

LEOLA - HCR 2
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New Questions Arise Following Data Center Meeting

By J.R. Cox

Exactly how much water will the proposed Leola Data Center consume on a monthly basis? Will the water be mixed with glycol and be periodically discharged in an environmentally friendly and ethical manner? If allowed to be constructed, will the data center expand from its initial containment of five acres to eventually cover the twenty that have been leased?

All of these questions and more made themselves apparent following a community meeting concerning the proposed data center that was held at the Leola Municipal Building on Friday, December 27.

Community members, County Commissioners, and state legislators were present at the meeting to hear the testimony of speakers Mike Klipfel and Wayne Breitag regarding the 50 megawatt Bitcoin mine that Leola Data Center, LLC, subsidiary of Electric Assets, LLC, is planning to construct adjacent to the Montana-Dakota Utilities' substation located approximately five miles southwest of Leola.

Included among those who were in attendance

were local agricultural producers who are keeping a close eye on this proposed multi-million dollar project. Among their many legitimate concerns is the question of how, and to what extent, would the constant decibels of electronic buzzing that emanate from the data center affect their livestock.

Not to mention their own peace of mind.

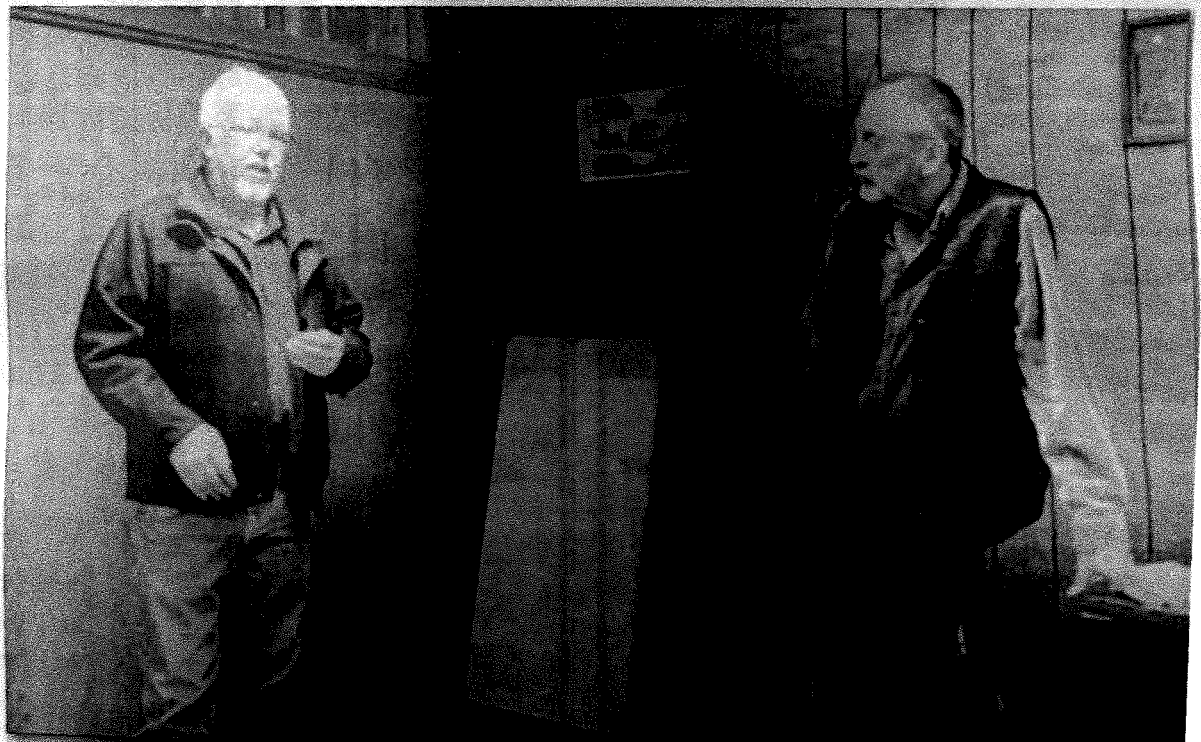
Amongst the details discussed at the meeting was the mention of brownouts occurring in neighboring Dickey County, where hundreds of megawatts of electricity are being sucked away from the power grid to support the data centers that have been constructed near

Ellendale and Jamestown. If the new data center, and likely subsequent construction, is not prevented from taking a foothold in McPherson County, will its residents at some point be forced to endure the same struggles?

District 23 Representative and FEM Manager Scott Moore was on hand to share

his knowledge and insight and did indeed appear to forecast the real potential of nuclear power making a return right here in the state of South Dakota for the first time since a Sioux Falls test facility in the 1960s.

