trip.

Those who would like to apply to take part in a Western N.D. Honor Flight can fill out an application online or contact Western N.D. Honor Flight.

Child

Continued from Page A1

September.

"I think it's important enough to have that discussion by the standing committee to continue this," he said.

He listed a number of takeaways from the conference regarding the importance of early childhood education and investment in daycare, including the need for competitive salaries to create career opportunities in the field. He added the investments could take years to fully show returns, but early childhood care will add to the quality of life and workforce development.

"We need to bring educators to the table when we're making decisions when it comes to childhood," Ross said. "We need to trust providers, bring them to the table, and we need to listen to parents."

Examples of what can be done were illustrated at the conference, he said.

"What some of the states

are doing is incredible," he said, mentioning free daycare for many families. "There are states that are finding ways, and they're doing it, and they're succeeding, and they're finding out that investing early is providing a more available workforce."

The work of the childcare committee so far has caught the attention of the state, putting Minot in the position of potentially playing a leading role in pushing the narrative about childcare in the state, Ross said.

"To me, that sends a message we're on the right track here in Minot, but we just can't stop," he said. "It kind of sat idle for a while, but I'd like to see it continue, and I know we can do some positive things. We can drive the conversation here."

Committee members indicated a need to visit with local legislators to keep them informed about childcare issues as the Legislature takes up funding issues starting in January.

One concern is lack of

utilization of certain state programs created in the last legislative session to assist the childcare industry, including subsidizing some costs for eligible families.

Committee member Amy Jenkins, who works in childcare licensing, said the North Dakota mindset against taking a handout may be part of the reason behind low usage. She added the process also can be overwhelming, particularly dealing with all the hoops of online applications. With many state human services employees working from home, the communication among state programs and the ability for providers and families to connect with the people they need to speak with is becoming lost, she said.

"You can't walk in and talk to somebody. Everything is online. That's a barrier," Jenkins said. "I have providers that literally don't take some of the state benefits because they don't want to go online and deal with all of that."

Daycare provider Stacey Boyko also spoke about

the cumbersome processes and the difficulty in getting information. Boyko said the majority of families her daycare serves are interested in the state's childcare assistance program but not all are eligible.

"The one thing I am seeing is I have a lot of middle income families that would like to utilize it, and the income limits are still not set high enough. There are middle income families that I know could use it, and they are being denied," she said. "Having more people qualify is, I think, the best place to start."

Additionally, because the number of their families on assistance is a factor for providers in determining program benefits, the hassle in going after state aid often isn't worth it for a home daycare, Boyko said.

The childcare committee plans to continue meeting quarterly, or more often when needed. The committee has a vacancy to be filled by mayoral appointment with an individual who operates a daycare.

Tax

Continued from Page A1

The park board waited until after Tuesday's election to act on an ordinance because the wording was dependent on the outcome of Measure 4, the property tax elimination proposal. Had the measure passed, the sales tax would have been directly strictly to facilities projects. Because it failed, the board is proceeding with a request for a sales tax to lower property taxes by 14 mills, or about 40%, and fund new projects and maintenance.

The intent is to use sales tax income to provide for bond payment on a proposed

turf facility at Maysa Arena as well as operational costs for facilities, said Elly DesLauriers, executive director for the park district.

The ordinance also states the ordinance will be reviewed after five years.

"If sales tax is doing well, we could have the opportunity that we would even be able to reduce them more at that point," DesLauriers said of property taxes. "We have heard loud and clear that property taxes are a very hot button issue, and we believe this is Minot Park District's opportunity to reduce those."

She added the district's facilities bring in tournaments and people from outside the community, increasing sales

tax revenue. She called it a chance to "put money towards those facilities that are being used as well and start creating some more economic impact for our community."

Minot resident Tom Warssocki spoke in opposition to the sales tax. Increasing the sales tax will give Minot one of the highest local taxes in the state, he said. The state has a 5% sales tax, Minot has 2% and Ward County has a half percent.

"That, I believe, will send people out of this city to go shopping. They'll go to other places that have a lower sales tax because 8% is a lot. And yes, if you spend \$20,000 a year, a half a cent sales tax is

only an extra \$100, but people that are on fixed income, or those that are in a lower economic environment, they don't have that money today," Warssocki said. "I think this is the wrong time to add a half a cent sales tax to an already way too high sales tax in the city."

He said he agrees there are many residents who would like a nice indoor facility, but cities such as Williston and Waford City that have built facilities are finding they need more money to pay for operation.

"I believe we will have the same issues here," he said.

The board voted 5-0 to approve the ordinance and refer it to the city.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

The Abandoned Mine Lands Division (AML) of the North Dakota Public Service

Commission will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, at 1:00 p.m., CST, at the Velva City Hall, 101 1ST St W, Velva, North Dakota. The AML Division is seeking input on the proposed reclamation of an abandoned coal mine (Truax-Traer) in

Ward County approximately 9 miles southwest of Velva, ND. Anyone interested in this project or with concerns regarding any abandoned coal mine are encouraged to attend this open forum.

For more information, please contact Michael Howe, Environmental Engineer, Abandoned Mine Lands Division, North Dakota Public Service Commission, 600 E. Blvd. Ave., Dept. 408, Bismarck, ND 58505-0480 or by calling 701-328-4188.

8 AM-24-353 Filed 11/08/2024 Pages: 2
Public Meeting Notice and Invoice

North Dakota Newspaper Association

501 East Main Ave.

Bismarck, North Dakota 58501

Phone: 1-701-223-6397 Fax: 1-701-223-8185

INVOICE

November 25, 2024

Order: **24112PA0**

Invoice# **14571**

Attn: Default Contact Public Service Commission 600 E. Blvd Ave. Dept 408 Bismarck, North Dakota 58505	
Voice: _____	Fax: _____
Email: ndpsc@nd.gov	

Advertiser: **AML Division**

Brand:

Campaign

Client Order Number:

Amount Due:

\$382.77

Please detach and return this portion with your payment

AML Division Invoice# 14571 P.O.#: Client Order Number:

Run Date	Ad Size	Rate Type	Rate	Color Rate	Total	Discount	(%)	Amount after Discount	Page
Minot Daily News (Minot, North Dakota)									
11/08/2024	9.00	General	\$42.53		\$382.77	\$0.00	(0.00%)	\$382.77	
Caption: Notice of public meeting, AML									
Subtotal:	9.00		\$42.53	\$0.00	\$382.77	\$0.00		\$382.77	

Gross Advertising	\$382.77	Total Misc	\$0.00	Amount Paid	\$0.00
Agency Discount	\$0.00	Tax	\$0.00	Adjustments	\$0.00
Other Discount	\$0.00	Total Billed	\$382.77	Payment Date	
Service Charge	\$0.00	Unbilled	\$0.00	Balance Due	\$382.77

If you'd like to pay your invoice online, go to www.ndna.com/billpay. We accept Visa/Mastercard. A 3% fee will automatically be added to your total. We also accept checks and ACH, with no additional fee added. Contact accounting@ndna.com for ACH information. Thank you!