

views expressed before City Council & media

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The Director said that lack of staff at Ellendale makes it impossible to adequately supervise the facility, doing things like unlocking and locking, cleaning tables, sweeping and mopping, etc.

The Director also said there were a number of "problems" with the building in Ellendale. She was not specific. Mayor Flaherty questioned why he and the City Council had not been informed of them, and asked her to prepare a list of things that need repaired or replaced, to which she agreed.

While the Director agreed that it is a very good thing for seniors to eat together, she insisted that the meals delivered to homes are hot, meeting state standards as demonstrated with thermometers. Several seniors disagreed strongly with this assertion, saying that their meals have arrived cold.

Holli Kronberg, who until recently served as cook at the Senior Center, disagreed with some of the Director's assertions, and suggested that they had been advanced as excuses to close the Ellendale facility. Holli indicated that she would like to come back to work, but the situation set up by the Director had made things difficult.

After considerable discussion, City Council member Justin Meidinger wondered out loud whether the conflict was mainly a "time and money" issue, and if so, why couldn't a workable solution not be found? The Director appeared to affirm that resources are the problem, and she held out the possibility that the decision to close the center to sit-down meals could be reversed.

Board member Susan Merkel affirmed the Director's view, and suggested that too much unhelpful talk had been going on behind the back of the leadership. Other speakers, however, made statements suggest-



Sunny, Brenda Rekow's golden retriever, provided a model of calm and good behavior during the press event, in which a reporter from KVLV participated. In this scene, a few of the participants are lingering after the interviews were completed. A WDAY reporter was in town to interview people regarding their views on the Applied Digital data center, not the Community Center. He interviewed at this location, but his report did not deal with the Senior Center issue. (photo from KVLV video)

ing that they see faulty leadership as the root of the problem.

After some 30 minutes of discussion, Mayor Flaherty suggested scheduling another meeting in two weeks, to look at the problem from a more informed perspective.

Some of the same issues were discussed in front of a TV camera the following afternoon, albeit without representation from the Director or the board. The two minute news item that resulted was titled "*Whistle-blower Hotline: Ellendale seniors express concerns after senior center shutdown.*" The segment can be viewed at bit.ly/ellsrcenter.

The *Leader* has been in contact with Director Person-Klein and has discussed the matter with one of the board members, as well as several of the seniors who are unhappy with the situation. Person-Klein has sent us a public statement, which we print below, without comment. Former Senior Center cook Holli Kronberg has also issued a statement, which has also been posted online as a Change.org petition, and which we also reprint without comment. It can be viewed online by searching the title in the bottom section at change.org.

Dickey County Senior Citizens Announces Operational Update for Ellendale Senior Center

Ellendale, ND, September 9, 2025 — Dickey County Senior Citizens, a nonprofit organization serving older adults across the county since 1979, remains committed to providing nutritious meals to seniors in the Ellendale community and beyond.

Due to the recent resignation of the head cook at the Ellendale Senior Center for medical reasons, and despite proactive recruitment efforts—including newspaper ads, social media outreach, and community engagement—no applicants were received prior to the cook's final day. To ensure uninterrupted meal service, the organization made the decision to temporarily suspend congregate and pick-up meals ONLY at the Ellendale location beginning August 21, 2025.

Participants were offered the option to transition to home-delivered meals, which remain fully compliant with the guidelines of the senior nutrition program. Meals are now prepared at the Oakes Senior Center and delivered to Ellendale by local volunteers, maintaining a consistent five-day-per-week service.

"This model of combining kitchen operations is becoming increasingly common in rural communities," said Jennifer Person-Klein, Director of Dickey

County Senior Citizens. "It addresses both staffing shortages and declining congregate participation, which in Ellendale has averaged just 3–5 individuals daily."

On September 3, 2025, a board meeting was held at the Ellendale Senior Center to discuss future plans. Notice of the meeting was posted at both Senior Centers prior. After thoughtful discussion, the board voted unanimously to continue preparing meals in Oakes and to prioritize hiring an assistant cook and driver to support the increased meal volume. In the interim, board members and the Director are rotating shifts to assist in the kitchen.