Other considerations now leave local residents to wonder how grand in scale
Continued on next page



District 23 Representative and FEM Manager Scott Moore and Leola resident Wayne Breitag were speakers at the recently held community meeting at the municipal building concerning the proposed Leola Data Center.

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Continued from front page the invasion of these resource-consuming, for-profit, digital investments could eventually become. Will Leola one day soon be a location where a view of the western horizon reveals a hyperscaled, gray structure that eclipses the evening sunset? A building that broadcasts electromagnetic pollution 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and contributes to countless millions of tons of e-waste following inevitable equipment upgrades.

Senator Al Novstrup, who was also in attendance at the meeting, stated that there are pros and cons to anything. But aside from the green-eyed owners of the data center, how do the people who are affected by this project benefit in any way, shape, or form?

And more importantly - at what cost? How much tax revenue will the county receive annually while the data center is in operation? The correct answer to that question is that it does not matter.

With so many negative implications at stake, it is clear that no data center like that which has been

proposed near Leola should be granted permission to operate here or anywhere else, for any price. Not to threaten local wildlife and livestock, not to threaten the environment, and not to turn South Dakota's valuable farmland into a buzzing block of concrete - a wasteful structure that expends thousands of gallons of water and hundreds of megawatts of electricity to mine for Bitcoins and promote artificial intelligence, which carries its own various pros and cons. We can make better use of such critical resources.

Whether it's a CO2 pipeline buried under the ground or a Bitcoin mine constructed above it, McPherson County, in recent years, appears to have gained a target on its back. And that is why anyone with the power to come to the county's defense bears the responsibility of doing what they can to preserve its freedom and integrity.

Residents of McPherson County cannot afford to remain quiet or indifferent on this important matter, not just for our own sake or the sake of our neighbor, but for the hundreds of

thousands of other South Dakotans who may also be placed in harm's way in the near future. We now have the opportunity to set a standard throughout the state, declaring in an irrefutable, booming voice, "We are *not* for sale." That our integrity, peace of mind, our lives and liberty all matter. That under no circumstances will we trade what we know is right, and right for the common good, for any proposed dollar amount.

Like other counties in other states of this country that have also been the target of the ongoing data center metastasis (which now leads the world, numbering into the thousands of structures) our county and its residents have the opportunity to

draw a line in the sand and push back.

Between the impending potential of a pressurized and liquefied asphyxiant beneath our feet and the proposed gross consumption of our daily utilities and basic needs, perhaps local residents would be apt to declare a new slogan in decided protest: "Rural Lives Matter."

The McPherson County Planning Commission will hold a public meeting to receive input concerning the county's proposed

zoning regulations for data processing centers in McPherson County at the courthouse on Tuesday, January 21 at 10:05 a.m. The Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the McPherson County Commission concerning the adoption of the zoning regulations.

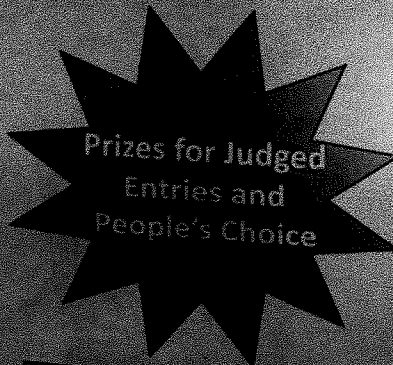
Citizens may attend and make their voices heard or they may submit written comments to County Zoning Officer Hunter Heinrich, P.O. Box 50, Leola, SD 57456.

Thank You Notes

Thank you to the Willing Workers 4-H Club for the Christmas goodies. So good!

God bless, Nancy Berreth

Leola FBLA's Annual



Thursday, Feb. 6th
4:00 - 7:30
in the Leola Cafeteria!

Come out and support the Titans as they take on the Warner Monarchs!

Please register Chili or Soup entries by Feb. 4th
Contact Trevor Van Tilburg at 712-461-2531 or
at trevor.vantilburg@k12.sd.us

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

2025 Crop Hour

January 7-February 27, 2025
Tuesdays-Thursdays
Zoom Webinar | 10:00 a.m. CST / 9:00 a.m. MST

- Register once for access to all sessions
- Free registration
- Visit extension.sdstate.edu/events or scan the QR code to register
- Certified Crop Advisor credits available

Weekly Topics

Jan. 7-9: Soils and Water
Jan. 14-15: Weeds Integrated Pest Management
Jan. 21-23: Insect Integrated Pest Management
Jan. 28-30: Plant Diseases and Fungicides
Feb. 4-6: Specialty Crops
Feb. 11-13: Crop and Forage Production
Feb. 18-20: Oilseed and Biomass Management
Feb. 25-27: Regenerative Agriculture

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