

City approves lodging fee

By Travis Gulbrandson
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The ordinance to establish a \$2 lodging fee passed its second reading Monday night, which means it will come into effect June 1.

The remaining step it has to go through before that time will be when it is published April 18.

The Vermillion City Council unanimously passed the ordinance, which came after the council's adoption in February of Business Improvement District (BID) Plan #1.

Thirteen cities in South Dakota currently have at least one BID, the receipts of which are used primarily to market the communities.

City Manager John Prescott said last month that there currently 191 eligible rooms in the community that would be affected by the ordinance.

With 50 percent occupancy for 365 days, a lodging fee of \$1 per night would generate \$34,675. A lodging fee of \$2 would generate \$69,350.

The money would go toward funding the enhancement, expansion, marketing and promotion of visitor facilities, events, attractions and activities benefitting the city and its hotels and motels located within the district.

The BID issue was first raised last September by the Visit Vermillion tourism committee of the Vermillion Chamber of Commerce & Development Company (VCDC).

At a city council meeting that month, former VCDC executive director Steve Howe said the committee realized it did not have the funding to start activities that could generate new visitor dollars.

"We just don't have a lot of money with which to grow some of these visitor stays in the community," Howe said.

In last September's meeting, Comfort Inn owner Joe Eckert also spoke about the BID, saying he was not opposed to it.

"In fact, I think there's potential for a great opportunity here if it's done right, but the area of concern is ... how those monies are spent," Eckert said.

During the city council meeting on March 17, the members voted for a \$2 fee after the first reading of the ordinance, despite the recommendation of the BID Board of Directors and local hotel owners to use \$1 instead.

Although this Monday's reading took place as a public hearing, no member of the public - hotel owner or Vermillion citizen - came to speak for or against the ordinance.

Vermillion logo will appear on new water tower

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The Vermillion City Council passed a change order to add an additional logo onto the new water tower during its regular meeting Monday night.

The original \$1,258,700 million bid award to Maguire Iron included a provision for painting the city's official logo on the north side of the water tank, said Assistant City Engineer Jason Anderson.

The change order would add an additional \$10,000 to the project, and result in painting the logo on both the east and west sides of the tower.

Although the order ultimately passed, the council's vote was split six to three.

Council member Steve Ward said that while he has no problem with the Vermillion logo, he thought there should be "some indication of the University of South Dakota, as well."

"It would symbolize better than anything else in this town ... this relationship that we have," Ward said.

Other council members were less agreeable to this suggestion.

"The logo itself is designed with the DakotaDome in the background, so I think we do recognize the university, even without the SD," said Dennis Zimmerman.

Howard Willson said he thought USD was an important part of the community and should be recognized, but that the water tower is "the community of Vermillion water tower," and not specific to the university.

"For that reason I think the logo should represent the entire community of Vermillion, and not just one identity," he said.

Willson did add that if USD would like to have its logo painted on the north side and would pay to put it there, he would have no objections.

Other council members were up for more discussion of what should be painted on the tower.

"I don't necessarily agree with Steve about specifically what should be added, but I think ... it's an area where public input would really help," said Kelsey Collier-Wise. "I think that there is an opportunity to do more than just have the current logo on the water tower."

The new water tower was assembled toward the end of 2013 behind Wal-Mart. According to a memo provided to the council members, all the welding in the project is complete.

"The painting contractor is expected to begin work once the weather cooperates," the memo read. "Maguire Iron is tentatively planning for the subcontractor to begin paint work in May."

The project is scheduled for completion in August 2014.

Belcher to present Marshall lecture



Belcher

Judge Romonda D. Belcher of Des Moines will help the University of South Dakota School of Law pay tribute to one of America's most well-known Supreme Court Justices with a keynote address during the 2014 Thurgood Marshall Lecture at 10 a.m. on Friday, April 11, at the Law School Courtroom.

Hosted by USD's Black Law Students Association

(BLSA), the annual Thurgood Marshall Lecture is free and open to the public.

Belcher is a Polk County District Associate Judge in Iowa's 5C District. Appointed in 2010, she became the first African-American female judge in the state of Iowa.

Belcher is a native of Plymouth, NC, and attended Howard University in Washington, DC, where she received her B.A. degree with a major in administration of justice and a minor in broadcast journalism.

Belcher is a 1995 graduate of Drake University Law School where she was president of the BLSA chapter, secretary of the Student

Bar Association and a member of the Frederick Douglass Moot Court Team.

After graduating she was a judicial law clerk for then Iowa Supreme Court Justice Louis Lavorato and in 1995, she became an assistant Polk County attorney before her appointment as a district associate judge.

Vermillion Light & Power receives honor

WASHINGTON, DC - Vermillion Light & Power has earned the American Public Power Association's Safety Award of Excellence for safe operating practices in 2013.

