

Counties Association Chooses New Leadership

Bismarck, ND - The ND Association of Counties (NDACo) elected new leadership to its Board of Directors during the 2023 Annual Conference in Bismarck. County officials from every county in the state gathered to take in multiple workshops on topics important to counties, network with other officials, and focus on future potential legislation and other issues.

The new officers on the NDACo Board of Directors are:

- Jayme Tenneson, Nelson/Griggs County State's Attorney**, was elected President
- Trudy Ruland, Mountrail County Commissioner**, was elected 1st Vice President
- Chad Kaiser, Stutsman County Sheriff**, was elected 2nd Vice President
- Nick Moser, Cavalier County Commissioner**, was elected 3rd Vice President
- Steve Lee, McLean County Commissioner**, became Past President
- Jamee Folk, Mercer County Commissioner**, was elected to the Board to represent Region 7.
- Tony Grindberg, Cass County Commissioner**, was elected to the Board to represent Region 5.

Each member of the NDACo Board of Directors represents a Member Association or Commissioner Region. A full list of Board Members, including pictures, can be found at www.ndaco.org/about-ndaco/board-of-directors.



ND Association of Counties Board of Directors Executive Officers, L-R: Nick Moser, 3rd VP (Cavalier), Trudy Ruland, 1st VP (Mountrail), Jayme Tenneson, President (Nelson/Griggs), Chad Kaiser, 2nd VP (Stutsman), Steve Lee, Past President (McLean).

County Commissioners Choose New Leadership

The North Dakota County Commissioners Association (NDCCA) met Monday, October 9, to elect new leadership on its Board of Directors for 2023-2024.

The new officers of the NDCCA Board of Directors are:

- Joan Hollekim, Mountrail County:** President
- Neal Messer, Stark County:** Vice President
- Glenda Collier, Eddy County:** Treasurer
- Chad Peterson, Cass County:** Past President

Members also elected **Andy Zachmeier, Morton County** and **Tracey Dolezal, Dunn County**, to join the Board of Directors.

They re-elected **Cory Hanson, Williams County** and **Jim Kapitan, Cass County**, to serve on the Board. **Jason Arth, Sargent County**, was appointed to an open position on the Board in May 2023.


Ex-Officio Member:

Scott Ouradnik, Slope County Commissioner, was re-elected as North Dakota's representative on the Western Interstate Region Board of Directors.



Members of the ND County Commissioners Association Board of Directors
L - R: Glenda Collier (Eddy), Andy Zachmeier (Morton), Tracey Dolezal (Dunn), Jason Arth (Sargent), Cory Hanson (Williams), Chad Peterson (Cass), Neal Messer (Stark), Jim Kapitan (Cass), Joan Hollekim (Mountrail).

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SCHOLARSHIP FUND

- Total funds raised for Elite Exhibitor and NACo Sales
\$5,527
- Total funds raised for 70/30 Raffle on Monday night
\$2,398
- **TOTAL FUNDS** deposited into Scholarship Account
\$7,925

ND Association of Counties
PO Box 877
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www.ndaco.org

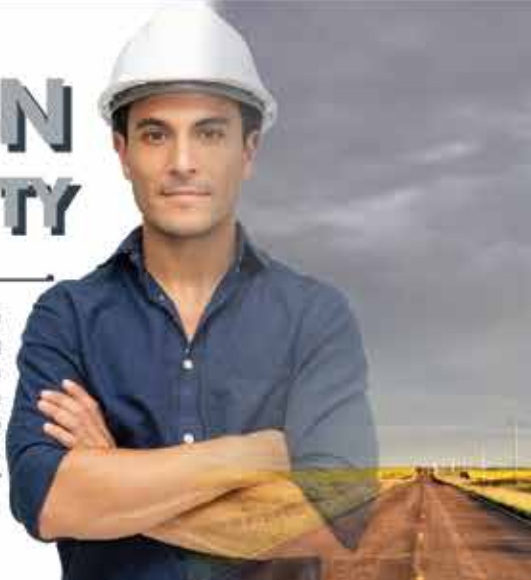


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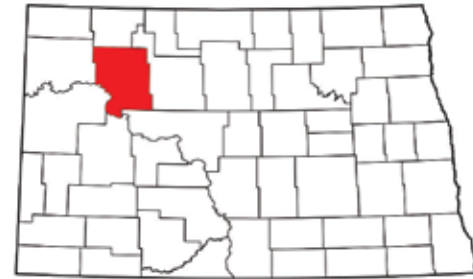
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Board Member PROFILE



LORI HANSON

Mountrail County

Family: Married to my husband Chris for 32 years – one son, Jacob and his wife Breanna.

Other things you are involved in: Planning and zoning, church and golf.

Favorite movie or movie genre: Romantic comedies.

Music: what are you listening to right now? Classis Rock

Book: what are you reading right now? Just finished *Tribute* by Nora Roberts.

Something people probably don't know about you: I was raised on a farm and have never driven a tractor.

Philosophy of life and/or work: Maintain a good work-life balance. Try to leave work at the office, enjoy family time and take time for yourself.

Anything else you'd like to add? I have worked in county government for 39 years – all with Mountrail County. The local boards and taxpayers are great to work with and I have met a lot of interesting people.



NDACo Executive Committee

Jayme Tenneson, President Nelson/Griggs
Trudy Ruland, 1st Vice President Mountrail
Chad Kaiser, 2nd Vice President..... Stutsman
Nick Moser, 3rd Vice President..... Cavalier
Steve Lee, Past President..... McLean

Directors

Beau Anderson..... Williams
Jamee Folk..... Mercer
Tony Grindberg..... Cass
Steve Forde..... Nelson
Becky Hagel..... Foster
Lori Hanson..... Mountrail
Kim Jacobson..... Agassiz Valley
Erica Johnsrud..... McKenzie
Wanda Knutson..... Mercer
Dana Larsen..... Ward
Shirley Murray..... Sheridan
Scott Ouradnik..... Slope
Kelly Palm..... Griggs

Ex Officio Members

Perry Turner (McIntosh)..... NACo Board
Robert Wilson (Cass)..... NACo Board
Joan Hollekim (Mountrail)..... NDCCA President

NRG Technology Services Staff:

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NDCCA Executive Committee

Joan Hollekim, President..... Mountrail
Neal Messer, Vice President..... Stark
Glenda Collier, Treasurer..... Eddy
Chad Peterson, Past President..... Cass

Directors

Jason Arth..... Sargent
Tracey Dolezal..... Dunn
Cory Hanson..... Williams
Jim Kapitan..... Cass
Andy Zachmeier..... Morton

Ex Officio Members

Scott Ouradnik (Slope)..... Western Interstate Region Board
Perry Turner (McIntosh)..... NACo Board

NDACo Staff

Aaron Birst..... Executive Director
Alisha Adolf..... Professional Development Manager (ILG)
Kaitlyn Bakken..... GIS Coordinator
Cassie Braun..... Accounting Assistant
Genny Dienstmann..... Operations
Patrick Engelhart..... CEG Safety Specialist
Jeff Eslinger..... Communications Director
Ryan Gellner..... Vision Zero Outreach Program Manager
Cathy Heidt..... Administrative Secretary
Teanna Hintz..... Accounting Assistant
Jason Horning..... Next Gen 9-1-1 Program Manager
Lisa Jahner..... Research & Programs
Mary Korsmo..... SACCHO Executive Director
Kathy Kottenbrock..... 9-1-1 Project Manager
Jennifer Morman..... CEG Claims Manager
Donnell Preskey..... Government/Public Relations Specialist
Linda Svihovec..... Research Analyst
Michelle Tabbert..... Administrative Officer
Angie Wentland..... Controller
Mike Wolf..... CEG Underwriting & Loss Control Manager

FROM the COUNTIES

NDACo Priorities in the Coming Year

What a great conference! It was awesome seeing familiar faces and seeing all the first-time attendees! I want to commend the staff, exhibitors, and presenters for another great conference. I hope that you were able to take new information and relationships away from the conference!

