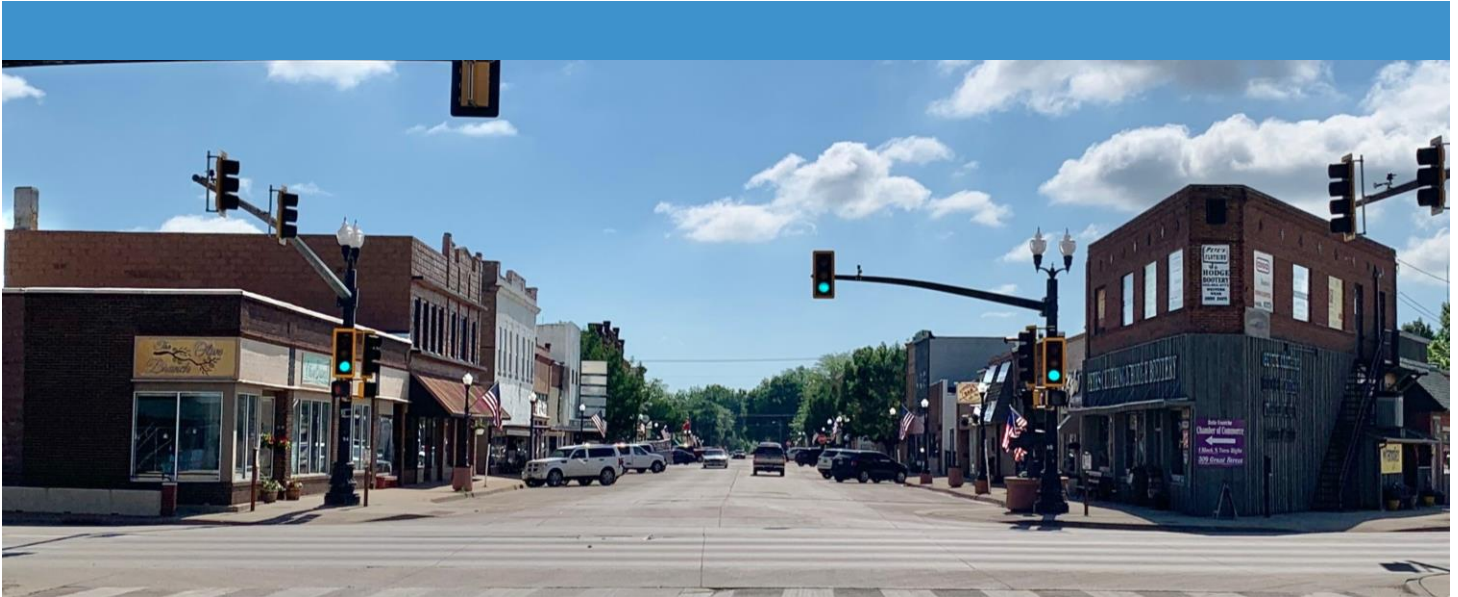


BELLE FOURCHE ECONOMIC ID DEVELOPMENT



BF Arts Council's Hermann Park Summer Concert

July 21, 2021

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Black Sheep and the Shepherd.
No admission charges.

BFDC Board of Directors Meeting

August 11, 2021

Time: 7:00 a.m.

Location: BFDC Conference Room
- 5th & Grant Plaza, 608 5th Ave.

RESOURCE

West River Business Service Center

wrbsc.com

Promoting and financing community development across South Dakota. The center is a one-stop resource center for community and economic development in western SD. Services that can help all types of entrepreneurs and businesses grow through a variety of programs.



Live Music 6:30 - 9:30 PM
July 22: Dakota Country

FREE

New Location:

Tri-State Museum Grounds

Where Friends Meet by the River
Belle Fourche

New Pad Is A Splash!



