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## PRESS RELEASE

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## VCDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS ENCOURAGES VOTERS TO VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE CLAY COUNTY COURTHOUSE BOND

**Vermillion, SD, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021** – The Board of Directors of the Vermillion Area Chamber & Development Company (VCDC) recently unanimously, with two members abstaining, voted in favor to support the proposal by the Clay County Commission in regard to the \$41 million Clay County Courthouse, Jail & Law Enforcement Bond.

The bond, which is on the ballot for the upcoming election, will be voted on by Clay County residents on Tuesday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

The proposal is to construct a new Clay County jail, law enforcement center, courthouse and government services building. In addition to the \$41 million bond, Clay County Commissioners have authorized monies to immediately be directed to maintenance on the existing courthouse including a new roof and tuck point and cleaning of the exterior stone.

“Being the county seat for Clay County is a point of pride and responsibility for our community”, said Nate Welch, President & CEO of the VCDC. “The proposed bond has been vetted by a great working committee which gives Vermillion and Clay County its best chance to be prudent, responsible and visionary for our County.”

During the vote, the Board of Directors took into consideration the tax implications for Vermillion residents. For a 30-year general obligation bond, the annual tax levy would be \$157 per \$100,000 of house value. If the bond fails to pass at the election, the current jail facility will be closed, and a tax increase will result regardless. Over the lifetime of the 30-year bond, \$40 million would be spent covering the costs to transporting and housing inmates in neighboring counties. “This is our best opportunity to keep our dollars here in our County,” continued Welch.



The Clay County Facility Planning Committee, consisting of a range of citizen volunteers, have worked for over two years and conducted close to 100 meetings to secure the most cost-efficient solution to address the County needs.

The County has made it clear there are no intentions to tear down the existing historic courthouse, with funds even set aside to stabilize and maintain the structure.

“The VCDC is motivated to working with community leaders to find an appropriate tenant and preserve the history of the building for the future Vermillion community,” said Nate Welch. “This is the best time for the lowest cost option that provides opportunity in our community and our county. With interest rates at more than 60-year lows, and a couple of years that will allow for final detail planning within a set budget, the current proposal can provide time and resources to match the best way with the current situation. We also have seen opportunities and discussions that could pose the best options for a future for the historic courthouse that so many love.”

The VCDC encourages residents of Clay County to vote yes on this bond on Election Day, but ultimately to get out and vote.

“We believe that decisions are made by those who show up. This is your time,” stated Nate Welch.

Voting in Clay County has already commenced. Residents can vote in person at the Clay County Courthouse, Monday through Friday from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm until Monday, June 7<sup>th</sup>. On Election Day, Tuesday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, all residents will vote at their local polling place, the National Guard Armory. Alternatively, absentee ballots can be applied for until Monday, June 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm and must be submitted by Tuesday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm.

The VCDC would like to note that two members of the Board of Directors chose to abstain from the vote. The two members were City Manager, John Prescott and Board of Directors Vice-Chair, Jeff Erickson.

For more information or to request an interview, contact Megan Davidson, Director of Strategic Communications & Tourism at [Megan@VermillionChamber.com](mailto:Megan@VermillionChamber.com) or call the VCDC offices at 605.624.5571.