

## City of Clark finishes 2017 and gets ready for 2018

With adverse winter weather on Monday, the December meeting of the Clark City Council went off as planned. December is an important fiscal month for municipalities and over 16 agenda item decisions were acted upon in the 90-minute meeting.

Shane Hagstrom and Jeff Seefeldt represented the Clark Fire Department and had several questions as to budgeting and finances, as long-time Fire Department treasurer Keith Zobel died this fall.

As the budget discussion continued, the talk turned to financing of the city's sirens. Finance officer Jackie Luttrell proposed setting up a new account to maintain the sirens. The council approved all fire department matters, including meeting pay, sirens and paying claims matters.

The only agenda item that wasn't solved by a unanimous decision dealt with revisiting liquor rates of the establishments in Clark. Councilman Brian Cook made the motion to reduce the Dakota Butcher annual fee from \$9,000 that the council approved last month, to \$8,500.

Cook felt that the council was being arbitrary and he was wishful of a fee system that didn't show controversy.

Mayor John Pollock stated that it is important to establish a level playing field and he asked Cook if he wanted to make a motion to make the change from \$9,000 to \$8,500 for Dakota Butcher. He did and Louann Streff seconded the motion. Those two voted in favor of the change with Dennis Larson,

Kerry Kline and Andrew Zemlicka voting against it. Belinda Hanson was absent. The vote failed, 3-2.

2018 city salaries were next on the docket. The salary ordinance appears on page eight in this week's *Courier* edition.

The mayor began the salary discussion saying that the employees were to get a three percent raise, with a couple exceptions. As the mayor, finance officer and council looked at the numbers, the mayor felt an hourly wage scale for department heads would be the way to go and this, after the various hourly wage numbers were plugged in, was approved. This hourly raise was at least a three percent raise.

### In other business:

▲ The January meeting will be on Tuesday, January 2, 2018.

▲ Police Chief Jeremy Wellnitz reported 1,307 miles traveled in the November police report. Five

### City of Clark (continued on page 2)

### WEATHER

Ryan Eggleston - Official  
Weather Observer

	HI	LO	PR
Nov. 28 .....	47	22	0
Nov. 29 .....	47	25	0
Nov. 30 .....	45	24	0
Dec. 1 .....	39	25	0
Dec. 2 .....	49	22	0
Dec. 3 .....	48	25	0
Dec. 4 .....	39	9	.06
2017 precipitation to date	22.95		
2016 precipitation to date	20.03		

## Retailers looking for a good holiday season

With snow on the ground and a recent frigid chill in the air, the county has taken on the feeling of Christmas as Thanksgiving and November are both history.

With less than three weeks of shopping days left until Christmas, area merchants are thinking that sales are on pace to equal last year, or at least that is the hope this holiday season.

Local retailers are looking for a good holiday season this year and most comments have been very favorable and positive concerning buying locally.

Pam Dekker at Dekker Hardware said that because of the lovely late fall weather there were early sales on Christmas trees, yard decorations and Christmas lights. "Now with winter weather - snow shovels, ice melt, ice scrapers and gloves have been going out the door."

Dekker said a big seller this holiday season is the Nuwave Bio-air Fryer. "It is a healthy, deep fry with no oil," said Dekker.

Dekker said it was 'awesome' to see Commercial Street full on Saturday, November 25, Small Business Saturday. "I know the main event(s) at the Legion Hall brought people to town, but there also were so many people shopping."

At Ken's Food Fair, baking goods and baking needs are Christmas mainstays. "We have many cooking items and even candy making supplies," said Ken's manager Kim Nelson.

Nelson was busy making preparations for the Ken's Food Fair Open House, on Friday, December 15. "Look for a fun theme," said Nelson. "We've had a busy fall and we are looking forward to the loy-



Clark Flower and Gift Shop hosted their 40th Anniversary Open House recently. "We had a wonderful open house," said Clark Flower and Gift co-owner Linda Seefeldt.

This photo was taken Monday afternoon, as a quick

al customers during the Christmas season."

Melanie Smith of the Clark Flower and Gift Shop stated, "Our 40th Anniversary Open House was very, very well attended." In recent years Clark Flower and Gift has been hosting the open house the week prior to Thanksgiving. "People are getting in the mood this

moving weather event passed through eastern South Dakota.

Area schools shut down and icy road conditions made driving hazardous, but it did allow for things to look more 'Christmas-like'.

We have many great gift and decoration ideas and our fashion accessories have been very popular. Anything plaid is big this year.

"I really think this will be a good year for Care Packages. Our framed prints and home decor have also been doing well. I look for a good Christmas!" she said. Floral bouquets are a staple at

the store, along with scarves and jewelry.

Ida Foster, co-manager at Dakota Butcher in Clark said the store is busy processing deer seven days a week and she is really looking forward to the Christmas season.

