

Secure connections is the key to WRT annual meeting

The sun was shining, and members were smiling as they celebrated WRT's 74th annual membership meeting on Friday, June 5, 2026, in Hazen. The annual event also marked the mailing of WRT Co-op Cashback checks. More than 15,700 capital credit checks, averaging \$838, were mailed to current and former WRT members during the week leading up to the meeting.

Nearly 400 people went through the registration and food line as members participated in the cooperative's annual membership meeting.

This year's meeting focused on the importance of secure connections, cooperative principles and strong margins. WRT

board President Matt Erhardt Jr. welcomed those in attendance and introduced the two directors appointed since last year's meeting: District 4 Director Jon Engelstad of New Salem and District 5 Director Joseph Luger of Fort Yates. As noted in his written report, both directors were appointed to fill the unexpired terms of their predecessors, with Engelstad's term up this year and Luger's term running through 2027.

Members in attendance, as well as those who participated online or by absentee ballot, were able to vote for District 4 and District 7 directors, both contested elections. Final records confirmed that 842 members participated in this

year's election.

Valerie Schaaf of Glen Ullin defeated current director Jon Engelstad 413-333 to represent WRT District 4, which includes parts of Morton and Stark counties in North Dakota, including the portions of the St. Anthony, Flasher, New Salem, Glen Ullin, and Hebron exchanges lying within those counties south of Interstate 94.

Two candidates from Hazen, incumbent Gene Wolf and local cooperative advocate Paul Doll, vied for the district 7 position, with Doll winning 513-282. WRT District 7 includes parts of Mercer County, including portions of the Hazen, Stanton, Pick City, and Center exchanges lying within Mercer County.

Independent auditing firm Baker Tilly US LLP reviewed WRT's financial statements, operations, and cash flows. In its recap to the membership, the firm said the WRT board of directors hired the auditing firm, which is independent of the cooperative, and that it provided a clean, unmodified audit with no internal control issues to report.

Highlights included WRT's operating margins of \$7.8 million, or 19% of revenue, for 2025, comparable to the previous year. WRT's nonoperating margins reached \$43.8 million, or 107%. That puts WRT in a unique position compared with most cooperatives across the nation, which average 8%. On the balance sheet, total assets of \$358 million surpassed last year's record by \$27 million, with virtually no debt.

WRT CEO and General Manager Troy Schilling explained WRT's commitment to the seven cooperative principles and how several were on display that day: voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, and member economic

participation.

The latter was reflected in members electing directors, who in turn help determine the surplus distribution, or cashback, to members. The fourth principle, autonomy and independence, again underscored the importance of members representing members through WRT's bylaws and policies. WRT employees and leadership also focus heavily on the fifth principle, education, training, and information, from educating members on streaming TV, cyber threats, and scams to ensuring employees are well-trained and equipped to serve the membership.

Schilling also discussed cooperation among cooperatives and the importance of those connections while reviewing the sixth cooperative principle. The final principle, concern for community, is evident in donations made to organizations across WRT's service area, which includes 26 exchanges in North Dakota and South Dakota. WRT prides itself on being a community partner, carrying out the seven cooperative principles and serving members

as its priority. Schilling added that the WRT board of directors approved the retirement of \$24 million to members, with \$13 million mailed the previous week.

Schilling attributed WRT's continued success to cooperative members, WRT leadership, and dedicated employees. Employees recognized at the meeting included Jody Murschel, 30 years; Aaron Wick, 25 years; Marty Stambach and Jesse Wetzel, both 15 years; Cole Grinsteiner, 10 years; Austin Roth, Terry Dschaak, Andrea Scharbach, Dylan Zahn, Nicholas Dwarf, Lindsay Sandquist, Jessica Borlaug, Michelle Cole, and Nichole Doll, all with five years of service. In addition, Schilling was recognized for 10 years as WRT CEO and general manager.

The 74th annual membership meeting concluded with the grand prize cash drawing, won by Sandy Wiebe of Beulah. The cooperative will celebrate its 75th anniversary on June 4, 2027.

WRT is a member-owned telecommunications cooperative offering internet broadband speeds up to 10 gigabits through its fiber network. The cooperative provides service to more than 13,000 members in central North Dakota and South Dakota. For more information, visit WRT's website at www.westriv.com or follow WRT on Facebook at www.facebook.com/myWRT.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

CITY OF FLASHER

FLASHER, NORTH DAKOTA

2026 FLASHER PEDESTRIAN TRAIL

MOORE PROJECT NO. 30286

General Notice

Owner is requesting Bids for the construction of the project listed above.