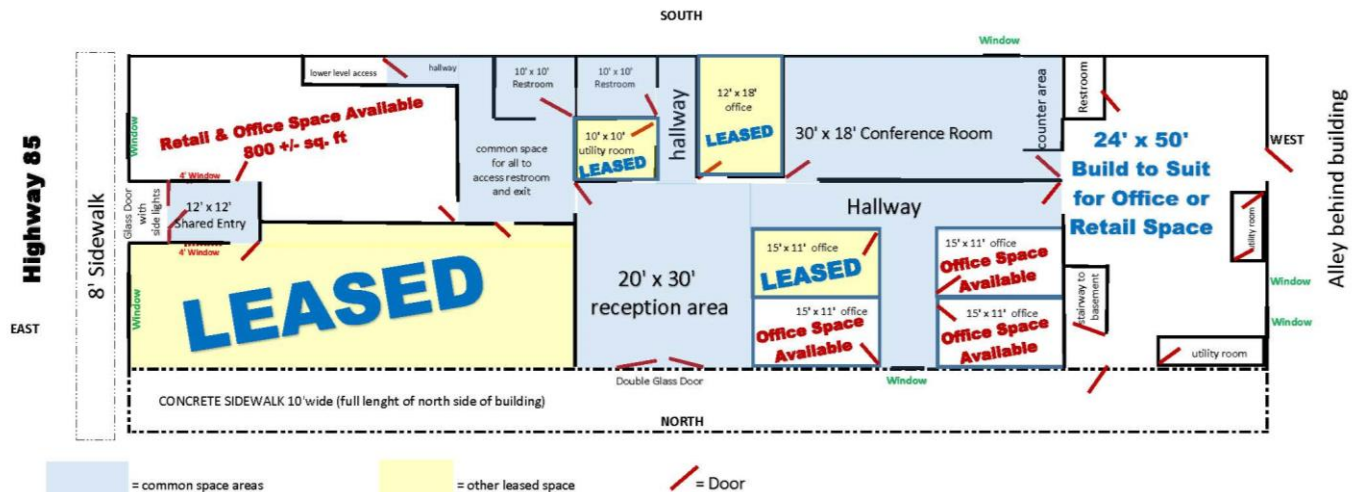
The city's new splash pad officially opened June 16th at Jones Park. It didn't take long to attract the attention of several neighborhood youngsters looking to beat the heat. - Beacon Photo

NEW CONSTRUCTION – Ready for Lease!

- 767 +/- sq. ft. of retail or office space
- 3 – 11x15 offices
- Build to suit space in the west end of the building

Located in a downtown business plaza, excellent parking and Highway 85 signage. Shared common space lobby and restrooms. Shared scheduled space of oversized conference room with technology in place. FREE Wi-Fi throughout the facility.

For more information: 605-892-5065



Belle Fourche Convention Center Project Delayed But Still on Track

BELLE FOURCHE – The lot at the northeast corner of Hwy 85 and 34 in Belle Fourche was to be a beehive of activity by now, but nothing is moving. Yet.

Developer Doug Peterson and DA Peterson Company, LLC of Lemmon is planning to build a large hotel, restaurant, and convention center on the site but the recent rise in the cost of lumber has put those plans temporarily on hold. It now looks like groundbreaking will happen late summer to early fall.

“We still are planning the project for this year,” Peterson told the Beacon. “It has taken a little longer to get things together. There were some reservations with our partners with material prices as high as they were.”

Lumber prices rose more than 150% year over year in April. But since May’s record high of more than 17-hundred dollars per thousand board feet prices have retreated about 43%. That comes as welcome news to the future of the project. “We’ll know more in the next two weeks for sure,”

Peterson said. “But I would say that we’ll still try and get started by the fall.” Peterson says they are aiming to get the concrete work in before the weather turns cold. Once foundations are done, and barring supply chain issues, he says there should be about a 6-month construction timeframe.

Timing is important for projects like this. Material costs are high but that is offset by low interest rates. As material costs drop it is likely interest rates will rise. Hitting that “sweet spot” is critical. According to Hollie Stalder, Belle Fourche Development Corporation Executive Director, there are at least three community projects on hold right with material costs as high as they are. But most, like Peterson, are planning to move ahead.

“We are actually pre-working a lot of stuff right now so we can be ready,” Peterson said.

“We’re rolling the ball downhill a little faster.”

In fact, interest in the lodge and convention center is still at an all-time high. Peterson has picked up additional local investors in the project since the announcement last February.

As far as the scope of the project Peterson says that has not changed. The development will still include a three-story structure with 74 guest rooms, a 300-seat convention center, a restaurant, indoor swimming pool and a 1,200 square foot fitness center that will be open to the public. The \$10 million project still has no official name, but “Center of the Nation Lodge and Convention Center” has been suggested. The company runs similar lodges and convention centers in Lemmon, Newcastle, Bowman, and Lead. But this will be Peterson’s largest project to date.

