

**INSIDE:**

■ Council seeks bids for baler building, Page 06

■ USD Welcome Week 2013, Page 10



# Dog days of summer



The dog days of summer arrived in Vermillion this week with temperatures climbing into the 90s, so the timing of Monday's Pooch Plunge at the Prentis Park swimming pool couldn't have been better. Tugboat hitches a ride on the back of his owner, Jessica Kennedy of Vermillion, as they enjoyed a refreshing dip in the pool. Turn to Page 12 for another picture from the event. (Photo by David Lias)

## Pool plans may go back to the drawing board

By Travis Gulbrandson  
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Last year, the City of Vermillion unveiled plans for an approximately \$6 million water park to replace the pool at Prentis Park.

Now it looks as if those plans could be changing.

Parks & Recreation Director Jim Goblirsch spoke with the city council during its special meeting Monday afternoon, where he expressed his concerns about cost, the lack of an overall parks plan and the ability of the community to support a facility of that proposed size.

"This is a big, big facility," Goblirsch said. "I don't know if you're going to support that. When you say \$6 million, that means additional lifeguards, additional water."

The facility was designed in cooperation with Water's Edge Aquatic Design of Lenexa, KS, after residents and city officials were polled about the kinds of amenities and features they wanted to see, in addition to a new swimming pool.

Last August it was announced that the main recreational pool area would have a spray area for toddlers, an interactive play structure with different activities on it, a water walk with tethered floatation devices, a 25-year lap lane area and springboard diving.

The other pool section would feature a lazy river and a plunge pool

with different slide structures.

"Our swimming pool committee did a great job," said city manager John Prescott. "They did cut some things out of there, but we ended up settling on a project that is about \$6 million. Maybe it's something we need to figure out what it is that we can afford, and try to develop a plan around that."

"I think you would see some of the same features, but you may not see all of the same features if we needed to do that," he said.

Although no action was taken, Prescott did mention the possibility of having residents vote on the issuing of general obligation bonds toward the completion of the project.

A malt beverage mark-up also was brought forward as a possibility of acquiring funds, although council president Kent Osborne said he would not be in favor of it in this case.

"I'm not necessarily in favor of it if it's all going to be at the expense of expanding government, and a lot of money's going to go to the person or people who have to administrate this," Osborne said. "To me, the administration is more than it's worth. It's more than it's worth to the public in the perception of it, and it's more than it's worth for what we're going to get out of it."

"If there's a way to fix that, fantastic. If there isn't, I don't really see that as a viable funding source," he said.

Goblirsch said that if the right "tweaks" were made to the project, it could end up costing much less than \$6 million to complete.

"I don't think it's a bad plan," he said. "I just think there's a possibility of putting something that's really, really nice up there for \$1-\$2 million less."

To this end, Goblirsch said he has been talking with another business that designs pools, Associated Pool Builders, which is located in Bismarck, ND.

"They're one of the leaders up here in the industry," Goblirsch said. "They do a ton of pools, and they have a pretty good support staff that can help give us some information, just to get a second opinion on what kind of size you could use here."

"On a 95-degree day, of course, your pool's going to be busy and full, but not always do we have 95-degree days," he said. "There are plenty of 80-degree days, which are beautiful and sunny, but not everybody goes to the pool. What capacity do we really need that pool to be?"

In addition to the pool, Goblirsch said there are other considerations that need to be made to Prentis Park overall, including the management of trees and increased demand for parking, in addition to how the basketball courts, horseshoe pits and disc golf courses would be affected

■ POOL, Page 03

## City approves project plan for Bliss Pointe TIF

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Another step has been taken in the Bliss Pointe development district.

The Vermillion City council approved a project plan for Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District 6 at its regular meeting Monday night.

The decision comes after the council approved the creation of TIF 6 at a meeting last month to assist with infrastructure development on blocks one through six.

In April, the Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Company (VCDC) closed on the purchase of approximately 30 acres of developable farmland as a solution to the shortage of affordable single-family housing in the community.

City Manager John Prescott said Monday that a TIF plan is required to plan how the funding will be utilized.

According to a memo given to council members, the city by resolution will issue a Private Placement Tax Increment Bond, and the city and VCDC have been in discussion with several local entities that will be bond holders.

The bonds will be issued by the city, Prescott said.

"Then, as the VCDC has expenses, that money can then be transferred to the VCDC in the form of what is called grants for the TIF plan," he said.

The memo also said property taxes generated by the development within the TIF district will be collected and transferred to the city, which will make the payments to the bond holders.

In addition, the TIF plan proposes that during the budget process, the city council consider making advances to the TIF fund for interest only payment to the bond holders until the TIF revenues are sufficient to

■ TIF, Page 09