I want to thank everyone for the opportunity to serve as the President of NDACo. I am following a great line of leadership and will do my best to continue the success of this organization.

I think that it's time that I share a few things about me. I have spent the last ten years serving as the State's Attorney in Nelson and Griggs Counties and as the Griggs County Emergency Manager. I am also active in our family farm located in Griggs County. I wake up a lot of mornings not knowing what direction I will be going for the day, but it makes every day exciting. I'm grateful that I can serve my neighbors and friends in the community. I am passionate about my job, county government, and trying to do the right thing for those who I represent.

Now down to business, I think we have many topics that we can focus on in the interim to give our friends at the legislature some direction when they reconvene in 2025. I hope that we can unite with our state and local partners to effectively look out for the best interests of our constituents.

I would like to see us work collectively to establish better treatment for mental health and chemical



Jayme Tenneson | NDACo President
Nelson/Griggs County State's Attorney

dependency issues. Another area of concern is employee recruitment and retention in local government and business. Additionally, I would like to work with our partners to address property tax relief. These are just a few of the many important topics facing our counties that we must work to alleviate in the interim.

Again, thank you for choosing me for this position. I will do my best to continue guiding NDACo on the successful path you have all chosen for the organization. I look forward to meeting and working with you all!



FROM the COMMISSIONERS

Thank You

What an honor and privilege to represent you on the NDCCA Board! As I begin my new role, I first want to take the opportunity to thank Chad Peterson for his outstanding and dedicated leadership in county government. Chad has been a mentor and I will have big shoes to fill. Thank you fellow county commissioners for having the confidence in my abilities and giving me the opportunity to serve as your President. Last but not least, a big shout out to the NDACo Team not only for another successful convention, but for all they do for local government. The staff is truly amazing; they are an inspired group of individuals dedicated and committed to us.

In November, I look forward to the County Tour to the counties of Cass, Grand Forks, Steele and Traill. Every county is unique and as I tour counties throughout the state, I will take this opportunity to become better informed by listening to the concerns brought forth. Last year, I was fortunate to have participated in the County Tour to Divide, Williams, Burke and Mountrail. I was overwhelmed with the challenges and problems counties are facing. The knowledge I gained was invaluable. We will need to work as a team to find solutions to the challenges and problems counties are facing. Please get involved and communicate your concerns, and if you have any issues you want to discuss, feel free to contact me.

Since I am new to the position, I also want to tell you a little something



Joan Hollekim | NDACo President
Mountrail County Commissioner

about myself to make that personal connection. I am a longtime resident of Stanley City and grew up in the "White House". I have nearly 40 years of experience as an employee and elected official of Mountrail County, 30 of those years as Deputy Auditor/County Auditor, 5 years in the Road & Bridge Department and currently I am serving my second term as County Commissioner. I also have 5 years' experience in city government. I guess you can say, I love serving the people. My husband and I have been happily married since 1985. We have two daughters, Ashley (Dusty) Cossette and Brooke (Seth) Wisthoff and six grandchildren. I am blessed.

Again, thank you for this opportunity. Just a heads up, I have phone contacts for all of you, I will be reaching out to many for your expertise.

FROM the ASSOCIATION

Much to be Thankful For

Well, I must have blinked again. I don't remember having a spring this year and it looks like winter came before we could get a fall. Which of course means our snowplow operators are already spending their days and nights working to make sure we can all still survive up in the north country.

If you are like me, leaving another summer behind takes some adjustment; but I take solace in the fact the end of the year always brings another holiday season to spend with family and friends.

These county news columns will be dedicated to what you all do at the county level of government, but I would be remiss not to mention the horrendous events currently happening on the world stage. It is heartbreaking. I mention this

not to be negative but to be positive—positive we live in this great state in this great country where we do not have to worry about constant war on our doorsteps.


Although I don't profess to know the answers to all the world's problems, it seems to me if all the world was able to have our strong and dedicated local government structure that met the citizens' basic needs, it would go a long way to making at least that portion of their lives better.

Which brings me back to the holidays. I always find it appropriate to start this season with Veterans Day because of course without our veterans we would not have the opportunities we all enjoy today. So, this Veterans Day I will be sitting



Aaron Birst | NDACo Executive Director

in my truck drinking too much coffee, missing too many deer and listening to stories for the tenth time; but I will also be sitting with my Vietnam vet father and that is something to be thankful for.


**NORTH DAKOTA
County NEWS**

Aaron Birst, Managing Editor
Jeff Eslinger, Editor

Clearwater Communications,
Layout/Design

ND Association of Counties
PO Box 877
Bismarck, ND 58502-0877
Ph 701-328-7300
Website: www.ndaco.org

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Making Ethical Decisions Is An Art

Chuck Gallagher | Certified Speaking Professional

In an era where uncertainty often obscures the path forward, making informed and ethically sound decisions has become the gold standard of leadership. The revered Harvard Business Review highlights this challenging terrain in its thought-provoking podcast episode "The Secret to Making Difficult Decisions." Drawing upon the wisdom of renowned Harvard Business School professor Joseph Badaracco, this episode unveils a roadmap for navigating the gray areas of decision-making, where the boundary between right and wrong is often blurred.



Chuck Gallagher

Embracing the Ambiguity of Gray Area Problems

Badaracco's term "gray area problems" encapsulates dilemmas that don't have clear-cut answers. In these scenarios, even the most detailed data sets may fall short, and consensus among team members can be elusive. Given the ambiguity of such problems, Badaracco lays down a foundational approach in his book, "Managing in the Gray: Five Timeless Questions for Resolving Your Toughest Problems at Work."

Striking the Harmonious Chord Between Business Savvy and Human Compassion

The episode underscores that leadership isn't just about crunching numbers or relying solely on cold, hard facts. It's a dance between business logic and human empathy. This harmonious blend of acumen and intuition can illuminate the way when the path forward seems indistinct.

A Quintet of Guiding Questions

Drawing upon his extensive research and experience, Badaracco proposes five seminal questions that can steer leaders toward well-rounded decisions:

1. What are the net consequences of all my choices?
2. To whom do I owe my primary loyalty?
3. What solution is grounded in reality?
4. What does this decision say about our identity as an organization or team?
5. Can I stand behind this decision, come what may?

Although these questions serve as guiding posts, leaders must personalize their answers, infusing them with their unique experiences, values, and perspectives.

The Weight of Ethical Consequences

Beyond the practicalities of decision-making, the episode delves deep into ethics. Leaders' choices, especially in gray areas, ripple out, influencing countless lives. Therefore, prioritizing ethical integrity is paramount, ensuring that decisions are wise and just.

Standing Firm in the Aftermath

As Badaracco poignantly notes, the essence of leadership lies in taking responsibility for one's choices. Leaders must craft their decisions carefully and stand by them, reflecting a commitment to authenticity and accountability.

To Sum It Up ...

