

# State Universities Might Seek Sale Of Alcohol On Campuses

BY BOB MERCER  
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE – Officials from all six state universities will meet next week to discuss whether to try changing South Dakota’s prohibition against selling alcohol at the campuses.

The task force’s findings will be presented in December to the state Board of Regents, whose members will decide then whether to take the issue to the Legislature in January.

The university system’s council of presidents and superintendents has already talked about the matter. They want discretion to allow alcohol sales on their campuses as another revenue source for campus activities and scholarships, according to Janelle Toman.

Toman is the regents’ director of communications and is chairwoman of the task force.

The council appointed representatives to the task force.

State law has banned alcohol sales on campuses since at least 1939. The law currently says no on-sale or off-sale license may be granted to operate on the campus of any state educational institution.

The law defines campus as the area immediately surrounding the buildings used for classrooms, administrative offices, athletic facilities and housing.

Toman said in an e-mail there are varying viewpoints about alcohol sales on campus.

“In some states, the availability of alcohol on campuses has been further restricted in recent years,” she wrote.

“In other locations, stadiums, performing arts centers and/or leased restaurant facilities have launched in this direction, primarily as a way to generate revenue and to offer their customers of legal drinking age additional services,” she continued.

The task force members are:

Steve Meeker, Black Hills State University;

Jeff Dittman, Dakota State University;

Veronica Paulson and Josh Moon, Northern State University;

Mike Keegan and Joel Lueken, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology;

Doug Wermedal and Tracy Greene, South Dakota State University;

Kim Grieve and Darby Ganschow, University of South Dakota; and

Chance Costello, Student Federation.

**Animal Shelter To Host Nov. Gala**

Heartland Humane Society will host its annual Wine & Whiskers gala Nov. 14 from 6-9:30 p.m at Minervas Event Center. The event will include wine tasting, a three-course plated meal, a large silent and live auction, merchandise, and raffles including a chance to win \$750.

Tickets are currently on sale and can be reserved by calling 605.664.4244 or online at [www.heartlandhumanesociety.net](http://www.heartlandhumanesociety.net). Seating is reserved to 300.

“Community support is vital to our success and Wine & Whiskers is one example of Heartland asking donors to come together and celebrate responsible animal care in our communities,” Heartland’s director Kerry Hacecky said.

Returning events for the evening include the handmade mittens, dessert dash and paw draw. Hacecky said guests will notice new raffles, merchandise, and schedule for the evening events. New items will include a chance to win one live auction package, a formal meal, and a new line of merchandise.

Top auction items at the gala include NASCAR and Walt Disney World tickets, artwork by Oscar Howe and Scott Luken, and several social packages including bourbon tasting and a Chilean meal.

To learn more about Wine and Whiskers, go online at [www.heartlandhumanesociety.net/events](http://www.heartlandhumanesociety.net/events) or search “Wine and Whiskers” on Facebook.

# Prentis Park Renovations Continuing This Fall

BY ELYSE BRIGHTMAN  
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Prentis Park is in the middle of major renovations and Vermillion residents can expect to see more as “work continues” into the fall months.

“We’re continuing to move along,” said Jim Goblirsch, director of Vermillion Parks and Recreation. “This time of the season is when we can do a lot of the work because the sports aren’t going on and the park is a little quieter.”

Currently, most of the work is being done on electrical lines for the new community pool being installed next year.

“If you see right in front of the pool, between Plum (Street) and the pool, there’s kind of a dugout area where we’re putting the transformer in for the new pool, so they can start construction for the new pool next year and still have power for the old pool,” Goblirsch said.

The department is also working on the new sewer system that will be installed.

The new restroom facilities and a new fence next to the baseball field have been completed recently. The restrooms now serve individuals on the outside and those on the inside of the fence to the field.

“It’s a dual sided restroom facility,” Goblirsch said. “One for the park, which will feed over by the playground where people can get into it — it’s a unisex handicap accessible facility —



ELYSE BRIGHTMAN/ FOR THE PLAIN TALK

**A new fence, new bathrooms and a new gate are just a few of the completed improvements at Prentis Park with work continuing this fall.**

and the other side, for the baseball field.”

Park visitors may also notice a new roof on the pioneer cabin, or Girl Scout house, as well as a new paint job done by the city, with help from some Vermillion Girl Scouts.

“We’re real happy with some of the progress we’re making there,” Goblirsch said.

The immediate future plans will

see a new backstop for the baseball field. Currently, the backstop is a net reaching down to the ground. The new backstop will be cement making it safer for spectators of the games.

“We weren’t pleased with the way the nets were going all the way to ground,” Goblirsch said. “We put a permanent cement backstop in, so that’s been a plus over there.”

## Regents Consider Tuition Increase Reduction

BY BOB MERCER  
State Capitol Bureau

ABERDEEN — A chart showing how South Dakota’s public universities could price themselves out of the regional market caught the attention of members of the state Board of Regents during their meeting last week at Northern State University.

Monte Kramer, the regents’ vice president for finance and administration, presented the chart. It compared what would happen during the next 15 years if South Dakota continues increasing tuition and fees by 5 percent, while neighboring states continue at their 10-year average of 3.2 percent.

Surrounding states currently charge an average of \$7,360 for undergraduate tuition and fees, while South Dakota’s state universities charge \$8,092.50. The neighboring states by 2030 would be at \$11,439.15, while South Dakota would be at \$16,022.60.

Kramer presented an alternative where South

Dakota went up 3 percent annually. Under that projection, South Dakota would be at \$12,240.63 in 2030.

The regents agreed they should adjust before it is too late.

The significance of the 5 percent growth has been a faster payback for bonded indebtedness on university construction projects and potentially more cash for maintenance and repair.

From every dollar paid in tuition, 20 cents flows into what’s known as the higher education facilities fund, or HEFF.

Kramer said adopting the 3 percent assumed rate of tuition growth rather than 5 percent would mean

the next bond issue couldn’t take place until 2021. Staying at the 5 percent growth rate would allow the next bond issue in 2019.

He said staying on the 5 percent path would make South Dakota uncompetitive with surrounding states and lead to lower enrollment that would put the universities at a further disadvantage financially.

“It is the prudent thing to do,” Kramer said.

Regent Terry Baloun of Sioux Falls agreed.

“I think we should revisit that assumption every year,” said Baloun, who is a retired banker. “So that we’re staying current with where the market condi-

tions are.”

Regent Bob Sutton of Pierre suggested the Legislature’s Joint Committee on Appropriations receive the chart.

The regents haven’t found much success in the past two decades in seeking more support from the Legislature for state university students.

Sutton said the chart would show the Legislature the spot that South Dakota now is in and the deeper hole that would result if the 5 percent growth rate for tuition continues.

“The consequences are considerably more dire if we continue to do that,” Sutton said.



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