

DAYCARE,
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this job to register to see if I can get a license from the city to see if I can do this job? A little insulting... a little. But, thank you," Kruse finished to a round of applause.

The meeting's first speaker was a private, daycare worker who pleaded with the council to listen to those who had come to speak.

"My parents think my house is pretty safe and if they weren't they wouldn't be at my house," longtime daycare provider Carlotta Kruse said. "I think it's up to you guys to listen to the parents about this register thing."

One resident pointed out that after many years of having dealt with these providers that their work is proof in itself that change doesn't need to be made.

"I think it is sudden and abrupt to change something that has worked for all these providers and families for the past 20 and 30 years," Lisa Sorensen said. "If numerous families trust them why would things need to be changed now? These providers with that kind of experience should be under a grandfather clause. The ladies I talk to say this is very hard because they are so abrupt and unnecessary."

The ordinance requires a provider to register with the city and in order to do so a daycare provider will need to demonstrate safety items such as having a fire extinguisher, smoke detector, two ways out of basement space used for a daycare, safe electrical wiring, closets that prevent

a child from being locked inside, and other basic safety requirements.

While the fence requirement is still part of the ordinance, an exception to having a fence can be obtained if the parents sign a consent form noting that there is not an enclosed playground at the registered location.

Councilman Steve Ward addressed some concerns that the providers will incur some type of cost from the results of the ordinance by saying that he hadn't heard anything specific to that issue.

However, some did address that they wouldn't know how much cost would come out of it until the ordinance would be enacted.

"I understand that this ordinance is being brought forth with the intention of improving safety, for emergency response purposes, and to comply with fire code," Amy Askew, a registered nurse and 13-year resident of Vermillion said. "But with the assumption there will be no consequences to the providers. The reality is that we won't know what those consequences are until the inspections are completed. In a year or two when the fire code changes there could be something new that directly effects are daycare providers."

"I am afraid the ordinance will provide unnecessary hoops for the providers to jump through and could potentially determine how or where they run their businesses which could lead to less flexibility, fewer openings, higher prices, and worst of all, fewer providers. As far as I am concerned our in-home daycare providers in town

are hidden gems."

The ordinance provides a daycare can register prior to July 1 without completing an inspection. In this case the first inspection would not be until 2016.

Registrations are for a two-year period and expire on the June 30 of even numbered years.

"On the topic of these inspections are the city official inspectors going to do a thorough background check, including the sex offender registry?" Rita Humphrey asked the council. "I am worried that if an inspector arrives during the day and there are children present and it is determined this inspector had a criminal neglect or abuse history and was in the presence of these children without their parents' consent."

Vermillion City Manager John Prescott assured Humphrey that the city does thorough background check on its employees and no such persons are under their employ. He also told the audience that if anything occurs where an employee is involved in an "unfortunate situation" the city would be made aware.

There was also discussion regarding on when and how the inspections would take place. Prescott said that inspections would be discussed with the providers and they could choose the best time for it to occur as to not be inconvenient to dealing with children potentially present at the location.

Brandon Wiemars got into a heated back-and-forth with mayor Jack Powell involving conversation that focused on background checks and if and when they would be done. Wiemars also voiced

concerns regarding the extra work the providers will have to do or that there is work being done now by them that they don't need the city to do for them.

"I don't know where this is so onerous that it is going to put someone out of business or cause them incredible hardships," Powell said. "I don't understand why you would be against minimum standards that everyone has. I am very appreciative of the daycare people we have now and I agree that they are wonderful people, but what we are trying to do is to put something into place so that future people are just as good and just as caring, and just as careful, and just as safety conscious as the people are right now."

"I don't know where we are trying to put anyone out of business."

Councilwoman Kelsey Collier-Wise told those in attendance that the council did sit and talk to daycare providers multiple times to hash out all the potential issues and took all of those talks into full account.

"What is the problem? What is the specific problem? I still don't know what it is...other than people don't like it," Collier-Wise said. "I understand that you have great daycare providers and I am so glad that you have that...I know you feel like you know everyone in the community, but you don't know everybody in the community. There are people that come to this community who don't know who to get that good reference from...or don't know the right people. We have to think about that too."

For an Extended Version of this Story visit www.plaintalk.net

Storytime Without Pictures

By Sarah Wetzel
For the Plain Talk

How do you pick a story to read to your child? Usually one with lots of colorful pictures, right? Not this week for storytime at the Vermillion Public Library.

The featured book was "The Book With No Pictures" by B.J. Novak.

"It was about the book with no pictures," Zander, 5, observed. "Because there was letters. She had to read all of the letters and she had to say silly stuff."

As the kids found out, illustrations can sometimes be said and not seen.

"She said all the pictures," said Katherine, 3. "I liked all the letters. My favorite letter was K because it's in my name."

This is not the only book of its kind according to Ann, 5.

"My grandpa has a million books with just tiny words that he has to read," she said. "They're little, tiny words in a box."

After the story, the kids had the chance to make their own word-pictures using letters from their own names.

"Check out the size of it," said Zander, holding up a big bubble-letter Z.

The children were directed to fold their paper in half and rub their penciled-in letter to create a mirror image on the other side.

"The letters go on the other side if you push on them," Ann observed.

Yifan, 6, agreed. "That's what I was going

to say," she said. "Everyone push really hard."

After the mirror images were created, the kids broke out the colors.

"This would make a great story for the newspaper," Zander said holding up his artwork. "Get it? News PAPER? It's supposed to be me but I don't know what color is my hair."

"My hair is white," Katherine said.

"This is so hard to finish," said Yifan, filling her Y's with an intricate design.

Imagination ran wild with the kids seeing the letters in new ways, noting how different they looked.

"It looks like people's legs," said Yifan looking at her mirror-Y's.

Ann found her double-A's intriguing as well.

"They kind of look like a machine making potions," she said. "This one is orange and this one is grape fruit salad."

Ann stated that she likes fruit salad even when it is Thanksgiving.

"Mine looks like butterflies," said Katherine, coloring her letters purple which happens to be her favorite color.

Yifan observed that the K's could be seen differently as well.

"I think it looks like a snowflake," she said.

The kids took the opportunity while drawing to chat and catch up.

"Did you beat me getting here?" Zander wanted to know.

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