“Our biggest property is 59 rooms,” he said. “It’s bigger than we’ve done before. The other properties we’ve done are all two story, this will be three stories and that’s exciting.”

The accommodations will include family suites and extended stay suites to help people relocating to Belle Fourche who need a temporary residence until housing and job situations are settled for a more permanent move. The convention center should make it easier for the community to attract larger meetings, conferences, and regional sporting events.

“My view as an outsider is this is the missing link for Belle Fourche to be able to jump into the next size city,” Peterson said. “When you see a three-story marquee hotel sitting there, they’re going to think ‘Belle is more than we thought.’”

BEACON STAFF | news@bellefourchebeacon.com

SD's Tupper urges competition in Senate Ag Hearing

By Carrie Stadheim,
Editor of Tri-State Livestock News

Two cattle producers had the ear of the Senate Ag Committee for a couple of hours Wednesday, June 23, 2021.

Rancher and manager of South Dakota's St. Onge Livestock, Justin Tupper testified, and so did Mark Gardiner of Gardiner Angus Ranch, Ashland, Kansas, and chairman of the board of directors of U.S. Premium Beef, a beef marketing company that is a part owner in National Beef, which is 51 percent owned by the Brazilian meat giant Marfrig.

Both men testified about cattle competition issues in an official Senate Ag Committee hearing in Washington, DC. Other witnesses included Dr. Glynn Tonsor of Kansas State University, Dr.

Dustin Aherin, animal protein analyst with Rabobank, Chesterfield, Missouri and Dr. Mary K. Hendrickson, Associate Professor, Division of Applied Social Sciences, University of Missouri.

In his five-minute opening statement, Tupper said the hearing was critical for the survival of the cattle industry. "There is a crisis across rural America, we are losing producers at an alarming rate, all the while watching big corporate feeders, packers with making record profits and the threat of vertical integration hanging over our heads," he said.

"Producers in my state and across the country are enduring devastating drought conditions, this is just one of the many challenges cattle producers face. All the while managing the land, borrowing money to keep operations going, fighting shifts in weather, and dealing with the rising input costs in a fallen bottom line. Most ranchers who sell calves at weaning time are selling them for less than \$1,000 per head...that's less than a 1 percent return on investment. An incredible risky business. For those who raise and sell all the way to fat cattle, calving to finish, a finished animal is worth somewhere near \$1600 per head today. Packers could buy that steer, process it, and sell it for beef alone, not counting by products for about \$2,800 per head today for a gross margin profit of over 80 percent. We as cattle producers understand and want the packer to make money. That makes the whole system work but since 2015, corporate packers' gross margin has ballooned from an average of \$100 to \$200 per head to well over \$1,000 per head. Packers have enjoyed unbelievable profits, harvesting around 120,000 head per day while cattle producers go out of business and consumers pay double or even triple at the meat counter... Cattle producers... reinvest in their local community, buying and upgrading equipment, paying more for feeder cattle, reinvesting in the land through conservation practices. The corporate packer doesn't reinvest in the industry or sometimes even in the country." He explained that two of the big four packers who process 85 percent of cattle are Brazilian owned.

"The packers' increased control of supply...has made it nearly impossible to have active price discovery. In my years as an auctioneer and operating St. Onge Livestock, I've learned that the most important participant in true price discovery is the second bidder. In most cases in the fat cattle trade today, we don't have a second bidder, there are simply not enough market participants. In traditional market times it was assumed that when boxed beef prices rose, the packer would ramp up chain speed to increase profits, instead they are using limited chain speed and shackle space to make the same money or more harvesting less cattle. So, producers see huge losses in equity while the packer reaps huge rewards despite having the least amount of risk and owning the product the least amount of time while exploiting the producers and ultimately the consumer. American cattle producers don't want nor are we looking for a handout. Producers cannot be sustainable or generational without being profitable."

"When there is an oligopoly with four packers controlling the industry, there are only 2 ways to level the playing field we can either work to eliminate the occurrence of anti-competitive practices and market manipulation in the meat packing sector, or as we've seen done in the past, in other industries, we can break them up so that they cannot have as much influence in the market.



