



S. D. Public Utilities Commission hosts Crocker Wind Farm hearing

Anytime a hearing lasts over four hours, there are definitely two sides and both sides want to be heard.

Such was the case last Wednesday night at the Clark Elementary School. South Dakota's Public Utilities Commissioners (PUC) Kristie Fiegen, Chris Nelson and Gary Hanson heard over four hours of testimony.

The PUC public input hearing regarding the proposed Geronimo Energy Crocker Wind Farm brought out approximately 160 interested patrons, with more than 40 individuals speaking for and against the project.

The Crocker Wind Farm project has been in progression since 2008 and the PUC hearing is the step which is taken following approval from the Clark County Board of Commissioners. This PUC hearing was quite similar to the county commissioner's public hearing, but

no commissioners were in attendance at this hearing, as it is now the state of South Dakota which will be making a decision regarding the future of the Crocker Wind Farm.

No decision by the PUC was forthcoming at this time, that will happen in late January, 2018, but this hearing was for the PUC commissioners to gather public input.

The proposed Crocker Wind Farm will be located in the Crocker Hills of northwest Clark County and could include approximately 200 wind turbines, each 500 feet tall with roto diameters of 446 feet. This project would cover up to 30,000 acres and sixty landowners have signed onto this wind energy project.

In May, the Clark County Board of Commissioners put the setbacks to residences to 3/4 mile. Geronimo Energy has taken the setback issue



Public Utilities Commissioners from left to right Kristie Fiegen, Chris Nelson and Gary Hanson joined by attorney Adam De Hueck, were in Clark last Wednesday at the PUC public input hearing held in regard to Geronimo Energy's proposed Crocker Wind Farm.

Opponents and proponents were given seven minutes to speak in front of the board. Approximately 40 came forward for their comments to be heard at the PUC hearing.

and other considerations to court, starting in July. Geronimo filed a writ of certiorari over the Third Circuit Court's decision that stated that Clark County Commissioners were within their right to extend the setback for each wind tower to three-quarters of a mile to a residence. The writ of certiorari asks a higher court to review the previous decision. The legal decisions of this project have yet to play out, further complicating matters.

The passion, on both sides of this issue, has been proven and witnessed with advertisements, letters to the editor and insertion circulars in the *Clark County Courier*. Last Wednesday was a chance for both sides to let their opinions be heard by the PUC.

The first 45 minutes of the hearing was given to Geronimo Energy. Senior permitting specialist Melissa Schmidt began with a power

point presentation on the physical aspects of the wind farm, the economic impacts to the landowner and to the community.

Opponents and proponents were then given seven minutes, per individual, with ITC general manager Bryan Roth beginning, "I'm not here to promote or oppose the Crocker Wind Farm. Roth wanted assurance from Geronimo Energy that inductive interference would not degrade telephone communications by ITC customers near the towers. "We spent more than \$1,000,000 in the late 1990s proving that the towers near Lake Benton, Minn. were causing a hum on telephones. Just work with us and assure us that if a problem does occur they admit to it and we get it resolved," he told the PUC commissioners.

It is impossible to print all the PUC Hearing (continued on page 3)

Pleasant Lutheran Cemetery dates back to 1883



Julian Hamre, Kristin Vandersnick and Julayne Thoreson are shown to the right of the Pleasant Lutheran Church/bell memorial located in the Pleasant

Before 1961, a statuesque, steeped white country church could be seen for miles atop a hill in Pleasant Township.

The Pleasant Lutheran Church was built in 1893. The cemetery preceded the church building and remains a nicely kept and well maintained cemetery located on the corner of 186th Street and 432nd

Avenue in Pleasant Township. From U. S. Highway 212, one would go south on State Highway 25 for 13 miles to 186th Street, turn right (west and go one mile to the corner and it is nestled among a square of pine, cedar and ash trees on top of the hill.

Sadly, the beautiful church met its demise due to fire in December of

Lutheran, sometimes called Pleasant Hill Cemetery.

Pleasant Lutheran Church had its origin in 1883 with services held until 1961 at the steeped church

1961.

Julian Hamre, current chairman of the cemetery board, was about seven years old at the time and remembers that day. "I remember they kept shooting water at the bell after the rest of the church was lost, to try to save it," noted Hamre of the church that was home to many of his family members.

Editor's Note: Studying old records and visiting Clark County cemeteries reveals not only the final resting place of hundreds of early settlers, but also gives a partial glimpse of pioneer life when this area was still known as "Dakota Territory". Along with the large town and church cemeteries are those abandoned, forlorn private cemeteries that dot the landscape in this county. The following story is one in a series of histories of the twenty-eight graveyards in Clark County. Persons knowing of cemeteries that might be missed in this report, or have history material connected with cemeteries in the locality are urged to contact the Courier.

"They covered the bell with a lot of ash after the fire so it wouldn't cool down so fast and crack I remember being told," added Kristin Vandersnick who has many Brekke, Brakke and Hamre family members. Her father Lloyd Brekke remains a member of the current cemetery board.