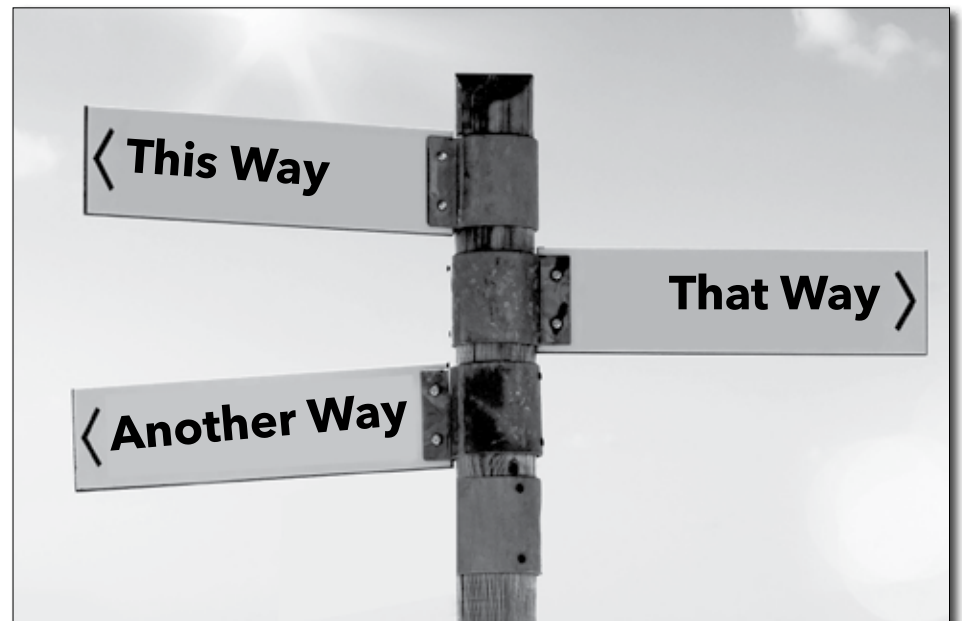
Navigating the labyrinth of decision-making, especially when ethical stakes are high, is undeniably challenging. Yet, insights from the "The Secret to Making

Difficult Decisions" podcast episode present a beacon for leaders worldwide. Armed with Badaracco's framework and a commitment to ethical rigor, leaders can confidently stride forward, even when the ground beneath seems uncertain.

Want to know more?

Would you like to explore these topics in greater depth or consider delving into ethical dilemmas tailored to your organization? Reach out to engage Chuck for enlightening speaking or consulting opportunities. Let's journey together towards a future where decisions are not just brilliant but also ethically sound.

For more information visit ChuckGallagher.com or contact Chuck at chuck@chuckgallagher.com.



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NDIT Microsoft 365 Changes

Amber Schriock | NRG Service Manager

The State put out the 2023-2025 Budget Guidelines Memorandum in April 2022, stating the increased costs estimates, with no timeline for the Microsoft Office 365 rates. The current rates expired in June 2023, while estimating that they may increase to \$22.40 for the Basic license.

NDIT recently sent out a notification to a select group of county officials of a price increase effective **July 1, 2024**, that shows a \$5 surcharge/per license/per month to reflect true cost.

That means that if your users have a Basic 365 license that shows up on your NDIT bill every month, the new rate will be **\$21.20**.

Please be aware that the increase in price of the Basic license includes the email license, Microsoft Exchange, as well as a myriad of security features implemented by the State. It also includes web only access to these applications: Exchange, Teams, SharePoint, OneDrive.

Current Non-State Pricing Reference Sheet		
E-Mail Type	Description	Monthly Charge
Office 365 Basic	Includes Exchange, Teams, SharePoint, OneDrive with Web Applications Only	\$16.20
Office 365 Professional	Includes all Basic Features plus Desktop Applications	\$27.30
Office 365 Premium	Includes all Professional Features plus E-Mail Encryption and Teams Voice	\$43.25

Artificial Intelligence Exploratory Committee

NACo's AI Exploratory Committee covers emerging policies, practices and potential applications and consequences of Artificial Intelligence (AI), through the lens of county government governance, operations, constituent services, innovation, public trust, privacy, and security, and workforce productivity.

AI systems have catapulted the use of advanced computer technologies within society at unprecedented scale. People across the world are recognizing the potential that AI will bring to the economy and public sector, and America's counties need to be prepared to address this innovation with the realization that AI technology is here to stay.

The AI Exploratory Committee will operate under a scope that seeks to determine:

- Assess the current state of AI technology
- Identify potential applications of AI and the related benefits and risks for county govt. operations

- Evaluate the risks and benefits of AI related to workforce productivity, displacement and skills
- Explore the county governance landscape with ethics, public trust, privacy and security impacts
- Develop a preliminary policy and practice toolkit with sample guidelines and standards for AI
- Identify opportunities for collaboration and partnership with different county stakeholders
- Advise on public policy issues that may need to be considered by NACo's board and policy committees
- Facilitate education and engagement opportunities for county officials, NACo networks and partners

The AI Exploratory Committee is dedicated to exploring these and many more benefits as AI is integrated into governmental services. The adherence to thoughtful risk management and diligent privacy practices will be of utmost importance as counties adapt to AI systems.



Software Updates Are Cybersecurity's Unsung Heroes

This week in cybersecurity awareness month focuses on software updates. It is the least glamorous of all, but very important.

Some updates are automatic and some are not. Most likely, your county technology department has put in place automatic software updates that keep staff computers and software applications protected. You may ask why this is important and why you shouldn't delay on accepting the update if given the choice, but computer viruses evolve and change every day, which means that software applications must receive regular updates in response.

As I noted earlier, it is important to not delay these updates. But sometimes you have the option, such as on devices like your mobile phone. The longer you delay the update, the greater your

chances are for having your identity and information compromised.

But not all update notifications are equal. You also need to be wary of any email that you receive which asks you to "click here" to download new updates for your software application or your computer. The question to ask is whether this is the normal process that the county IT department follows in applying updates. You need to be sure you know the source of the email before downloading any type of updated requested through that means. This is true as well when you are browsing the internet. If you get a message saying, "your computer software is out of date and you need to click here and install this update," DON'T DO IT! The chances are high that this type of email contains malware or a virus that will be installed on your computer.

NRG TECHNOLOGY STAFF



Lonny Bosch	President	Danielle Kraft.....	Accounting Assistant
Cody Anderson.....	Systems Engineer	Matthew Levoron.....	Field Technician Intern
Garrett Bruner.....	Service Coordinator	Jeff McDowell.....	Systems Engineer
Dawson Dosch.....	Field Technician	Erik McGurran.....	Security Analyst
Dwight Driscoll.....	Account Manager	Amber Schriock.....	Service Manager
Travis Fandrich.....	Field Technician	AJ Snyder.....	Field Technician
Jacob Fettig.....	Field Engineer	Kay Ternes.....	Service Coordinator
Kendall Fey.....	Field Engineer	David Weiand.....	Systems Engineer
Jacob Fricke.....	Service Coordinator		

NDSU Extension Internship Program Prepares Students for Fulfilling Careers

For college students who are curious about a career that serves their community, helps youth develop leadership and citizenship skills, or helps farmers and ranchers be more profitable, being an NDSU Extension agent might be the perfect fit.

Each summer, NDSU Extension offers college students a paid internship program where the student works with a host county or Extension tribal county and a mentor, to help them decide if a career in Extension is right for them.

For Jared Lovro, an NDSU student majoring in agricultural education from Granville, North Dakota, interning with NDSU Extension for two summers in a row has provided him with lifelong memories, hands-on learning experiences, and professional and personal connections.