ST. ONGE LIVESTOCK MANAGER ADDRESSES THE SENATE AG COMMITTEE IN A CATTLE AND BEEF PRICING HEARING JUNE 23, 2021. SCREENSHOT FROM LIVE HEARING RECORDING

“These are critical times,” said Tupper.

Gardiner’s testimony followed Tupper’s.

“Today our topic is complicated; the cause of this issue is not. A processing plant fire, a pandemic and a ransomware attack caused extraordinary disruption in processing, resulting in a dramatic drop of the processed beef supply and a bulging oversupply of live cattle. This caused an unprecedented drop in cattle prices while simultaneously leading to a record rise in beef prices. All driven by pure economic market principles.

“Today we have too many cattle and too little processing capacity. We have a volatile marketplace, created by outside unavoidable factors, not any one market player. We have observed similar lumber disruptions in lumber, automobiles, and other goods. Now the solution to all of this is very complicated. Processors are adding capacity due to the demand for high quality beef. Adding this capacity will take time. History tells us we will reach a point when ample processing will compete for a limited supply of cattle. When this happens, the marketplace will shift, and the producers will have more leverage. The question for us in the meantime becomes: how much damage will regulations do to the marketplace by artificially manipulating the pricing mechanisms?

“Experiences tell us the unintended consequences of these actions can create longer lasting havoc and even greater volatility to our industry. Let’s look at our industry history.

“From 1980 to 1995, we were the very picture of an industry in trouble. Consumer satisfaction was at an all-time low. And we were losing market share at a rate that put us in peril of being an irrelevant protein. This loss of market share and dissatisfaction was rooted in the production sector.

“In other words, producers had to resolve our quality issues at the beginning of the supply chain. What caused the disconnect between our product and the consumer? It’s very simple, all cattle were purchased on the average, there were no incentives, one price fit all. Progressive producers needed and wanted to price cattle on a value-based system that paid for each animal based upon value, not average. Superior cattle have more value; inferior cattle have less value. These incentives allowed producers to respond to consumer demand signals.

“Today we have record beef demand. Producers designed and negotiated these grids with the processors. The information transfer between the industry sectors establishing pricing mechanisms that rewarded producers who delivered the beef the world desired. I want to stress the greatest benefit and the greatest added value has been achieved by the very smallest producers. They have reaped the largest dollar value per head and were given market access.

“The unintended consequences of regulated government mandates such as SB 3693 and 543 could potentially have a negative effect on the beef industry. I’m unaware of any data or research that indicates these proposed regulations will have a positive change on the price of cattle going forward.

“There is considerable discussion regarding cash trade. I look at this as a base price, no different than a commodity like wheat. I can call our local elevator and get the base price of wheat. If I hit the targets of value with my wheat due to protein content or baking quality, I am paid for this additional value.

“Value based marketing operates on the same concept. We know the targets are value for the processor and the consumer. If we achieve these goals, we are compensated for producing superior beef. A possible price discovery that we could look at on the thinly traded cash market is to have all base prices of formula grid and alternative market arrangements (AMAs) become a part of mandatory price reporting. This base price needs to be inclusive. I remind you that this comes up for renewal on Sept. 30 of ‘21. Any changes that we make are better implemented by the industry versus government mandates,” said Gardiner.

Dr. Tonsor, Dr. Aherin and Dr. Hendrickson followed with their opening statements, and then the floor was opened for the Senators to ask questions. Many questions followed about how the beef industry can better serve consumers and avoid the disruptions in product availability that caused beef to be missing on grocery store shelves during the pandemic while lots of cattle across the country were overfed because cattle feeders were unable to obtain a bid on them.

Responses varied, with Dr. Tonsor, Dr. Aherin and Mr. Gardiner hesitant to endorse regulatory changes, although Gardiner did support the idea of updating the Livestock Mandatory Reporting (also known as mandatory price reporting) law to include a library of prices including AMAs and other forward contracts.

Tupper lent support to legislation that would require the big four packers to buy a percentage of cattle on the open or cash market. It was reported that currently about 25 percent of cattle are purchased this way. Senator Grassley of Iowa has sponsored a bill to require the big packers to purchase 50 percent of their weekly kill on the cash market and to take delivery of them within 14 days.

Several Senators indicated a need for legislative change that would provide more security to the food system including product availability for consumers as well as financial stability for producers.



