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McClusky, North Dakota

Price \$1

# Mobile home variance approved for residential area

By ALLAN TINKER

McClusky Council members present for the January city meeting were Bryon Belile, Brandi Baker, Lee Wahl, Nathan Rhoads, Auditor Amanda Saueressig, City Maintenance Lane Rhoads, and Devin Peterson. Also present, Scott Baier and Casey Ebach, Jerri Van Sandt. The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. and the agenda approved with no additions or changes along with approval of last month's minutes, financial report, and police report.

Lane Rhoads gave the maintenance report and stated that the lift station needs replacement. A motion passed to purchase a 60-gallon vertical DeWalt compressor. The welder received an oil change. Rhoads noted that they were still trying different methods to clear sewer problems on the corner of 6th Street and Highway 200. Contributing factors are shallow placement of sewer line and heat tape that is not working.

Rhoads also reported that there were cars parked on the streets for long periods of time.

Lee Wahl stated he was issued a warning ticket but another vehicle in his neighborhood did not receive a ticket. No further specific information was available about time, location, or vehicles. Council members discussed the need for consistent enforcement and/or reports on other overdue parking.

Past due water bills were reviewed, and Council member Brandi Baker will contact an individual regarding late payment.

The total dollar amount of water bills listed 'past due' was \$2,647.

The Day Care report from JDA, also Baker, indicates there are three or four spots open and the number available depends on the child's age.

Mayor Bryon Belile gave the McClusky Grocery report for JDA and stated that a liquor license was obtained and they are working on grants. Monday, January 19, another grocery co-op meeting was held in Minot.

Auditor Saueressig reported that she is continuing to work



Lane Rhoads on way to cleaning up ice in early January.

with Midwest Audit to provide information to the State Auditor's office. The city is also still doing a budget review.

The council discussed communication from League of Cities requesting implementation of public comment periods for city councils, school boards, etc. Sample polity was attached to communication. After discussion, a motion was passed to allow for a public comment period at the beginning of each meeting. Speakers Community members will be allowed 5 minutes each, and the complete comment period will be limited to 30 minutes.

A motion passed for County Assessor Tanya Mueller to fill in until the city finds someone to hire for city assessor. The county assessor will be paid \$25 per card.

The council discussed public document (open record) requests and will continue to research per page charge in addition to charging \$25 an hour after the first hour. No formal motion was made to establish the open record request charges.

The council discussed Casey Ebach's oral request to move her mobile home from the city's mobile home park to a residential

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## Four-day school week approved by McClusky-Goodrich school board

By ALLAN TINKER

On January 14, the 6 p.m. public discussion on the proposed switch to a four-day school week was held in the high school gymnasium, where one set of bleachers had been pulled out for the public, facing two tables where school representatives faced the group of citizens gathered to voice their views on the proposed change.

The gymnasium was the choice of the school board for location of the meeting. Other public meetings have been held in the school's music room or the home economics room prior to this, assumed to be largely chosen for expected crowd size. Acoustics were a problem in being able to hear individual speakers within the group as sound echoed in the large open space of the gymnasium.

The Mc-Gd School District Board President Crimmins opened the meeting at 6 p.m. and told the group it would end promptly at 7 p.m. after when the monthly school board meeting and the vote on the proposed change would take place.

Crimmins explained the purpose of the meeting and asked for comments on the proposal. These included a reduced number of days of school but longer class periods, differing procedures for making up storm days or missed days, and that this meeting would address some of the same issues as the earlier meeting a few months

before.'

A survey had been sent earlier to all parents and teachers at the school. The survey was not sent to the other residents of the school district if they did not have a child attending school at that time.

The audience was informed that the Turtle Lake Mercer School District showed 75 percent of the people there were happy with the four-day school week, with 25 percent not happy. The group was told that ITV classes could be available on an individual basis.

They also learned that storm days would be made up on the next Friday available after the storm, as well as teacher absences. Elementary school classes will start later than the high school classes.

Upon question, the board stated that there were no calculated cost savings, but that the current workdays of both teachers and students would attend would change. Teachers at the current salaried days would see a drop of eight days fewer a year, from 183 to 175.

Students would attend 19 fewer days a year than their current 183 days, a total of 152 days.

Those days would then require adjustment for any students who were receiving backpacks for the weekend or other school services, such as safe haven.

There was comment on the audience from the already

steady need for substitute teachers to help and how that would be handled.

Support staff were concerned about making up missed days of work due to shorter work weeks and one person estimated they would lose \$5,000 in pay a year under the new plan.

One comment from the audience addressed the changes in travel and scheduling and the parents' work. They stated, "those who are not otherwise self-employed or farmers, would have a risk of losing their employment for these changes." Currently 4 of 5 school board members are farmers or self-employed.

Another person asked about the students who have jobs and the board stated they had "not looked at" this issue.

The board stated that the change would help entice new and other teachers to apply for the extra time bonus and now the community saw applicants choose larger towns and some also choose those bigger towns with four-day school weeks.

The board did not address or document the housing and services shortage of McClusky and the surrounding area or this possible effect on new or replacement teacher hires.

Starting pay rate differences for applicants were not discussed.

Another person from the audience asked about the FFA supper and concerts being af-

fected, seeing that already they had trouble finding open times for extracurricular events and had to start the Christmas concert earlier than usual in the evening.

A possible teacher-hiring negative effect was also noted in that Sheridan County is a poverty level county and Turtle Lake-Mercer in McLean County is not, and TL-M School District also has a larger population and available jobs base to aid workers and students to adjust their work obligations.

Also addressed was the problem of the nation-wide level of students who are behind their grade level in school, "All the kids are behind," they said and an audience member asked how shorter school weeks would help. One answer was that the teacher would be able to teach more "in depth" with a longer class period within the shorter work week.

The time set aside for the public discussion ended at 7 p.m. and the group disbanded with the board moving to their designated meeting room.

The vote for the four-day week for school was approved at the following school board meeting, with a roll call vote of 5-0. One board member stated they could "Go ahead and see if it works" after they were told there was an option not to continue if it didn't work well.

The school board meeting ended at 8:30 p.m.