Lovro, who interned in McHenry County in 2022 and at the North Central Research Extension Center in 2023, grew up as a member of 4-H and was familiar with NDSU Extension.

“I really wanted to understand the day-to-day life of an Extension agent, mostly to see if it had future career

potential,” says Lovro. “I also was interested in helping with ag research and learning more about cropping systems in the north central part of the state.”

“Extension interns play a pivotal role in the NDSU Extension mission,” says Jim Gray, NDSU Extension west district director and coordinator of the internship program. “Our interns’ responsibilities include assisting NDSU Extension team members with delivering impactful programs to diverse audiences. They also have hands-on engagement with agriculture, natural resources, family wellness and youth development programming throughout the summer. Plus, they have a chance to earn academic credits and gain invaluable experience while making a real difference in our state.”

Sabrina Dunlop of Rolla, North Dakota, interned in Richland County this past summer and was mentored by Lacy Christopher, the NDSU Extension agriculture and natural resources agent in her host county.

“I really enjoyed the variety of programs I assisted with this summer,” says Dunlop. “Because I was familiar




with Extension through 4-H, I wanted to understand more about the work Extension agents do in community development, wellness and leadership. I got to experience the community

connection that Richland County has with NDSU Extension. Two of my best memories from the summer were helping at a livestock showmanship clinic and helping with the Richland County Fair.”

“We believe the internship program is a valuable training program for students who may be considering a career with Extension,” says Gray. “Because we offer a variety of programs and resources for communities, we are hoping to provide students from different backgrounds and different majors with a chance to learn how their skills and education may be a fit for Extension.”

“The hands-on experience provided during an internship can help students better understand their field of study and develop practical skills that are highly valued by employers,” says Carrie Hammer, interim associate dean of the NDSU College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources. “Beyond using the knowledge they’ve gained in the classroom, they also get to hone their communication and networking skills, project management skills, and ultimately enhance their personal growth.”



North Dakota
Livestock Alliance
ndlivestock.org



The North Dakota Livestock Alliance is a non-profit organization led by farmers and ranchers focused on transparency with North Dakota’s Counties about:

- ***Livestock development benefits and challenges***
- ***Modern livestock management and environmental stewardship***
- ***State and local livestock zoning and permitting procedures***
- ***Why your County wants to be a Livestock Friendly Community***

Contact us or invite NDLA to your next County Commission meeting at ndlivestock.org or 701-712-1488 Follow us on Twitter @LivestockND

Governor Calls Lawmakers into Special Session A Number of Bills Have County Impact

Donnell Preskey, NDACo Government/Public Relations Specialist

North Dakota legislators were called back to the Capitol for a Special Session in October to address the 2023-2025 appropriations bill for the state Office of Management and Budget (OMB). SB 2015 also included several items outside of the OMB budget, both appropriations and policy related. The Special Session was in response to the North Dakota Supreme Court issuing a ruling finding the OMB budget bill unconstitutional, ruling it violated the state Constitution's single-subject rule. The OMB budget bill has historically been the last bill to pass during legislative sessions and lawmakers have utilized it as a "catch-all" bill. It has never been challenged until now. The North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System (NDPERS) board sued the state over a section of the bill that changed the makeup of the NDPERS board. The special session called on short notice was necessary to avoid a November 1 interruption to state government operations and services to citizens.

North Dakota Legislative Council developed 14 bills, separating the contents of SB 2015, the OMB bill, into seven appropriations and seven policy bills. Two committees, a joint appropriations and joint policy committee made up of both House and Senate members, heard the bills, made amendments, and provided recommendations to be voted on by the full House and Senate. It was an interesting process that mirrored how conference committees operate.

In addition to the bills that were born from the OMB bill, the House, through a rare floor action, approved the introduction of a bill to expand income tax relief. House members passed the bill; however, the Senate defeated the proposal.

The other issue that garnered the most discussion during the Special Session was the makeup of the NDPERS board. That legislation is described below along with a summary of other bills of county interest. While the bills obviously included much more content, NDACo has highlighted items that were changed from SB 2015 as it was passed in April and have county impact.

1547 – PERS Board Membership

- Increases PERS Board membership from 9 to 11 members.
- Board now includes: 4 legislators (2 House and 2 Senate appointed by Majority Leaders), 4 "citizens" appointed by the governor (non-elected), 3 elected by employees.



(increased from 2 to 4 legislators on board).

- Appointed positions are "at will" and can be replaced at any time.
- All current appointed members are removed from the board; replacements take over 14 days after bill goes into law.

1548 – PERS Transition Effective Date

- Effective date amended to allow for the NDPERS board to transition from Defined Benefit to Defined Contribution for new employees when NDPERS is "ready" to make the change versus waiting until January 1, 2025.
- Ensures "best in class" options for existing and legacy employees and includes annuity options.
- This would guarantee those in the Defined Benefit plan have the same level of investment options as those in the new Defined Contribution plan.

2393 – OMB Appropriation

- Increased the amount the Emergency Commission has authority to spend from \$400,000 to \$750,000 to be available for the state to respond to a variety of needs that may arise.

2394 – Snow Grant Extension

- Provides an extension and additional funding for snow removal grants.
- \$106,000 is appropriated to provide additional 2021-23 snow removal grants to local entities that did not receive a snow removal grant during the 21-23 biennium even though they submitted applications and required documentation to the ND Department of Emergency Services prior to 10/20/23.
- This will address some local entities who missed the earlier deadline but qualified for the grant.

1543 – Facility-Related Grants Appropriation

- Includes \$8,250,000 for behavioral health facility grant in western North Dakota (badlands human service center service region).
- Matching funds required and the grant-receiving entity must operate the facility for a period of at least ten years.
- New language added to allow for \$6.4 million to be used to expand community services

by transitioning to a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic if DHHS is unable to secure a grant recipient.

2396 – Distribution of Controlled Substance

- A felony for anyone who delivers a controlled substance or supplies another to deliver the controlled substance, if the individual consuming the substance is injured or dies from consuming.
- Bill is aimed at addressing fentanyl overdose deaths.

1549 – Income Tax Relief

- House approved introduction of bill.
- \$45.8 million to increase the bottom (zero) bracket.
- The expansion would have eliminated the state income tax for an additional 50,000 North Dakotans.
- Individuals with incomes of \$60,000 (single) & \$100,000 (married) would fall in zero bracket.
- Passed House/Failed Senate.