Bids for the construction of the Project will be received and accepted via electronic bid (vBid) through Quest CDN until July 7, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. local time. Bids will be viewed and read via video/phone conference at 10:30 a.m. Mailed or hand delivered bids will not be opened or considered. Link for the video/phone conference is provided at www.mooreengineeringinc.com by clicking the Bid Information tab, or at www.Quest CDN.com.

The Project includes the following Work: Excavation, Clearing & Grubbing, Aggregate Base Course, Topsoil, Erosion Control, Benches, and Interpretive Signs.

Obtaining the Bidding Documents

Digital project bidding documents will be available at www.mooreengineeringinc.com by clicking the Bid Information tab, or at www.Quest CDN.com. You may download the complete set of digital documents for a nonrefundable fee of \$50.00 by locating eBidDoc™ Number 10233342 on the website. Contact Quest CDN Customer Support at 952-233-1632 or info@Quest CDN.com for assistance in membership registration, downloading digital project information, and vBid online bid submittal questions.

Bidding Documents may be downloaded from the designated website. Prospective Bidders are urged to register with the designated website as a plan holder, even if Bidding Documents are obtained from a plan room or source other than the designated website in either electronic or paper format. The designated website will be updated periodically with addenda, lists of registered plan holders, reports, and other information relevant to submitting a Bid for the Project. All official notifications, addenda, and other Bidding Documents will be offered only through the designated website. Neither Owner nor Engineer will be responsible for Bidding Documents, including addenda, if any, obtained from sources other than the designated website.

The Issuing Office for the Bidding Documents is:

Moore Engineering, Inc.

4503 Coleman Street, Suite 105, Bismarck, ND 58503

Each bid must be accompanied by a bidder's bond in a sum equal to 5% of the full amount of the bid executed by the bidder as principal and by a surety, conditioned that if the principal's bid is accepted and a contract is awarded to the principal, the principal, within ten (10) days after the notice of the award, shall execute a contract in accordance with the terms of the bid and the bid bond, and any conditions of the City of Flasher, as required by law. A countersignature of a bid bond is not required. If the City of Flasher elects to award a contract to the lowest responsible bidder, and the lowest responsible bidder does not execute a contract within ten (10) days, the bidder's bond will be forfeited to the City of Flasher, and the City of Flasher may award the project to the next lowest responsible bidder.

Each bidder must possess a valid North Dakota contractor's license for the full amount of their bid, as required by N.D.C.C. § 43-07-7. Each bidder MUST enclose a copy of their Contractor's License or Certificate of Renewal, issued by the North Dakota Secretary of State, and each license must be valid and dated at least 10 days prior to the date set for bid opening, as required under N.D.C.C. § 43-07-12.

No bid may be read or considered if the bid does not fully comply with the requirements of this section and that any deficient bid submitted must be resealed and returned to the bidder immediately.

City of Flasher reserves the right to reject any and all bids and rebid the project until a satisfactory bid is received.

Bidders are required to comply with Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirements.

This Advertisement is issued by:

Owner: City of Flasher

By: Alesia Senff

Title: City Auditor

Date: June 11, 2026

Published June 11, 18, 25 and July 2, 2026

Taylor Schmitt
PHOTOGRAPHY
701-516-7209
taylorsschmittphotography1@gmail.com
Sports • Seniors • Events • Families • Couples •
Real Estate • Concerts • and more!
f d i

Carson Chiropractic Clinic

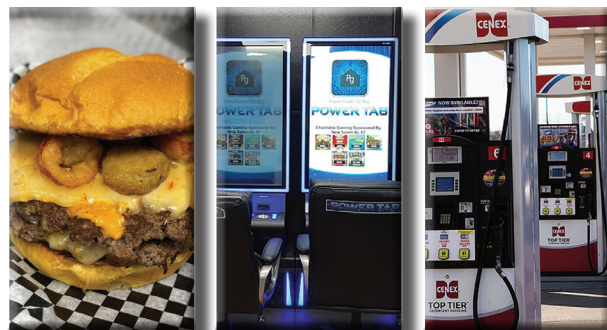
Thursdays 9 am - 1 pm CDT
Dr. Kelly Gartner | 701-622-3676

Flasher Chiropractic Clinic

Tuesdays 9 am - 1 pm CDT
Dr. Sheri Ten Broek | 701-597-3931

1-800-458-8388

*Your daily stop
has it all!*



*Fresh
off the
Grill*

*Stay
and
Play*

*Fuel
up
Fast*

Curtis RUD OIL
New Salem, ND
GAME GT TIME
SPORTS ★ GRILL
1310 N. 8th St.,
New Salem
701.843.7508
5am - 11pm daily
Follow us on Facebook!
f



Extend your reach and put your business information in front of thousands of readers in 7 counties!

Let us help you grow your business through print and digital advertising!

Call Jill at
701-584-2900

or email

jill@gspublishing.net