

North Dakota newspapers thankful for legislative votes

By Cecile Wehrman | NDNA Executive Director

On the whole, North Dakota legislators understand the importance of newspapers and their actions during the 2025 legislative session show it. Legislators protected the publication of county minutes in newspapers voting down a bill that would have given the option to post them only on county websites; voted to keep highway bid notices in newspapers rather than only posting them on trade or government agency websites; restored the historic practice of spreading publication of insurance abstracts across all newspapers in the state instead of just eight; passed a postal resolution asking for better delivery service for newspapers and consumers alike; and on Wednesday passed a bill that gives legal weight to www.ndpublicnotices.com, a website maintained by the North Dakota Newspaper Association.



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SB 2069 was the first bill I testified on back on Jan. 9, and the last of the five bills passed among those we were most concerned about. The bill provides two backstops for legal notices in the rare instance a newspaper fails to publish a notice, counting a notice at ndpublicnotices.com as well as a notice on a state agency website, as fulfilling legal notice -- while leaving requirements for publication of print notices in place. Because I wrote on this topic earlier in the session, it's important to let people know what is NOT happening. The state will NOT be developing a public notice website capable of cutting newspapers out of public notice placements at some future point. It was, however, a discussion among some legislators who saw this bill as a way to take a step toward eliminating the costs of publishing notices in newspapers. When you know there are people in government who feel notices in newspapers have no value, it can seem like your house is on fire. But the votes on some of the bills I mentioned above show that, by and large, legislators support upholding newspapers as the vehicle for delivering public notices. Just look at some of these tallies: HB 1380, the county minutes on the web bill failed in the House 80-13; HB 1398, restoring the historical abstract publication process, passed in the House 86-6; and SB 2069, though it had a closer vote in the Senate -- possibly due to some confusion since we opposed it originally -- passed in the House 72-

17; SB 2062, taking highway bids out of newspapers failed 89-4. That feels, to me, like an incredible showing of support for the importance of public notices in newspapers. Now, 73 privately owned businesses operating newspapers can breathe a sigh of relief, along with voters. We know citizens give overwhelming support to the concept of a trusted third party like newspapers having oversight of public notices. SB 2069 as passed will now solve the issue of a public hearing needing to be rescheduled because one out of a dozen or more papers required to publish it had a miss. I wish I could say newspapers are perfect, but every business occasionally has a hiccup due to illness, death, employee turnover -- heck, even a cyber attack -- which can cause highly consequential notices to be missed. You'll still never convince me that a website alone is where public notices should be placed because the mechanism for people to see them is much different than for people sitting down with a newspaper delivering news about their community along with notices about the government actions that may impact them. However, in the end, SB 2069 is a good compromise -- providing an alternate avenue for people to learn of a pending hearing when unforeseen disruptions impact newspapers, while leaving alone the printed newspapers' supremacy as the trusted place to access public notices in North Dakota.

NOTICES



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Binford City Council Minutes
Binford City Hall
March 10, 2025, 8 PM
The meeting was called to order at 8 pm on Monday March 10 by Mayor Ken Gilbertson. In attendance were council members Ciara Clark, Missy Dramstad, Wayne Quam and Justin Kuster. Guest Present David Ludwig, Linda Morris. A motion to approve the minutes of the prior meeting was made by Ciara seconded by Justin. Approved. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by Wayne seconded by Ciara. Approved. Ciara Clark 138.52 Ken Gilbertson.....92.35

LaRae Iverson.....651.80
Jayme Tenneson 180.87
Dave Ludwig908.30
Ciara Clark 277.05
Halvorson Skidsteer..... 200.00
MLGC.....80.96
City of Fargo.....14.00
Dakota Rural Water District 3694.25
Brager Sanitation.....2259.80
Gilbertson's.....600.00
Otter Tail Power Company1393.94
Water Smith Inc.....7269.00
MLGC.....1030.07
New Century Press.....92.49
Arrowwood.....1380.50
Justin made a motion and Missy seconded to pay bills presented. Motion carried.
New Business:
Tax Equalization Director discussed Griggs County Reassessment. She will help the City with assessments for the 2025 Tax Equalization Meeting. A motion was made by Wayne to approve boring at Locker Plant seconded by Ciara. Motion carried. Request for Proposal letters

will be sent to several Engineering Firms.
A motion was made by Ciara and seconded by Missy to approve changes of insurance by NIRF. Approved
The park board was discussed. Justin will look into clean-up day dates available.
Ads will be put in the Newspaper for Mowing Bids and Tax Equalization Meeting April 14th at 7 PM.
Old Business:
Cameras for Pump House are being purchased.
Looking into a call system.
Discussed tree trimming.
Delinquent Property will be purchased from Griggs County.
Ciara made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Justin seconded. Approved
Next council meeting will be Monday April 14, 8PM.
Respectfully submitted,
LaRae Iverson, City Auditor
GCC, April 25, 2025 346165



Darcy A. Wiebrand
LICSW



Gladys Larsen
APRN-FPA, FNP-C,
PMHNP-BC

Mental Health Services Happen Here

NDHC now provides mental health services, including psychiatric care, medication management and psychotherapy, so you can get professional therapy and support without all the travel. Appointments with an experienced therapist will take place via telehealth at our Northwood clinic. Call to schedule your appointment.



346210

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