911 Fee Processing Update

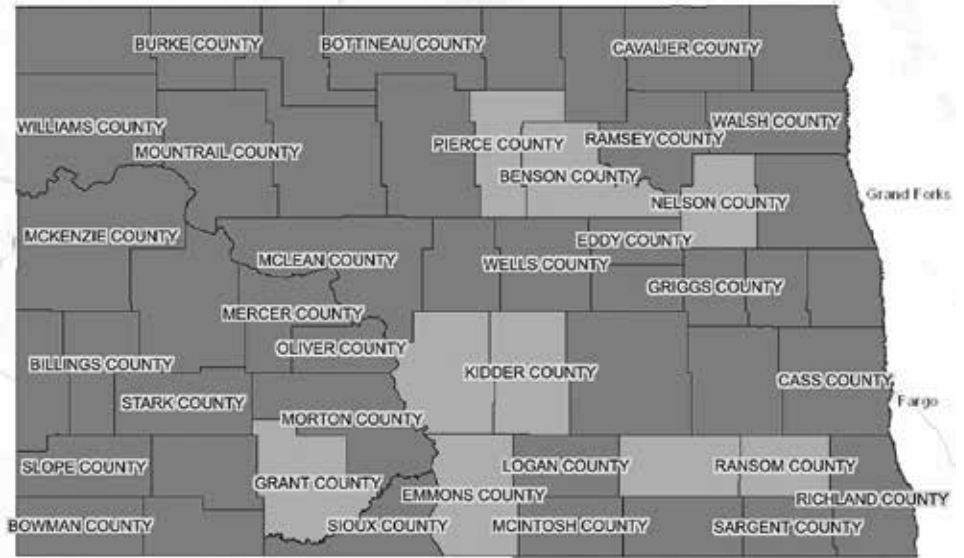
Jason Horning | Next Generation 9-1-1 Program Manager

After careful consideration and meetings with NDACo's board, the NDCCA, the County Auditors Association and the County Treasurers Association, NDACo decided to offer a service for the collection and distribution of 9-1-1 fees. The service's overall goal is to create efficiencies for county personnel and the telecom industry as it pertains to the calculation, remittance, and collection of 9-1-1 fees. More specifically, the service would provide transparency, support state and federal reporting requirements and allow NDACo to work on behalf of counties to make sure telecom remittances are correct.

The joint powers agreement (JPA) for "Collection and Distribution of 9-1-1 Fees" was distributed to counties for their consideration on September 1st of this year; and thus far, 44 of 53 county commissions have approved the JPA. NDACo is currently assessing support for the program and answering questions for counties who remain unsigned, remaining hopeful that it can achieve

100% participation. Jason Horning, NG9-1-1 Program Manager at NDACo states, "That level of participation is ideal because it optimizes the efficiencies for all parties concerned." The program is targeting a January 1, 2024, start date; but the date is entirely dependent on the number of counties who remain unsigned by the mid-November timeframe.

Essentially what the service offers is a centralized collection point for 9-1-1 fee remittances on wireline, wireless and VoIP phone service. NDACo would serve as that collection point, ensuring remittances are calculated correctly for each county, data is gathered from telecom companies to support county needs, and funds such as the Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) program and the Statewide Interoperable Radio Network (SIRN) program are appropriately financed. Funds remaining after deposits to the NG9-1-1 and SIRN programs would be transferred into each county's 9-1-1 account, along with supporting data and documentation to fulfil local needs and commitments.



Until NDACo is ready to initiate the program though, counties should continue to receive 9-1-1 fee revenue directly. More correspondence will be coming out in the coming weeks on the progress and whether the January 1, 2024, target date is achievable. Ultimately, formal requests to the telecom industry to re-direct 9-1-1 fee revenue from the county would be provided by NDACo

only after NDACo determines there are enough counties to move forward with the program and then only for those counties who have signed the JPA.

Lastly, governance for this service and JPA is being developed by the ND 9-1-1 Association and representatives from the County Auditors Association and County Treasurers Associations. Provided that the JPA and service takes flight, it will be this governing board that will serve in an oversight capacity and give guidance to NDACo for administration of the program.

Vision Zero Launching Buckle Up, Phone Down Challenge

Ryan Gellner | Vision Zero Outreach Program Manager

In a significant step towards promoting road safety, Vision Zero has launched the exciting Buckle Up Phone Down (BUPD) challenge. This innovative challenge invites counties to go head-to-head, and departments to compete with one another to make North Dakota's roads safer, one community at a time.

The BUPD challenge couldn't be simpler: when you step into any vehicle, secure your seat belt and actively encourage others to do the same. If you're the driver, put that cell phone down - no exceptions, every trip, every time!

Why Take the Challenge?

The need for the BUPD challenge is underscored by the alarming statistics from 2022. A staggering 69% of motor vehicle fatalities in North Dakota were attributed to individuals not wearing seat belts. Furthermore, distracted driving has rapidly become one of the most pressing safety concerns on the state's roads. To put it in perspective, sending a single text message at 55 mph is equivalent to driving the entire length of a football field blindfolded!

The BUPD challenge is more than just a campaign; it's a rallying cry to make North Dakota's roads safer, and here's how you can make a substantial impact:

- 1. Take the Pledge:** Commit to always wearing your seat belt and stashing your phone away when you drive. If you're a passenger, actively encourage the driver to follow suit.
- 2. Buckle Up Every Time:** It's not just drivers; every passenger in the vehicle should wear their seat belt on every trip.
- 3. Phone Down, Eyes Up:** Keep your phone out of reach - stash it in your glove box, the back seat, or better yet, hand it over to a passenger. Alternatively, just turn it off while driving to avoid temptations.
- 4. Spread the Word:** If you're part of a business or organization, introduce the BUPD challenge to your staff. Implement policies that require all drivers to wear seat belts and remain distraction free behind the wheel. Share this life-saving initiative through social media to inspire others to join the cause.

County vs. County and Department vs. Department Challenges

The BUPD challenge has already garnered significant interest and participation across the state. North Dakota is preparing to witness friendly

competitions between counties and departments, all in the name of road safety.

Counties in North Dakota are invited to engage in a friendly rivalry, competing to achieve the highest participation rate and the most significant reduction in unbelted fatalities. Various departments, spanning law enforcement, healthcare, education, and more, are encouraged to engage in good-natured competition.

The BUPD challenge offers a unique opportunity for communities to unite, protect their loved ones, and inspire positive change. As the challenge takes its first steps, North Dakota is poised to make its roads safer, one seat belt and one phone put away at a time.

Join the challenge, rally your county or department, and together, let's make North Dakota's roads safer for everyone. It's time to take the BUPD challenge, North Dakota!



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NDACo Annual Conference

October 8 - 10, 2023

Bismarck Event Center



What a treat to hear the National Anthem sung by Miss North Dakota Sydney Helgeson!



Excellence in County Government Award winners. L-R: Chad Peterson, Cass County Commissioner; Ann Johnsrud, retired McKenzie County Recorder; Erica Johnsrud, McKenzie County Auditor/Treasurer; Dale Heglund, retired NDLTAP Director. Not pictured: Nancy Braun, Stutsman County. (See related story, p. 14).



Greeting from Lt. Gov. Tammy Miller.



Emcee Ryan Gellner and Keynote Dave Raymond getting in on the dodgeball team photo with County Recorders.

NDACo ANNUAL CONFERENCE



NDACo Executive Director Aaron Birst presenting a custom made, county-themed cornhole set as a prize for one lucky first-time attendee.



Our wonderful Vision Zero Coordinators, L-R: Theresa Liebsch, Kaitlin Atkinson, Leah Kelm, Kyle Patterson.



Dave Raymond keynote inspires with "The Power of Fun."



National Association of Counties Immediate Past President Denise Winfrey addressed the NDACo Delegate Council meeting.



All in the family – Erica Johnsrud and Ann Johnsrud were both recipients of the Excellence in County Government Award. Erica – Official, Ann – Hall of Honor.(See related story, p. 14).