"Pizzas, freshly made daily," are  
**Retailers**  
(continued on page 5)



## The Toy Tree in Flat Iron Park is 'coming together'

From an idea put forth by Mary McGillivray at Dacotah Bank in Clark, a Toy Tree is coming together in Clark at the Flat Iron Park along US Highway 212. Covered with toys donated by local residents, this was the stage last week as the tree was decorated from the top down. The tree was constructed at Oscar's Machine Shop with Michael Wilson playing a large part in its coming together and constructing the sponsor's name sake bar for the top of the tree. See future issues of the *Courier* for the tree's progress in photos.

## With state monies for teacher pay comes accountability questions

Last week, members of South Dakota's School Finance Accountability Board met and gave final approval on recommendations to the Legislature's Joint Committee on Appropriations for school districts that allegedly violated state teacher-pay law.

In 2016 the State Legislature raised the state sales tax from four percent to 4.5 percent, primarily to raise teacher pay in South Dakota.

The five-member accountability board was set up to ensure that public school districts, 1) had spent at least 85 percent of the additional aid on teacher compensation from 2016 to 2017 and 2) at least 85 percent of the increase in local need for 2017 went to teacher compensation.

Thirty-six of South Dakota's 153 school districts didn't meet one or both of the accountability standards. All three area schools were one of the 36 on the list. The vast

majority of the schools on the list are in the bottom third, population-wise.

Clark, Willow Lake and Henry all had different situations regarding accountability.

### Henry

Henry was one of 15 schools that received outright waivers from the board.

When Henry superintendent Philip Schonebaum was contacted as to why Henry School was facing financial penalty for appearing not to meet the accountability requirements set forth by the state, Schonebaum commented, "The Henry School District was informed they were short of meeting a benchmark set by the state by approximately \$19,000."

He continued, "The shortage was created by the district hiring a new teacher to replace someone

that had moved on. The teacher was straight from college and didn't have his certification yet. The certification came after the accountability check for the fiscal year. Upon investigation it was found the Henry School District had met compensations and no penalty was given."

Schonebaum concluded, "It was a great experience for our district to see what was expected for the new compensation system. Henry will always work diligently to ensure that we meet expectations set by the state."

### Clark

Superintendent Luanne Warren, principal Jerry Hartley and business manager Mary Nelson appeared before the accountability board on November 16.

Said Warren, "We appeared before the Accountability Board to explain our missed target and how

we rectified it. Upon sending documentation to the state finance office that we had indeed met our accountability target, our waiver was accepted; however, this information has to be reviewed by a Legislative Audit committee before final acceptance."

The review took place in Pierre, on December 5. The legislative review board granted Clark School a full waiver. "This is wonderful news!" said Warren.

Warren explained how Clark was one of 36 schools that had similar problems with meeting the target funding. "With any new mandate, unforeseen events can happen and each school district was allowed to present this information to the state accountability board for review and waivers. Any school that did not

**Teacher pay**  
(continued on page 3)

## Sunday School programs to be held in the area

Many children's Christmas programs in individual churches will be held this holiday season. Christmas celebrations will continue as Christians in the community and around the world recognize the birth of the Savior and the new life he brought to the world.

### Clark services

At the Clark United Methodist Church a children's program will be held on December 17 during worship at 11:00 a.m.

At St. Paul Lutheran, they will be having their Sunday School program on Sunday, December 17, at 5:30 p.m.

The Assembly of God will have their church Christmas program

with children and adults on Sunday, December 10 at 6:30 p.m.

At the Plymouth Congregational Church (UCC) their children's Sunday School program will be held on the 10th at 9:30 a.m. during the church service.

### Willow Lake area

On Sunday, December 17 at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Vienna, the children of the church will be presenting their Christmas program at the 8:30 a.m. worship.

The Sunday before Christmas is the date, December 17, for Grace Lutheran Church's Sunday School program to start at 11:00 a.m.

Willow Lake Evangelical will have their parish Sunday School

program at 4:30 p.m. on the 24th.

At the United Methodist Church in Carpenter their Sunday School/Parish Christmas program will start at 5:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve. This will also be their candle-light service.

In Willow Lake, at the St. James Catholic Parish Church Hall, the Willow Lake Religious Education children will have their Christmas program at approximately 12 noon on Sunday, December 17. A potluck meal will follow the program.

### Bryant

In Bryant at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, their Sunday School children will present their Christmas program during worship

on December 17 with the service to begin at 9:45 a.m.

### Bradley

St. John's Lutheran Church in Bradley will have their Sunday School program at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, December 24.

The Bradley Christian School will have their Christmas program on Wednesday, December 20 at 7:00 p.m. at St. John's Lutheran Church.

### Henry

In Henry at the United Methodist Church, on Sunday, December 17, a children's Sunday School program will be held during the 10:45 a.m. service.

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