

# Minneapolis misses out on \$20,000 from burner developer

• Kandiyohi Development Partners didn't get the site it wanted, but the city won't bill it for \$125 per day in holding costs specified in its sale option.

By STEVE BRANDT  
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The developer of a biomass burner didn't get the city-owned site that it sought in south Minneapolis, but it is escaping a \$125-per-day charge the city could have imposed.

That penalty could have added at least \$20,000 to the city treasury. The city's failure to collect has drawn fire from op-

ponents of the project.

"Maybe I can try this with my property taxes," said one opponent, Betsy Sohn.

Kandiyohi Development Partners sought to buy a city-owned garbage-handling station in the Hiawatha-Lake area for a energy facility that would burn wood and other biomass.

But it failed in early June that it gave up on the site after it was unable to secure a commitment

from a utility to buy the plant's electricity by the March 30 deadline set by the city.

Now the city says it won't try to collect a \$125-per-day penalty that's written into its land option agreement with Kandiyohi.

When Kandiyohi's option to buy 2850 20th Av. S. was amended early last year, it agreed to pay \$125 per day to cover the city's holding costs for the prop-

erty, starting Oct. 3, until it met the city's closing conditions.

But although Kandiyohi was supposed to make the accruing payments each month, it never did so. The city never exercised its option of declaring Kandiyohi in default over those missed payments.

Finally, in early April, the city declared that Kandiyohi had defaulted on the land option because it hadn't gotten the required commitment from a utility to buy power.

Public Works Director Steve Kotke said the city's failure to

collect the penalty was an administrative oversight. Now that Kandiyohi's 60-day period to cure the default is over, the contract is voided and the city can't collect, he said.

The city also returned twice a \$50,000 check sent by Kandiyohi under the contract when it attempted to exercise its option. The city said it could not do so because it hadn't met conditions for exercising the option.

Julienne Glad, one burner opponent, said she's surprised that the city didn't try to collect, given that the payment

was to cover foregone property taxes and maintenance costs for the site.

But Kotke said some of those costs were based on the expectation that the city would vacate the site in favor of a new facility elsewhere in the city. It has so far not settled on a site for a joint venture with Hennepin County that would accept household hazardous waste and other items not typically hauled by normal city garbage pickup.

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## A play that crams 37 shortened versions of Shkspr's gr8est works into 97 mins. is drwing increasingly big crowds 2 to the lawn at Brit's Pub in Mpls.



Photos by M.K. SMITH • mksmith@startribune.com

Three actors performed their version of "The Compleat Wrks of Wllm Shkspr (Abridged)." The actors are a tight-knit group who have performed together for years. The show, which is gaining popularity over its run, draws an eclectic crowd. A manager at the pub expects about 400 people at the play's finale on Sunday.

# Shakespeare with a beer? Literature lite

By PATRICK LEE • plee@startribune.com

Harold Bloom, the preeminent Shakespeare scholar, once said, "Wisdom is to be found in Shakespeare, provided you get at it in the right way."

For the thousands of Minnesotans who have had the sheer pleasure of experiencing "The Compleat Wrks of Wllm Shkspr (abridged)," the right way involves ordering drinks on the lawn at Brit's Pub in Minneapolis and watching three men in tights attempt to portray all of William Shakespeare's 37 plays in 97 minutes.

The show, put on by the Actors Theater of Minnesota, incorporates rap, football game commentary and an episode of Dr. Phil, speeding through "Romeo and Juliet" and 35 other plays in the hourlong first act. The 40-minute second act is devoted to "Hamlet," complete with a smiley-faced ghost-on-a-stick as Hamlet's father.

The notoriously crotchety Bloom (who turns 78 this week) might scoff at this indignity to the Bard, but he surely would find favor with the show's democratic appeal.

The crowd of about 250 — some reclining on blankets, some chugging beers — covered the entire lawn despite the nagging humidity and muggy, overcast sky. The range of haircuts in the audience — mohawks, buzz cuts, perms and countless receding hairlines — demonstrated the show's wide popularity.

While the sexual innuendos and subtext elicited constant laughter from the adult members of the audience, the use of Silly String as fake blood delighted the younger ones present. But everyone chuckled at the physical comedy of three slightly overweight men frantically running around in a planned but seemingly spontaneous production.