The utility earned First in Group B in the category for utilities with 16,600 worker-hours of annual worker exposure. Marlin Bales, chair of the APPA Safety Committee and supervisor, Colorado Springs Utilities, in Colorado Springs, CO, presented the award on April 7, during the association's annual Engineering & Operations Technical Conference, held in Oklahoma City, OK.

"In our line of work, safety is the top priority," said Bales. "Without safety, we can't serve our customers to the best of our abilities. This award recognizes utilities that have their priorities straight."

More than 285 utilities entered the annual Safety Awards, which is the

highest number of entrants in the history of the program. Entrants were placed in categories according to their number of worker hours and ranked based on the most incident-free records during 2013. The incidence rate, used to judge entries, is based on the number of work-related reportable injuries or illnesses and the number of worker-hours during 2013, as defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

"We at Vermillion Light & Power are proud of the service we provide to our customers," said Mark Koller, Light & Power Superintendent for the City of Vermillion. "But above all else, we are proud of our safety record".

The Safety Awards have been held annually for the last 54 years. APPA is the national organization representing more than 2,000 not-for-profit, community- and state-owned electric utilities.

OBITUARIES

Carrie Campbell

Carrie Irene (Overby) Campbell, 89, of Vermillion, passed away on Wednesday, April 2, 2014, at the Sanford Vermillion Care Center, where she was a long-time resident.

A Mass of Christian burial was held at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, April 7, 2014, at St. Agnes Catholic Church of Vermillion with Fr. John Fischer officiating. A visitation will be held one hour prior to the service.

A committal ceremony will be held at Calvary Cemetery in Vermillion immediately following the service.

The youngest of four children, she was born on Aug. 23, 1924, on a farm in Union County to John and Harriet June (Davis) Overby. She attended country school at Pleasant Hill School in Union County. As a teenager, she met Clifford Campbell at River Soo in Richland, South Dakota, where she loved to dance. They were

married in 1941. They had six children, Clayton, Carol, Cathy, Colleen, Conroy and Craig.

Carrie and Clifford owned and operated Carrie's Café in Alcester during the late 1950s and early 1960s where Carrie did all the cooking, including her fabulous pies. The Campbell family moved to Vermillion several years later.

Over the past 35 years she has received wonderful, compassionate care from the staff of the Sanford Vermillion Care Center and Hospital as well as from doctors Yelverton, Dendinger and Mortinsen.

Carrie is survived by her sister, Bertha Johnson of Portland, OR; her sons, Clayton (Barbara) Campbell of Vermillion, Conroy Campbell of Vermillion, and Craig (Kathy) Campbell of Glenarm, IL; her daughter, Colleen Campbell (John Bohr) of Mitchell; several nieces and nephews; seven grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband; her sister, Anne Solberg; her brother, Ole Overby; and her daughters,

Carol Kastengren, and Cathy Coons.

Services have been entrusted to the Kober Funeral Home of Vermillion.

Condolences may be posted online at www.koberfuneralhome.com.

Norma Fallan

Norma L. Fallan, 82, of Vermillion, passed away quietly on April 4, 2014, at her home surrounded by her family.

Norma was born on Nov. 18, 1931, in Gayville, to Peter and Helen (Allison) Olson. She graduated from Gayville High School and moved to Vermillion and worked for the National Bank of South Dakota. She married George Fallan on Dec. 9, 1951, in Gayville. George and Norma farmed north of Vermillion and raised three children.

Norma loved her family, her granddaughters and her great-grandson. She loved to play cards and stayed very busy with that. She loved music; she played the piano and organ almost

every day in the quiet of her home.

Norma was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, George; and a sister and brother-in-law, Evelyn and Clarence Sittig.

She is survived by her children, son, Robert of Vermillion; daughter, Susan (Tim) Carlson of St. Croix, U.S.V.I.; son, David (Julie) of Vermillion; granddaughters, Kelsy and Erika Fallan of Vermillion; and great-grandson, Kyler Gannon; nephew, Rick (Marlene) Wibben; a niece, Cindy Sittig; and grand-nephews, Dan (Carol) Wibben and Doug (Gretchen) Wibben and their families.

Funeral services were 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, April 8, 2014, at the First United Methodist Church in Vermillion with burial following in the Bluffview Cemetery in Vermillion. Visitation began at 5 p.m. on Monday April 7, with a Prayer Service at 7 p.m. at the Hansen Funeral Home in Vermillion. hansenfuneralhome.com.



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NOTICE
SPECIAL DITCH BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, April 15, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.

In the Courthouse Basement Meeting Room
211 W. Main St.

To discuss maintenance/cleaning of taxed drainage ditches and other matters to come before the Board. All interested persons/landowners are urged to attend.

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