

# OPINION

OUR VIEW

## Board made right decision

The International Falls School Board made a wise decision when it took no action to hire a consultant to help it develop long-term goals for the district.

While we believe that developing these goals that will guide the district into the future is a valuable exercise and should be completed, now is not the time to spend \$12,000 to do that.

The cost involved in developing the goals appears to have surprised the board and administration, who had believed the cost to be in the \$4,000 to \$5,000 range.

When the price tag for the service came back at more than twice that, the board rightly put the plan on hold. The board also took no action to hire the same consultant, Big River Group LLC, St. Cloud, to provide search services for a new superintendent at an additional cost of \$24,500.

Perhaps the price tag for these important services would not be as large a deterrent to moving forward if the district was not in

the midst of attempting to create a plan to address declining enrollment that has resulted in the loss of about \$480,000 in state funding for the next school year.

The idea to hire a consultant to help the district develop long-term goals came from a Blue Ribbon Panel, established last year to identify ways to improve the school district. The panel has provided great ideas and insight into how the district may address issues that may be contributing to the declining enrollment.

In the meantime, we like the idea of seeking a consultant for a smaller fee. Are there local people who could provide these kinds of services at a cheaper cost? Would the Minnesota Department of Education be able to provide some consultation, maybe at no cost at all?

Developing long-term goals for the Falls School District is worthy of funding, but we encourage the board to consider ways to accomplish that that plan without adding to the district's financial concerns.



## Committing vehicular deerslaughter

When I moved here in International Falls from the Twin Cities, I knew there'd be some differences I'd have to adjust to, and things I'd experience for the first time.

It's going to get much colder in the wintertime-check.

There's going to be much more snow-check.

The town will pretty much shut down during deer hunting season-check.

When it comes to the last item there, I also knew I'd see much more wildlife than I was used to. So far, it's just been deer crossing the road in front of me, with plenty of space and time to slow down. However, this was not the case driving home from work Monday, as I did something, while new for me, probably happens quite frequently here: I hit a deer with my car.

The health status of said doe is currently unknown, this Jane Doe, if you will. She crossed right to left in front of me as I was driving south on Crescent Drive at about 25 mph. The cliché really is true, those buggers do come out of nowhere. I had no time to react, and my audible response to this new driving stimuli was profound.



Spenser  
BICKETT

STAFF WRITER

"Oh wow, a deer," I said to no one in particular, as this doe crossed and froze in front of me as I hit my brakes. She nearly cleared the front of my car, but the front left side of the bumper clipped her pretty good, and she slid across the rest of the road, and into the ditch on the left side.

I pulled over, parked, engaged my hazard lights, and considered my situation. I decided to analyze the overall damage of the situation. My physical being was not harmed by the collision, and I got out to survey the damage on the front of my car. Expecting a dent and perhaps a cracked headlight, I could find no body damage. Relieved, I thanked Henry

Ford for designing the Taurus to be such an effective deer battering ram.

However, now my thoughts turned cloudy, as I worried about the well-being of the deer. I drove back and forth up the road, scanning the ditch, but couldn't find anything. Unaware of what to do in this situation, I called my co-worker, who was raised here, and probably had been in this situation numerous times.

My assumption was incorrect, as she has never hit a deer with a car, but still knew what to do. If there is no damage to you or your car, and you can't find the deer, she said, just go home. But if you do hit a deer and it perishes or is badly wounded in the affair, she said if you can find it, you should call the police department's non-emergency phone number and alert them. They'll come remove the deer and report the collision, she said. Good to know.

So, after eight years of driving thousands of miles throughout the country, I come to International Falls, and within six months, I have committed vehicular deerslaughter.

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