Other members of the board include Brad Larson and Dick Fuller. John and Julayne Thoreson are the sextons and treasurers, Harold

Pleasant Lutheran (continued on page 7)

School board calls special meeting for electrical repairs

An emergency special meeting was called by the Clark School Board on Tuesday to handle an electrical issue at Clark High School.

The existing grounding electric system needs repair to meet current code.

In the boiler room at Clark High School all conduits have been eroded to the point they are non-functional. The state inspector, looking at this problem on Tuesday, would not pass inspection on the current electrical system. "The problem is believed to be caused by past standing water in the boiler room," said superintendent Luanne Warren.

To solve this situation the school board passed a resolution at Tuesday's meeting, with time and equipment not to exceed \$125,000 to Jacobson Electric. This fix will take approximately six weeks. Repair will start this week.

Prior to this action Clint Jacob-

son of Jacobson Electric and a representative from Sichmiller Engineering explained the problem in depth and what needs to be done to resolve this issue.

Also in attendance were Jerry Jacobsen and Trevor Forest of Clark Insurance Agency.

Said superintendent Warren, "We had no idea we had this problem. We found out about it Friday and with temporary solutions in place, we will start working to get this done immediately. I'm very glad the board acted so quickly to solve this issue. Safety of our students is priority number one."

WEATHER			
Ryan Eggleston - Official Weather Observer			
	HI	LO	PR
Sept. 12	84	58	0
Sept. 13	88	63	0
Sept. 14	81	58	0
Sept. 15	74	50	.14
Sept. 16	53	38	.16
Sept. 17	61	37	0
Sept. 18	73	51	0
2017 precipitation to date	15.85		
2016 precipitation to date	16.80		

Clark County Rainfall 9/12 - 9/18	
* Bradley .88"	* Garden City .30"
* Crocker 1.08"	* Henry .17"
* Raymond .81"	* Vienna NA
* Clark .30"	* Willow Lake .30"
* Carpenter 0"	

Kerry Kline is host to two foreign exchange students

▲ Kaelig is from France; Sho is from Japan

Kerry Kline and her son Mekel are welcoming students Kaelig Manach from France and Sho Sunagawa from Japan.

The boys are juniors at Clark High School for the 2017-2018 school year.

Kerry Kline is a local representative for Forte International exchange program since last summer and decided to be a host parent this year.

Kerry and her youngest - son Mekel were looking over the prospects with the same interests and couldn't decide between the two boys so both ended up being Mekel's 'younger brothers' for the school year. Mekel is a senior in high school.

The boys flew into Sioux Falls from their respective homes in August. Sho (pronounced 'show') arrived just in time for the Potato Day dance that evening.

Kaelig (pronounced 'Kay-lig') arrived a little later in August and was able to experience the Brown County Fair.

"Neither one of them has seen snow before," said Mekel with a smile. "We might get a little this year," he told the boys.

Kaelig from France

Kaelig is from Dinan, France. His father Erwin is an art instructor and his mother Marie is a dietitian. He has one brother Louenn who is 19 years old. His younger sister Soan is 11 years old.

Kaelig's birthday was on November 6, 2001. "I'll have to have a sweet 16th birthday party for him," noted Kline.

After returning from his year abroad, Manach will have to take his junior year of high school again in France followed by his senior year. He is undecided as to his future plans, however a profession in the medical field interests him at this point.

He enjoys playing basketball which he played in clubs at home in France. Music - (guitar) and skateboarding he also enjoys.

School for Manach started at 8:00 a.m. and goes until 5:00 p.m. - five days a week last year in his home town. English, math, French, history, geography, science Spanish and P.E. (physical education) are the classes he took last year.

Sho from Japan

Sho's hometown is Urasoe, Japan. He is the only child of his

parents Masanobu and Sachiyo Sunagawa. His father Masanobu works as a physical therapist and his mother is a stay-at-home mom.

Sho's birthday was yesterday - Tuesday, September 19. He was born in 2000. Kline noted that after Kaelig's birthday in November and Mekel's birthday on September 30, she will have a 16, 17 and 18 year old under her care at home.

When Sho returns to Japan, he will only have to take his senior year to graduate from high school. In Japan his classes last year were math, English, science, Japanese (language) social studies and P.E. - his favorite class.

Classes started at 7:45 a.m. and went until 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and on Saturday they go from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Sho especially enjoys playing basketball, but also plays volleyball and bowls in Japan. Playing basketball with friends is important.

His future plans are to go on to college in the United States. Maybe coaching in his future as well as taking a shot at being a professional basketball player.

Exchange students (continued on page 5)



From two older sisters to two 'younger brothers' is the life change this summer for Mekel Sanchez of Clark and his mother Kerry Kline. The two have opened their home this school term for foreign exchange students Kaelig Manach from France and Sho Sunagawa from Japan. Shown are, from left to right, Manach, Sunagawa, Kline and Sanchez. Both boys enjoy basketball and are looking forward to playing this season at Clark High School where both boys are juniors.