

Shining Bright

Season's Hearings

The end of November in New Rockford saw some exciting new holiday events come to town.

A holiday market in the Brown Memorial gave residents a chance to get their holiday shopping done while supporting local businesses.

Then New Rockford held its first-ever parade of lights. Businesses and various groups decorated floats and vehicles in festive Christmas lights, giving residents an enjoyable event to attend over Thanksgiving weekend.

And after the parade, everyone gathered in Centennial Park for a tree lighting ceremony, bringing back a community tradition that had gone away in the recent past.

**Above:** One parade entry had a relaxed Santa Claus enjoying the ride down Central Avenue while enjoying a glass of suds.

**At Right:** Parade attendees gathered around one of the trees in Centennial Park to see it light up for the holidays. Photos by Amy Wobbema.



Public hearings for wind farm application scheduled before and after Christmas

**by Nathan Price**

Forget carols and glad tidings; zoning rules, conflict disclosures and permit applications are decking the halls in Eddy County this Christmas.

With Flickertail Wind having submitted permits to Eddy County and several townships, four public hearings have now been scheduled for the week of December 25.

Having received the permit applications in mid-November, a 45-day window to hold their hearings has left local governments with little choice but to schedule them for the holidays.

The Eddy County Zoning Commission has scheduled their public hearing for 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 23 in the courtroom of the Eddy County Courthouse.

According to their meeting agenda, the morning will begin with a briefing from the Eddy County State's Attorney on conflicts of interest disclosure, followed by a disclosure of any conflicts by the zoning commissioners themselves.

Once any conflicts are disclosed, a vote will be held by the full commission to determine whether conflicted members can still vote on the permit application.

If a majority of the board votes to allow conflicted members the opportunity to vote, then they'll be allowed to do so regardless of any conflict of interest with Flickertail Wind.

The public hearing itself will last for one hour, with sign-ups for

**Hearings**  
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Cleanup effort shows results

Junk reduced by 80% in New Rockford

**by Nathan Price**

Earlier this year, New Rockford City Commissioners embarked on an effort to clean up the city by cracking down on the nuisance vehicles, junk and blighted structures that have blemished New Rockford for years.

This past spring, commissioners Jim Belquist and Stu Richter expressed frustration at seeing the same names on the city's nuisance lists year after year.

"We've been down this exact same road numerous times and we get to this point, and then we don't follow through. How are we going to change that?" asked Richter about junk vehicles and properties in May.

Months later, it appears their efforts have largely been successful.

Since May, the city has seen a 56% reduction in the number of nuisance vehicles – going from 66 to just 29 as of Monday, Dec. 1, when the city held their most recent regular meeting.

Many nuisance vehicles have either been garaged, licensed or sold by their owners since being made aware that their vehicles were in violation of city ordinance.

Public Works Superin-

**Cleanup**  
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NHS inducts 13 members



The new inductees to the NR-S Chapter of the National Honor Society were inducted on Thursday, Dec. 4. Back row (from left to right): Megyn Bjerke, Katie Cleveland, Angelina Hall, Jax Demester, Beau Baumbach, Sawyer Huso, Koy Zieman; front row: Jaida Schumacher, Cambria Engels, Kaylynn Chamberlain, Beth Becker, Sophia Skogen, Trystin Overby. Photo by Nathan Price.

Lies files motion to dismiss lawsuit

State's Attorney argues petition lacks applicable allegations

**by Nathan Price**

Eddy County State's Attorney Ashley Lies has filed a motion to dismiss a lawsuit from resident Larry Danduran, who claims she's failed to enforce conflict of interest laws and is asking for an acting state's attorney to be appointed in her place.

Filed on November 25,

Lies' motion argues that Danduran's lawsuit is insufficient to cause the court to appoint an acting state's attorney, and should therefore be dismissed with prejudice.

Danduran's formal petition accuses Lies of neglecting her responsibilities as state's attorney by not enforcing conflict of interest

laws related to several commissioners and the Flickertail Wind Project.

The wind farm project has generated debate in Eddy County over the past year, particularly regarding whether elected officials with land leases should participate in related decisions.

Earlier this year, Lies is-

sued her formal opinion – informed by discussions with the N.D. Attorney General's Office – that no conflicts of interest exist between Flickertail Wind and certain county commissioners until the project enters its permitting phase.

Danduran, however, is adamant that her opinion is

incorrect.

Lies and her legal representation argue that Danduran's petition lacks the necessary allegations to warrant consideration of an acting state's attorney.

"Because petitioner has

**Lawsuit**  
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