NeighborWorks Dakota Home Resources Paint the Town 2021 is in the books! Thanks to First Interstate Bank and Coach Slotten who had all of the Belle Fourche High School athletic teams turn out to make the work fun. The project was completed at 1103 5th Avenue, Belle Fourche.

New Crow's Nest Installed at Roundup Grounds

BELLE FOURCHE - A new crow's nest has been installed at the Black Hills Roundup grounds just in time for the 102nd annual event.

Four Aces Contracting and Fabrication from Sundance, WY, was the lead contractor of the project. Crews from the area placed the new crow's nest, on the supports between the two bucking chutes early last week. The new unit is both larger and has more visibility than the old structure.

"It just goes along with the improvements we've been making at the Roundup Grounds the past couple of years," said Keith Anderson, Roundup Committee Chairman.

The cost of the new crow's nest was close to \$20,000 according to Anderson. And there may be more improvements on the far side of the arena to come.

"We have some plans to maybe put some VIP boxes on both sides of (the crow's nest) to go with the other improvements and make it all blend together," he said.

Improvements to the brackets that frame the banners above the bucking chutes were also made last week.

"We like to put a little money back into the grounds each year, so it doesn't become rundown as it has in the past," Anderson added. "If you put that stuff off it costs a lot to repair. But if you put in a little at a time as you go along it doesn't sting so bad." *Belle Fourche Beacon*



USDA Announces Dates for CRP General and Grasslands Signups

SOUTH DAKOTA, June 14, 2021 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has set a July 23, 2021, deadline for agricultural producers and landowners to apply for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General signup 56. Additionally, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will accept applications for CRP Grasslands from July 12 to August 20. This year, USDA updated both signup options to provide greater incentives for producers and increase its conservation benefits, including reducing the impacts of climate change.

Both signups are competitive and will provide for annual rental payments for land devoted to conservation purposes.

"We are excited to roll out our new and improved CRP General and Grasslands signups," said Acting FSA State Director Joseph Schultz.

"Bottom line, CRP now makes more financial sense for producers while also providing a bigger return on investment in terms of natural resource benefits. The General and Grasslands signups are part of a broader suite of tools available through CRP to integrate key conservation practices on our nation's working lands."

General Signup *Through CRP, producers and landowners establish long term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees, to control soil erosion, improve water quality, and enhance wildlife habitat on cropland. Lands enrolled in CRP also play a key role in mitigating impacts from climate change, and FSA has added a new Climate-Smart Practice Incentive for practices that sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.*

FSA is also adding a one-time "inflationary" adjustment for payment rates, as well as having more flexibility on adjusting soil rental rates.

FSA opened the General Signup in January 2021 and extended the original deadline to July 23, 2021, to enable producers to consider FSA's new improvements to the program.

Grasslands Signup *CRP Grasslands helps landowners and operators protect grassland, including rangeland, and pastureland and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as grazing lands. Protecting grasslands contributes positively to the economy of many regions, provides biodiversity of plant and animal populations, and improves environmental quality.*

FSA has updated the Grasslands Signup to establish a minimum rental rate of \$15 per acre, as well as new National Grassland Priority Zones.

How to Sign Up *To enroll in the CRP General signup, producers and landowners should contact their local USDA Service Center by the July 23 deadline. To enroll in the CRP Grasslands signup, they should contact USDA by the August 20 deadline. While USDA offices may have limited visitors because of the pandemic, Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools. To work with FSA, producers and landowners should contact their local USDA Service Center. Contact information can be found at farmers.gov/service-locator.*

More Information on CRP Signed into law in 1985, CRP is one of the largest voluntary private-lands conservation programs in the United States. It was originally intended to primarily control soil erosion and potentially stabilize commodity prices by taking marginal lands out of production. The program has evolved over the years, providing many conservation and economic benefits. The program marked its 35-year anniversary this past December.

Under the current Administration, USDA is engaged in a whole-of-government effort to combat the climate crisis and conserve and protect our nation's lands, biodiversity, and natural resources, including our soil, air, and water. Through conservation practices, USDA aims to enhance economic growth and create new streams of income for farmers, ranchers, producers, and private foresters. Successfully meeting these challenges will require USDA and our agencies to pursue a coordinated approach alongside USDA stakeholders, including state, local, and tribal governments.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America.

To learn more, visit www.usda.gov