Dickey County Senior Citizens will continue to pay the lease for the Ellendale Senior Center through December 31, 2025, and the job posting for a cook in Ellendale remains active.

Job Opportunity: If you or someone you know is interested in cooking at the Ellendale Senior Center, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., please contact Director Jennifer Person-Klein at (701) 742-3509 or email dcsc213@yahoo.com. An application and interview process are required.

Ellendale's new community based coffee shop

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What inspired you to start the business?

"Previously when we had the last coffee shop in Ellendale we saw that people really loved having that. It was somewhere to play games, somewhere to catch up, somewhere to have meetings, and somewhere to get something fun to drink. And then when that closed, unfortunately that area wasn't being served here in Ellendale. So, we seized the opportunity. The dream started last April and took off from there."

Is there anything you'd like to tell Ellendale?

"Yeah! Please come to Fellows Coffee. We want to serve you, and we want this to be Ellendale's coffee shop. We don't want it to be *my* coffee shop, or even my employees coffee shop. We want it to be our town's coffee shop. I want people to feel like they have ownership of this place and can use it."

Stop in at Fellows Coffee on main street, open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 7am to 2pm, Wednesday from 7am to 5pm, and Saturday from 9am to 2pm!



The lounging area in Fellow's Coffee shop offers one of the best views of Main street in town, and provides an open, airy atmosphere. The 108-year old building has a long history as an important public space, whether housing a newspaper or one of a number of enterprises. Owner Holly Christensen wants it to be "Ellendale's coffee shop." "I want people to feel like they have ownership of this place," she told the *Leader*.

Newspapers have bright future in local communities

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"The public has a much more positive outlook than I would have expected, given the national attention there is on fake news and all the attacks on the press," Wehrman said.

One issue is newspapers may not be valuing themselves high enough, said former North Dakota journalist Teri Finneman, who is a professor at the University of Kansas focused on the history of U.S. journalism.

Finneman said many newspapers are stuck in a business model from the 1800s that kept costs low for news consumers because ad revenue supported most costs. That revenue source has dramatically changed without many newspapers catching up, she said.

"We need to adjust, and the public needs to do a better job of supporting journalism," Finneman said.

She gave the example of how going to the gas station, someone might buy a soda and a candy bar that costs two to three times what most people pay for their local newspaper.

One purchase is for something mass produced in seconds, and another is for a product which potentially takes hundreds of hours of labor to put together, but people often don't see the true value behind those purchases.

"So, we just really need to do a much better job explaining this to the public," Finneman said of the cost of producing news and the value to local communities. "People extremely support local news. They want local news, but the pricing no longer works."

Marianne Grogan, president of Coda Ventures who conducted the surveys, said it was heartening to see the dedication of newspapers and their staffs come through in the data.

"I'm very touched and amazed by the resilience of the newspapers as they face some big challenges," she said. "And what comes through is they are deeply committed to their communities."

The other side that's promising is how much community support there is for local news.

"What came through with the data is how much local newspapers mean to North Dakota residents, and it almost doesn't matter by age group," Grogan said. "They want them to be the watchdog for them. They want them to tell them about local events. They want them as productive members of their community."

Providing value to local communities

Currently, the steering committee for the initiative is coming up with a menu of solutions for local newspapers to review that could help them be sustainable, provide fulfilling careers for their editors and journalists, and give local communities more of what they want.

Some of that may require uncomfortable changes if local communities are willing to back their papers. For example, 20 of the 73 newspapers in the state are print only, meaning they don't have websites or digital editions.

"Economics is part of it, resistance to change is part of it," Wehrman said.

Public Notices

ABBREVIATED NOTICE OF INTENT TO AMEND ADMINISTRATIVE RULES relating to ND Oil and Gas Conservation and Geological Storage of Carbon Dioxide.

North Dakota Oil and Gas Division will hold public hearings to address proposed changes to the N.D. Admin. Code.