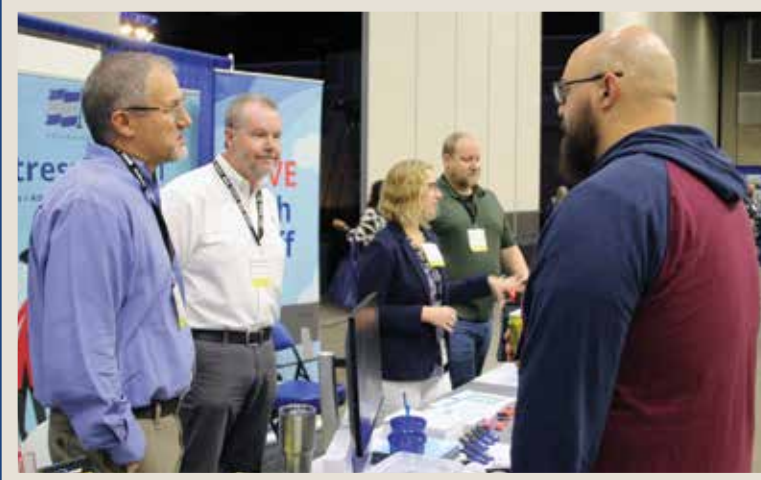


Proud parents Jenny and Tracy Nelson.



What a delight to have one of our scholarship winners, Morgan Nelson, attend in person to offer some words of appreciation.

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Closing Keynote Dr. Tara Feil reminding us to "Smile like it matters...because it does."

Excellence in County Government Awards Recognize Officials in Cass, Stutsman and McKenzie Counties along with Transportation Program Leader

Bismarck, ND - The North Dakota Association of Counties (NDACo) honored four county officials and one retired state official in a ceremony during the NDACo Annual Conference in Bismarck. The annual Excellence in County Government Awards honor those who have shown exceptional dedication, leadership and involvement for the good of all counties.

Cass County Commissioner Chad Peterson was honored in the **County Commissioner** category for his local and regional leadership. Serving Cass County since 2012, Chad Peterson has stepped up to get deeply and personally involved in making Cass County a great place to live and work. He advocates strongly for local officials to get involved in regional and national organizations and often recounts examples of learning about programs and funding sources that directly benefit his county. At the National Association of Counties (NACo), Chad sits on the Artificial Intelligence Exploratory Committee and is a Vice Chair on the Justice and Public Safety Steering Committee. (He is also serves on the Immigration Reform Task Force and the Rural Action Caucus.) He represents ND counties on the ND Insurance Reserve Fund Board of Directors and has just concluded his two-year term as President of the North Dakota County Commissioners Association, which was the organization that nominated him.

McKenzie County Auditor/Treasurer Erica Johnsrud was chosen for the award in the **County Official** category. Erica began her work with the county in January 2014 and was appointed Auditor/Treasurer in June 2017. She was elected to the position in both 2018 and 2022. Within McKenzie County, she serves on several other committees including the Handbook Committees and Safety and Security Committee. Erica often provides training to county employees around the state on topics such as preparing budgets, calculating taxes, delinquent tax foreclosures, and best practices for elections. She has been instrumental in modernizing many county practices to improve efficiency and providing online resources and live streaming of commission meetings to increase transparency for the public. Erica Johnsrud was nominated by McKenzie County and the ND County Treasurers Association.

Stutsman County Road Department Office Coordinator Nancy Braun was honored in the **County Employee** category. Nancy is known for her positive attitude and professionalism. She knows every detail of how the Road Department works, including financial and personnel records, inventory, parts ordering and staying on top of the day-to-day projects across four divisions within the department. She makes it a priority to build good relationships not only with county staff, but also city and township officials in the county. She is entrusted as the go-to person for answering questions from the public, even finding a way to get to work in the worst weather to be sure the department runs well in high pressure situations. Nancy Braun was nominated by the Stutsman County Commission.

Retired **McKenzie County Recorder Ann Johnsrud** was chosen for the **Hall of Honor** award, which recognizes former county officials who have left their mark on county government over the years. During her three decades at McKenzie County, Ann served in leadership roles in the ND County Recorders Association, ND Recorders Information Network, National Association of Clerks and Recorders and International Association of Government Officials. She was instrumental in legislative advocacy and in converting county records from paper to digital, introducing the use of computers to record keeping. McKenzie County was the first to complete the digital conversion, a feat much appreciated by landmen during the oil boom times. Ann Johnsrud was nominated by McKenzie County and the ND County Recorders Association.

North Dakota Local Technical Assistance Program Director (retired) Dale Heglund was chosen for the **Dedicated Partner Award**. This award recognizes individuals or organizations outside of county government who have contributed to the good of counties. NDACo selected Dale Heglund in honor of his long career helping counties implement best practices in road maintenance and construction. Dale is well known for his enthusiasm in sharing his knowledge about every aspect of transportation systems, with an emphasis on safety in operations and always seeking innovative products and processes. Many county officials over the years have benefited from his training. Dale Heglund has been the very definition of a dedicated partner.

To see the EICG video, go to our YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/FSM814zC7cU>.



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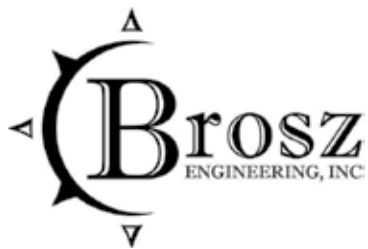
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- Dustpods
- Dustrol Inc.
- Election Systems & Software
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- Intrado
- Little Falls Machine Inc.
- Moore Engineering
- ND Public Information Officer Association
- ND State Procurement Office
- ND Waste & Recycling Assoc.
- ND Water Resources
- NDLTAP/UGPTI
- NDSU Extension District Directors
- North Dakota Weed Control Association
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- Rough Rider Industries
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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

INSTITUTE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT***Congratulations to the 2023 Hour Level Award Recipients!*****LEVEL I – 30 ILG TRAINING HOURS**

Debra Bahr..... Richland County Deputy Recorder
 Terri Bendixson..... Williams County Deputy Treasurer
 Jerry Bergquist..... Stutsman County Commissioner
 Jeff Beyer..... Bottineau County Commissioner
 Lyle Bopp..... Sargent County Commissioner
 Gwyn Bosch..... Mercer County Deputy Auditor
 Brandi Caya..... Burleigh County Deputy Auditor/Treasurer
 Michelle Denault..... Sargent County Human Resource Director/Risk Manager
 Angela Eagle..... Sioux County Auditor/Supt of Schools/Risk Manager
 Kurt Elliott..... Traill County Commissioner
 Kathie Erickson..... Ransom County Treasurer/Supt of Schools
 Sandra Felchle..... Sheridan County Commissioner
 Paul Fracassi..... Cass County Tax Director
 Alice Grinsteinner..... Mercer County Deputy Treasurer
 Kelly Haugan..... Ward County Emergency Manager
 Misty Hester..... Ward County Administrative Assistant
 Terry Hoffert..... Pierce County Commissioner
 Lana Jahner..... Stark County Deputy Auditor
 Laurie Johnson..... Mountrail County Jail Administrator
 Scott Johnson..... Sargent County Commissioner
 Anthony Larson..... Adams County Commissioner
 Dustin Laufer..... Adams County Commissioner
 Todd Lutz..... Hettinger County Commissioner
 Joe Mathern..... Ransom County Commissioner
 Maureen McGilvrey..... Stutsman County Treasurer/Recorder
 Karen Migler..... Pierce County Auditor/Treasurer/Hwy Supt/Supt of Schools
 Perry Miller..... Richland County Commissioner
 Kevin Pagel..... Adams County Commissioner
 Tracy Peters..... Cass County Human Resources Director
 Carmen Reed..... Mercer/Oliver County Auditor/Emergency Manager (Mercer)
 & Emergency Manager (Oliver)
 Karen Richard..... Stark County Auditor/Treasurer/Supt of Schools
 Ellen Roundy..... Foster County Auditor/Risk Manager
 Alan Scanson..... Foster County Commissioner
 Jaden Schmidt..... Oliver County Auditor
 Shannan Senger..... Mercer County Recorder
 Ty Skarda..... McKenzie County State's Attorney
 Adam Smith..... Golden Valley County Commissioner
 Mary Trahan..... Mountrail County Highway Dept Accountant
 Robert Wilson..... Cass County Administrator/Risk Manager

