

Mid Term Legislative Report Highlights Chamber Meeting

District 23 Representative, Charles B. Hoffman, took time from his busy schedule in Pierre to let Eurekans know about bills currently working their way through the legislative process.

One of the things that Hoffman is pleased about during this session has nothing to do with the bills. He stated that the divisiveness that was present last year is absent this year and that the newly elected representatives came ready to work.

Some of the issues that Hoffman discussed: Legislators do not know what will happen at the federal level and that budget will not be set until the SD legislative session ends, so that does not have a lot of impact on what is currently being done in Pierre. Revenues are up in South Dakota and having surplus money is a large contrast compared to the national status. A bill permitting specified personnel to carry guns in schools will continue to be a lengthy debate. Another school-related bill is where state athletic tournaments will be held, either throughout the state as they currently are, or at the new event center in Sioux Falls. A first-ever judicial review is studying the overcrowding of SD's prisons and the solutions that may help. Some of the bills being discussed for the hunting-loving state deal with habitat, use of dogs, and waterfowl licenses. Drugs – cocaine, marijuana, meth – continue to be a big problem and are directly related to the Mexican drug cartel. Hoffman said that the tourism tax has passed so far, and predicted that it will become permanent.

With a tremendous amount of work still to be done during this legislative session, Hoffman left the Chamber meeting to return to Pierre where he had a 7:00 AM meeting the following morning. Before leaving, he stressed that anyone with questions or input should contact him or others representing District 23 with their concerns.

Monthly Reports:

- City – Sanitation remains one of the city's biggest issues, and decisions have been made. Three bids were received and representatives from the three companies met with the city council at their regular monthly meeting. Following that a special meeting was held later in the week and the contract was awarded to Dakota Heartland of Moberge. The mayor noted that Eureka's current sanitation company, Dependable Sanitation, did not submit a bid. Because that company owns the Blue Building (as it has come to be known), it will no longer be in use when Dakota Heartland takes over the sanitation duties. Residential customers will continue to receive bills from the City as normal, and commercial accounts will deal directly with Dakota Heartland or whatever company they wish to use. A huge project for Eureka during the warm weather months will be the complete renovation of Highway 10 through Eureka. Bids for that project are being opened in Pierre on February 6 and Eureka representatives cannot be present at that opening – no reason is known for that and it will be investigated before the time of the bid opening. Ron Hemmingson will be retiring at the end of February after 32 years. An annual library report showed a total of 15,429 books in the library, there were 607 users of the library and 5,390 books were checked out during the last year.
- Eureka Development – Businesses for sale in Eureka will be listed on the website free of charge and will contain details about the business as well as pictures. Nu-Way Cleaners has just been listed. A potential new business to promote and sell food products from Eureka and the region is being pursued. Regulations, costs and licensing are some of the areas being researched after a meeting with Eureka Kuchen Factory, Grassland Goodies

and Kauk's Meat Market showed that all had interest in the project. The annual meeting will be held on Feb. 28. This will be done in conjunction with the Eureka School – a speaker on Entrepreneurship will speak to grades 7-12 during the afternoon, and again at the annual meeting that evening. This is one of the ways Eureka Development is working to encourage youth to get an education then come back to grow their business in their hometown. Membership letters for Chamber were sent to all Eureka businesses. All messages being run on Chamber's electronic billboard cost \$1 a day for January and February.

- HRC – The project is progressing well. Inside work is being done now, and siding will be put on when the weather is warm. Letters have been sent to all people who have their name on a waiting list and the first 4 to accept occupancy will live in the new apartments. If fewer than 4 respond, the apartments will be advertised.
- Schmeckfest – February 2 will be the next Family Night Bingo at the Lyric. January's bingo night was cancelled due to the weather and illness. In June the Tractor Drive will go to Ashley for their Quasi.

Business Meeting:

The Big Q committee donated \$3,000 to Chamber to be used for street banners.

Mark Opp turned in his resignation from the Chamber board of directors, and the resignation was accepted. Clyde Ottenbacher was appointed to fill the remaining year of that term.

An election was held for the 3 terms that expired. Barb Billotto, Lester Merkel, and Jim Schumacher were all re-elected. Reorganization of the board is Barb Billotto-President and Ivy Bossert-Secretary/Treasurer. A Vice-President was not named, but any director present at a meeting when the President is gone will preside over the meeting.

Jim Schumacher thanked all who had helped in various projects throughout the year and stressed that not only did the work get done, but they had fun doing it.

Special thanks were given to Larry and Pam Ottenbacher for being Santa and Mrs. Claus.

Wanda Jundt