Oil and Gas Division
8:30 am CDT Mon., Oct. 20, 2025
1000 E Calgary Ave
Bismarck, ND
Dickinson Field Office
1:30 pm MDT Mon., Oct. 20, 2025
926 E Industrial Drive
Dickinson, ND
Bakken Airport Hotel
8:30 am CDT Tue., Oct. 21, 2025
5813 Jefferson Ln
Williston, ND
Minot Field Office
2:00 pm CDT Tue., Oct. 21, 2025
7 Third St SE, Suite 107
Minot, ND

Copies of the proposed rules will be available September 30, 2025 and may be obtained by writing the Oil and Gas Division at 600 E. Blvd, Dept. 474, Bismarck, ND 58505-0840, or by calling (701) 328-8020. View changes at www.dmr.nd.gov/oilgas. Comment in writing by 5pm October 31, 2025. Submit written comments to the Oil and Gas Division (see address above) or oilandgasinfo@nd.gov. If you plan to attend the public hearing and will need special facilities or assistance relating to a disability, please contact the Oil

and Gas Division at the above address or phone number by October 6, 2025.
(September 18, 2025)

IN THE DISTRICT COURT, SOUTH-EAST JUDICIAL DISTRICT STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA COUNTY OF DICKEY PROBATE DIVISION

Court File No. 11-2025-PR-00022
In the Matter of the Estate of Ryan J. Lagodinski, Deceased.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the undersigned has been appointed Personal Representative of the above estate. All persons having claims against the said deceased are required to present their claims within three (3) months after the date of the first publication or mailing of this notice or said claims will be forever barred. Claims must either be presented to Cassandra M. Setter, Personal Representative of the Estate, at 1550 67th Ave S, Fargo, North Dakota 58104, or filed with the Court. Dated this 28th day of August 2025
Cassandra M. Setter

1550 67th Ave S
Fargo, ND 58104
Timothy G. Richard, ND #05454, of SERKLAND LAW FIRM.
10 Roberts Street N
Fargo, North Dakota 58102
Phone: 701-232-8957
trichard@serklandlaw.com

Attorneys for:
Personal Representative

(September 4, 11 & 18, 2025)
PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES

The North Dakota Health and Human Services is requesting public comments on the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) State Plan Amendment. The amendment proposes a 5% increase in the standard of need, which will result in a 5% increase in possible benefit rates for TANF recipients. The current draft plan can be viewed online at www.hhs.nd.gov/applyforhelp/tanf.

A public hearing on this proposed plan amendment will be held by a virtual Teams meeting on Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025, at 2:30 p.m. CT. Individuals can join the meeting using the following information:

- Join the meeting now
- Meeting ID: 210 365 643 502 5
- Passcode: D22Sf34w
- Dial in by phone: +1 701-328-0950, 895832497# United States, Bismarck
- Phone conference ID: 895 832 497#
- Join on a video conferencing device
- Tenant key: teams@join.nd.gov
- Video ID: 113 435 712 2

Comments can also be submitted in writing and must be received by the conclusion of the public hearing on Sept. 18, 2025. Written comments may be submitted by email to applyforhelp@nd.gov.

(September 18, 2025)

Landfill Hours
April 1 - Sept. 30

Monday & Wednesday: 3 pm – 8 pm
Tuesday & Thursday : 8 am – 12 pm (noon)
Saturday: 10 am – 4

The Dickey County Leader is a member in good standing of the



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HEFTY SEED IS HIRING A SALES AGRONOMIST

A rewarding position in agronomy combined with first-rate outdoor recreation and a friendly community is waiting for you in central North Dakota. Hefty Seed is hiring a sales agronomist in Hurdsville, ND. In an area that boasts some of the region's best hunting and fishing, the right candidate will be able to enjoy acreage for hunting and many beautiful lakes nearby. Some great housing options are also available. We are looking to invest in individuals who will be a great fit with our established, yet growing team of agronomists. This position includes top pay and benefits. If you are looking to work in an enjoyable environment while providing top notch service to our valued customers, we invite you to send your resume and cover letter to chad.weckerly@heftyseed.com or call Chad at 701-793-7382. We look forward to working with you.