LEVEL II – 100 ILG TRAINING HOURS

Heidi Anderson..... McLean County Recorder
 Jackie Babbitt..... Richland County Recorder/Supt of Schools
 Shannon Davis..... Stutsman County Human Resources Director/Risk Manager
 Krista Faller..... Adams County Auditor/Treasurer/Supt of Schools/Risk Manager
 Sandy Fossum..... Richland County Auditor/Administrator
 Becky Hagel..... Foster County Commissioner
 Jan Hamlin..... LaMoure County Auditor/Supt of Schools
 Kari Hatzenbuehler..... Morton County Treasurer
 Heather Hovey..... Traill County Chief Deputy Auditor/Risk Manager
 Rachel Keohane..... Golden Valley County Clerk of District Court/Emergency Manager
 Kayla Knudson..... Traill County Tax Director
 Dana Larsen..... Ward County Highway Engineer
 Debbie Magnuson..... Barnes County Treasurer
 Mickie McNulty-Eide..... Oliver County Recorder/Clerk of District Court
 Mindy Schumacher..... Bowman County Auditor/Risk Manager
 Nancy Seefeldt..... Morton County Recorder
 Mary Senger..... Burleigh County Emergency Manager
 Natalie Wandler..... Stark County Tax Director/GIS Coordinator
 Shelly Weppler..... Ward County Commissioner

LEVEL III – ILG TRAINING 150 HOURS

Kathy Anderson..... Eddy County Treasurer/Supt of Schools
 Kevin Fieldsend..... Ramsey County Highway Superintendent
 Stacie Hansen-Leier..... Barnes County Tax Director
 Joan Hollekim..... Mountrail County Commissioner
 Diana Krause..... Renville County Tax Director
 Marcia Kessel..... Billings County Auditor/Treasurer
 Julie Mindt..... Barnes County Deputy Auditor/Risk Manager
 Patti Ogurchak..... Williams County Treasurer/Recorder/Supt of Schools
 Danielle Petersen..... Renville County Recorder/Clerk of District Court
 Cindy Schwehr..... Barnes County Commissioner

LEVEL IV – 200 ILG TRAINING HOURS

Laura Huber..... Oliver County Treasurer/Supt of Schools
 Erica Johnsrud..... McKenzie County Auditor/Treasurer
 Dawn Rhone..... Morton County Auditor
 Tracy Stein..... Sheridan County Deputy Auditor/Risk Manager
 Noreen Wilkie..... Ward County Tax Director

LEVEL V – 300 ILG TRAINING HOURS

LeAnn Pollman..... Renville County Auditor/Treasurer/Supt of Schools

LEVEL VI – 400 ILG TRAINING HOURS

Lynelle Lyman Hoppe..... Foster County Recorder

North Dakota Attorney General's Opinions

These and all other Opinions issued by the ND Attorney General's Office can be seen at: attorneygeneral.nd.gov/attorney-generals-office/legal-opinions.

WILLISTON BASIN SCHOOL DISTRICT #7

Opinion #: 2023-O-05

Date issued: October 12 2023

Issued to: Williston Basin School District #7

Request: Whether the Williston Basin School District #7 properly: 1) noticed an executive session, 2) described the general subject matter and legal authority before entering the executive session, and 3) limited the discussion during the executive session to the legal authority stated.

Conclusion: The Williston Basin School District #7 school board properly noticed and announced the topics of discussion for an executive session. However, the school board did not keep its discussion limited to the topics and authority of the executive session held for attorney consultation and negotiation strategy regarding Dr. Thake.

THE CITY OF FARGO UNREASONABLY DELAYED THE RELEASE OF REQUESTED RECORDS

Opinion #: 2023-O-04

Date Issued: September 28, 2023

Issued To: City of Fargo

The following summary has been edited for brevity. Full text is at: <https://attorneygeneral.nd.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2023-O-04.pdf>

Facts Presented: On February 17, 2022, Mr. Coen made two open record requests to Fargo for records related to the Fargo Police Advisory and Oversight Board. His first letter requested records “that define terms used in the proposed

ordinance, including but not limited to the terms: ‘community,’ ‘community relations,’ ‘police relations,’ ‘community representatives,’ ‘community perspective,’ and ‘community impacts.’” The second letter requested, “letters, emails, texts and/or any other communication documents” between the Fargo city attorney, assistant city attorneys, city attorney staff, and any other parties who were included in the creation of Fargo Police Advisory and Oversight Board. The date range of the records requested was between April 1, 2021, and November 30, 2021.

Fargo’s Director of Communications and Government Affairs, Gregg Schildberger, sent a confirmation email acknowledging the request to Mr. Coen the following day, February 18, 2022. Next, Mr. Schildberger contacted the relevant Fargo departments and began processing Mr. Coen’s request. On March 11, 2022, after determining search parameters, Mr. Schildberger emailed Mr. Coen and advised Mr. Coen that a response was anticipated the following week.

Issue: Whether Fargo responded to Mr. Coen’s record request within a reasonable time.

Analysis: The requests made by Mr. Coen were broad in nature, pertained to an eight month timeframe, and included various city personnel who may be in different departments. Rather than ask Mr. Coen to narrow or clarify his request, Fargo admits that it “determined to undergo a comprehensive search for the records requested by Mr. Coen.” Ultimately, it took 26 days to provide 59 pages of responsive records to the first letter request and of those records, none needed redaction. There were no records responsive to the second letter request.

Conclusion: Fargo ran afoul of the open records laws by not providing requested records within a reasonable time and failing to give the requester an explanation for the nearly four-week delay.

Steps Needed to Remedy Violation: Mr. Coen has received all requested records. Therefore, there are no further corrective measures required.



8th Circuit Court of Appeals Upholds Legislative District Boundaries

Bismarck, ND - Attorney General Drew Wrigley has announced that a three-judge panel for the United States District Court for North Dakota upheld the legislatively drawn boundaries for state legislative districts 4 and 9.

In 2021, the Legislature redrew the state legislative districts – a process required after every federal census. As part of the 2021 redistricting plan, the Legislature created subdistricts encompassing the Native American reservations in districts 4 and 9 to comply with the requirements of the federal Voting Rights Act. The

plaintiffs challenged North Dakota’s subdistricts under the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution, alleging the subdistricts resulted from unlawful racial gerrymandering. The federal judges disagreed with the plaintiffs’ arguments and granted the State’s motion for summary judgment, stating the “undisputed record shows the Legislative Assembly did perform a contemplative and thorough pre-enactment analysis” and “the State had good reasons and strong evidence to believe the subdistricts were required by the [Voting Rights Act].”