Actor Jim Cunningham, 47, said for every run of the show on the lawn, the eclectic crowds increase in size until the run's final performance.

"It has evolved into this sort of cult experience up there on Brit's Pub. There's plenty of people that come back more than once," he said. "It's like the perfect storm....You're doing this goofy, almost Monty Python-esque Shakespeare play at a British pub on a bowling green on a Sunday night, with drink specials."

For the finale on Sunday, the pub's general manager, Shane Higgins, predicts a turnout of up to 400.

Although the actors do manage to mention or show the titles of all 37 works, the 97-minute time limit is a lost cause. Cunningham says they long ago gave up trying to finish exactly

**'THE COMPLEAT WRKS OF WLLM SHKSPR (ABRIDGED)'**

**Who:** Originally written and conceived by the Reduced Shakespeare Company. Produced by the Actors Theater of Minnesota.

**When:** 3:30 p.m. July 13.

**Where:** The lawn at Brit's Pub, 1110 Nicollet Mall

**Tickets:** Free. Call 612-332-3908 for more information.

Sunday's (abridged) performance of Shakespeare's "Macbeth" drew laughs from some of the 250 people gathered on the lawn at Brit's Pub in downtown Minneapolis.

on time. It is clear to the audience that the actors are having just as much, if not more, fun on stage than the audience is having on the lawn. Cunningham attributes this to the close-knit relationships among the three-person cast: he first started acting in shows with Chris Whiting, 46, over two decades ago, and Ross Young, 46, sang at Cunningham's wedding.

The family atmosphere was also reflected in the audience. John Bringewatt, 56, came to see the show for the first time with several friends who were well-versed in English literature and Shakespeare.

"I'm the only non-English major here, I don't know Shakespeare very well," he said. "And I'm going to try and bring my son here next week."

Last summer, the group's first time back at Brit's Pub after a hiatus of several years, was supposed to be the show's final act. A good dose of ego-boosting, compliments and im-

passioned pleas from Higgins convinced the troupe to come back for at least another summer.

For the pub, the word-of-mouth popularity of "The Compleat Wrks of Wllm Shkspr (abridged)" is a win-win situation: Guests come to enjoy the free show, and the establishment couldn't ask for a more effective marketing tool.

For the actors, their return next summer depends on their age and the likelihood of suffering a myocardial infarction mid-performance, Cunningham said. Nowadays, he starts every performance with his own, modified introduction: "This show was written by younger men. We have also discovered that this show was performed by younger men," he announces. "At our age, it is more of a weight-loss program."

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## Fund will aid kids of drowning victim

**A MEMORIAL FUND**

has been set up for the four daughters of Lona Donahue, the South St. Paul woman who drowned in the St. Croix River Saturday afternoon.

**DONATIONS** may be made to any TCF Bank to the Lona Donahue Memorial Fund, account number 3439236659.

Donahue, 41, died after she was swept off a sandbar by large waves at Pembles Beach just south of Hudson, Wis. Her daughter, Elizabeth, and Elizabeth's friend, both 13, also were caught in the choppy water and were rescued by bystanders. There are no lifeguards at the beach.

Authorities recovered Donahue's body about 11:30 a.m. Sunday.

Donahue, a single mother, had four daughters between ages 13 and 21, two are minors. Proceeds from the memorial fund will go toward her daughters' care.

Funeral plans are pending.

CHAO XIONG

## St. Paul taps state official to oversee city's finances

An official with the Minnesota Department of Health will now run the city of St. Paul's finances.

Margaret Kelly, assistant commissioner of health, was appointed by Mayor Chris Coleman to be director of financial services. She replaces Matt Smith, who left recently to take a similar position in Dakota County.

As assistant commissioner, Kelly manages a department of about 1,300 people and a yearly budget of \$450 million. She joined the Health Department in 2002 and has served as chief financial officer and fiscal policy director. She also has worked at the state department's human services and finance.

St. Paul's budget for 2008 is \$565 million, and Coleman will draft a proposed 2009 budget by mid-August. The salary range for the financial services director is \$93,000 to \$127,000, according to city records.

Kelly has a master's degree in public administration from Hamline University and a bachelor's degree in history from Carleton College.

She will start her job with the city on Aug. 11.

CHRIS HAVENS



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