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Tuesday

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Rundquist concerned about RTC timetable

By Heather Rule
Daily Journal

Tim Rundquist is concerned that the clock is ticking away and that there's still no agreement for redevelopment of the Fergus Falls Regional Treatment Center. "We seem to be at a standstill," he said, as he voiced his concerns during the new business portion of the city council meeting Monday.

the RTC, seem to be "swamped," Rundquist said. He suggested appointing a city council liaison to help with the process. The city and Historic Kirkbride entered into a letter of intent in July for the proposed \$41.4 million project. At that time, it was thought the development agreement would be presented to the council before Oct. 30.



Rundquist

Along with the timetable, his other problem deals with how the council is being relayed information about the project. He's looking to receive information firsthand, rather than secondhand. "I don't feel that the council has a real direct conduit to the negotiations," Rundquist said. The main person communicating with Willey is Kent Mattson, the city's RTC adviser, according to City Administrator Mark Sievert. Mattson is continuing to communicate with Willey about the project.

Mattson was planning to update the council on the RTC at its next meeting, Sievert said. "I think the ball's back in Ray's court," Sievert said. "There has been no lack of communication to the developers. You guys (council) know as much as we know." If communication is moving slowly, it's on the part of the developers and not the city, according to Sievert. However, he also said he didn't want to be critical of Willey, because he knows the RTC is such a big project. Having a council liaison for

the RTC project couldn't hurt, Jay Cichosz said. Ben Schierer agreed, though Stan Synstelien said he didn't feel like the council was being left out of the loop on this. City attorney Rolf Nycklemoe cautioned that a council liaison would not have the authority to do any negotiating with developers, since that is up to the council as a whole, but he didn't see any issues with a person being involved in the communication process. The council will likely address the liaison issue at an upcoming meeting.



Joel Myhre/Daily Journal

Steam poured out of Otter Tail Power's Hoot Lake plant Monday morning as electrical demand was at its peak.

Frostbite cases mount as dangerous cold continues

Utility companies see spike in customer usage

Associated Press

ST. PAUL — Many schools canceled classes for a second day as dangerous arctic air kept an icy grip on Minnesota where at least one hospital saw a record number of frostbite cases. In Fergus Falls and the surrounding area, however, schools opened as usual on Tuesday. Power companies are seeing an increase in usage, according to a spokeswoman for Otter Tail Power Company. Public Relations Director for the company, Cris Oehler, said Otter Tail

Power has been adequately staffed to deal with increased customer calls during the cold stretch. The company's numbers are showing an increase in energy usage even from the most recent cold snap. "Energy usage is up about five percent during the last 36 hours from a comparable period about two years ago," Oehler said Monday afternoon. Likewise, Great Plains Natural Gas has also seen a spike in gas usage among its customers, according to senior public relations representative Mark Hanson. "Based on average temperatures for this time of the year, natural gas usage was approximately 50 percent greater than normal on Sunday," Hanson said.

Hospitals are also seeing increases. At Regions Hospital in St. Paul, 14 people were treated for frostbite and eight patients suffered from hypothermia in the last two days. Hospital officials say all eight intensive care beds in the burn unit were filled with people suffering from frostbite. Dr. George Edmonson tells the Pioneer Press that in past years the hospital has handled a handful of severe frostbite cases, but this year there's already been a dozen. Edmonson says that's a record-breaking number. Temperatures dipped to 26 below zero in Ely and in International Falls in northern Minnesota early Tuesday. Forecasters expect some relief Wednesday

when the mercury could climb above zero to the south. In Fergus Falls, the temperature dropped to 27 below on Monday morning, but "only" reached a low of 18 below on Monday evening and Tuesday morning. Sunday's low of 25 below tied a record for the lowest temperature recorded on Jan. 5. It also reached 25 below on Jan. 5, 1996. Monday's low missed the record of 30 below set on Jan. 6, 1951. The frigid cold is expected to stick around through Wednesday, with a warmup starting Thursday, and temperatures expected in the mid thirties by Sunday. For a complete forecast, see Page 2.

Dehumidification equipment bid approved

By Heather Rule
Daily Journal

It's the hope that the complete desiccant dehumidification system for the south rink at the Community Arena will be in place in mid-March, weather permitting. The Fergus Falls City Council Monday approved a bid for supplying the desiccant dehumidification equipment. The city received quotes through this past Friday, with the lone number coming from Schwab Vollhaber Lubratt, Inc., in Shoreview, for \$65,992, according to a memo from City Engineer Dan Edwards. This comes from the same manufacturer that provided the dehumidification equipment for the north rink as part of the original Community Arena bid. Even though the bid came in slightly above the \$65,000 engineer's estimate, it should still fit within the project budget, according to Edwards. The architect and mechanical engineer reviewed the quote and determined the equipment quoted meets the specifications at a reasonable cost. The manufacturer is committed to having equipment delivered no later than March 1. Using a consultant, city staff will prepare a bid package for the installation of the equipment, including associated piping and ducting. The installation work will be handled as a separate contract and would complete the final phase of the overall dehumidification system for the south rink.

Home invasion suspect in court

By Heather Rule
Daily Journal

One of three men charged in a Fergus Falls home invasion on Thanksgiving appeared Monday in Otter Tail County District Court. Terry Allen Stewart, 35, of Fergus Falls, is charged with one felony count of first-degree burglary of an occupied dwelling. During an omnibus hearing Monday, Stewart's attorney entered in the demand for a speedy trial. A contested omnibus hearing was scheduled for Feb. 5, with a jury trial scheduled for Feb. 25. Stewart remains in the Otter Tail County Jail. Also charged in the case with one count each of

See **Invasion** — Page 3

Projects, study indicate housing on the rise in Perham

By Chris Reinos/Daily Journal

ON THE ROAD

For a few years now, Perham has been contending with dual problems, problems that are intrinsically tied together. The city has a need for more workers, but also has been lacking in places for potential workers to live. But as long as these two problems have been at the forefront, a local group called Grow Perham has been working hard to find solutions. "We're looking at having local people reinvest in themselves and their community," Grow Perham managing partner and organizer

Dave Schornack said. Grow Perham organizers have spearheaded the development of four Clearwater Apartment complexes in Perham since 2009, with a total of 56 units available in the building. Construction on a fifth building, the biggest so far at 16 units, is underway and is scheduled to be completed by May 1. Schornack wants these housing projects to spur development in the business community as well. The group's ultimate goal, according to Schornack, is to literally grow Perham by 1,000 residents in the next five years. "It's not just a housing issue

we're involved in; it's much bigger than that," he said. These apartment buildings have made an impact in the city, according to Economic Development Director Chuck Johnson. Couple them with a 32-unit townhouse development also scheduled to open in the spring and Perham will be looking at almost 50 new openings in a few short months. Johnson and other Perham city officials have heard presentations over the past few years from different companies looking to create housing in the city. But their plans have not been strong or



Chris Reinos/Daily Journal

The fifth of six planned Clearwater Apartment buildings is scheduled to be completed by May 1. The buildings have been spearheaded by the community group Grow Perham.

See **Perham** — Page 3

MAILING LABEL

TOMORROW:

HIGH: -4 LOW: -18

SUNRISE TOMORROW: 8:06 am
SUNSET TOMORROW: 4:56 pm

YESTERDAY:

HIGH: -17 LOW: -27
PRECIPITATION: .0

OBITUARIES

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