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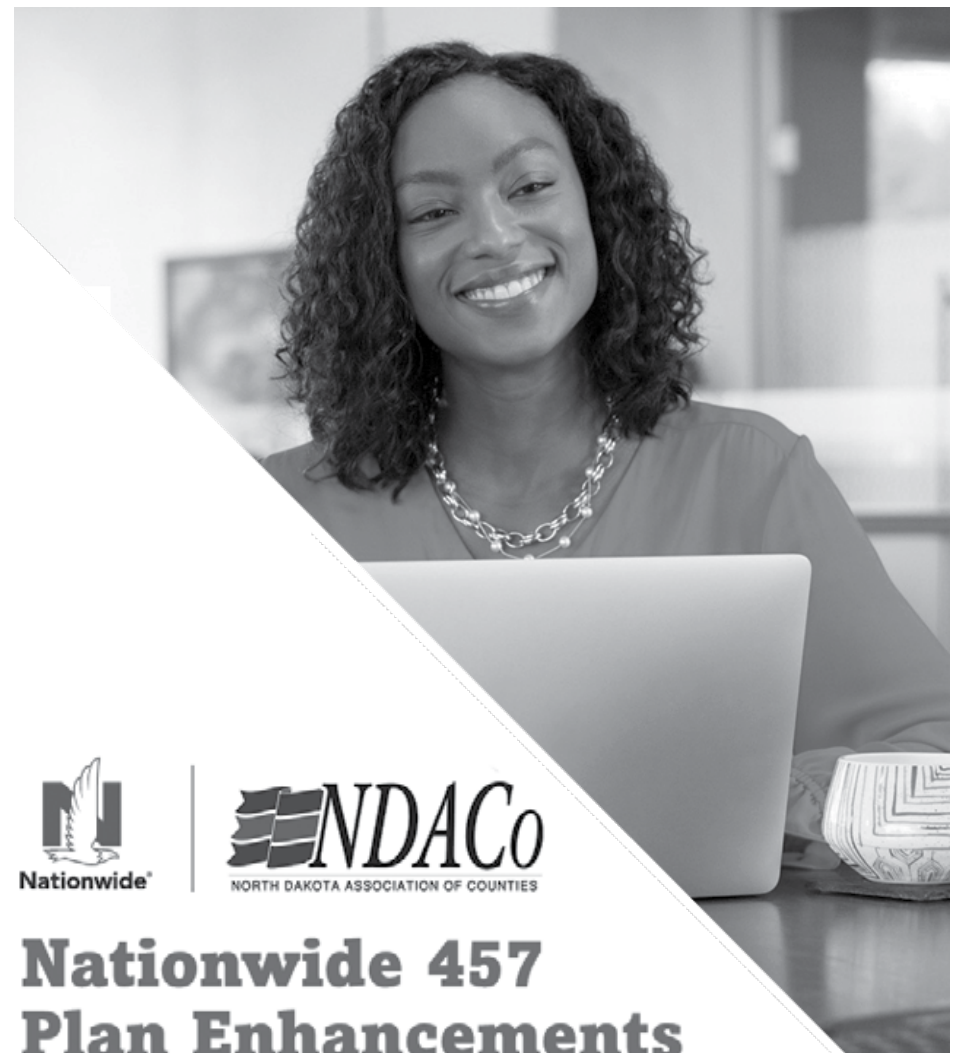
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Adams named State Chair of the North Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

Mary Korsmo | NDSACCHO Executive Director

Sherry Adams, Executive Officer for Southwestern District Health Unit, covering the counties of Adams, Billings, Bowman, Dunn, Golden Valley, Hettinger, Slope and Stark, was named State Chair of the North Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). The three-year appointment became effective October 1, 2023. ESGR is a Department of Defense office established to promote cooperation and understanding between Reserve Component Service members and their civilian employers through outreach, recognition, and educational opportunities. ESGR also aids in conflict resolution between Service members and their employers.

“I am excited to lead the North Dakota ESGR volunteers,” said Adams. “They are dedicated to the mission of ESGR and in their service to both the citizen-soldiers of the North Dakota National Guard and Reserve, as well as the companies, municipalities, and organizations which employ our military members.”

Adams is a Registered Sanitarian/Registered Environmental Health Specialist working at Southwestern District Health Unit in Dickinson since 2004 and serving as Administrator/CEO since 2009. She has worked in Emergency Preparedness and Response for twenty years, is certified in Homeland Security at Level V, as well as certified in Domestic Preparedness. She is certified by FEMA and the State of North Dakota as an Incident Command Instructor. She became a part of the State IMAT (Incident Management Assistance Team) as a Safety Officer in 2009, and as an Incident Commander in 2012. Sherry has been part of a North Dakota team sent to Africa on eleven occasions to teach Incident Command to their government.

“Sherry’s appointment to the ESGR committee is a win for the committee and North Dakota,” stated NDACo Executive Director Aaron Birst. “Sherry will not only bring her experience and dedication but will also bring it with the unbounded energy we all see every day with Sherry.”

Congratulations, Sherry Adams!



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Secretary Howe Selects North Dakota's First Ever Election Hero

LANGDON, ND – North Dakota Secretary of State Michael Howe has awarded Kari Phillips of Langdon, North Dakota, the 2023 North Dakota Election Hero Award. This inaugural award recognizes Phillips tireless commitment and dedication as a poll worker in Cavalier County, and celebrates the effort and volunteers needed to conduct elections. Secretary Howe was pleased to present this award to Phillips to commemorate National Election Hero Day on November 6.

“Elections cannot run smoothly without community support, and Kari is a prime example of how knowledgeable volunteers on the front lines of elections make sure the process is done professionally and properly,” says Secretary Howe. “I am thrilled to present this well-deserved honor to someone that exemplifies what being an election hero truly is.”

Phillips was nominated by Cavalier County Auditor Lisa Gellner, who highlighted her 20 years of service to county elections. Gellner stated that Phillips enthusiasm is contagious and her extensive election knowledge “creates an awesome election team” that help the



Kari Phillips and Michael Howe

voters of Cavalier County. Phillips began her service as a poll worker in 2004 and has served both as a clerk and inspector.

The North Dakota Election Hero Award was created in honor of National Election Hero Day which celebrates the importance of election teams, poll workers, state leaders, and the many people who work to provide safe, secure and accessible elections.

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2023 COUNTY CALENDAR

November

- 5 _____ Daylight Savings Ends
- 7 _____ Judiciary Committee Meeting, Roughrider Room, Capitol
- 9 _____ Juvenile Justice Committee Meeting, Roughrider Room, Capitol
- 11 _____ Veterans Day
- 15 _____ Retirement Committee Meeting, Roughrider Room, Capitol
- 17-18 _____ North Dakota Farm Bureau Annual Meeting, Fargo Holiday Inn
- 23 _____ Thanksgiving Day
- 28 _____ Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee Meeting, Roughrider Room, Capitol
- 29 _____ Tentative Health Services Committee Meeting

December

- 4-5 _____ ND Township Officers Association Annual Convention, Bismarck Ramada Inn
- 5-8 _____ Joint ND Water Convention & Irrigation Workshop, Bismarck Hotel & Conference Center
- 7 _____ NDIRF Board Meeting, NDIRF Office Building
- 11-12 _____ ND Sheriffs & Deputies Association Meeting, Mandan Baymont
- 12 _____ Tentative Government Finance Committee Meeting
- 13 _____ NDCCA Board Meeting, NDACo County Office Building
- 13 _____ Tentative Budget Section
- 13 _____ Tentative Legacy and Budget Stabilization Fund Advisory Board
- 14 _____ Information Technology Committee, Harvest Room, Capitol
- 14 _____ ILG/NDACo Board Meeting, NDACo County Office Building
- 15-16 _____ ND Farmers Union State Convention, Bismarck Event Center
- 21 _____ First Day of Winter
- 25 _____ Christmas



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John Lundby
Senior Vice President
701.222.1617

Mike Manstrom
Senior Vice President
701.222.1616

Craig Theis
Senior Vice President
612.376.4135

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