

Latest Devils Lake School Board Meeting Recap

The Devils Lake Public School Board met on Monday, Feb. 23 in regular session in the Sports Center.

Present were Cory Meyer, Jason Hodous, Emily Foss, Business Manager Melissa Haahr and Superintendent Ned Clouten.

Board members, Andrew Sogge and Sheri Olson, were present via telephone remotely.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance and call to order, first on the agenda for the School Board Meeting was an evaluation of the student outcomes goals to date, specifically 2.1, 2.3 and Choice Ready 2.1 and 2.2 led by Superintendent Ned Clouten.

In all Clouten expressed a positive outlook on how there has been some improvements just short of the goals set for this time period. As the board discussed each level and where the students fall presently, there were a number of areas where improvement was evident and some that still raised concerns. According to Clouten, the outlook is favorable for this school year, so far.

Chronic absenteeism was the next topic of con-



Devils Lake Public Schools Superintendent Ned Clouten discusses student outcome goals at the Feb. 23 meeting of the School Board. (photo by Louise Oleson, DLJ)

cern at this meeting. The superintendent had sent out a questionnaire dealing with absenteeism prior to the school board meeting. Both Foss and Olson stated that parent awareness of this topic has improved. "Being in school is important!" The stats show that there has been an increase in attendance, therefore lowering some of the chronic absenteeism concerns, but not by much, maybe 1.1% improvement from midyear last year to this year.

"I am pleased with these results, overall," Clouten stated.

To date they are at

91.9% for the High School level, with the goal of 94% in view.

This report and its results, so far, were included in a motion that was seconded and approved.

The superintendent's evaluation was approved.

Finally Christa Brodina from LRCTC reported on the Career Ready Program (CRP) that gets students prepared for going out into the workforce. They are in their second year of evaluating this program and Brodina had some positive things to say about its effectiveness.

The next schoolboard meeting is scheduled for March 23 at 5 p.m.

Devils Lake City Commission Meeting March 2

by Louise Oleson, DLJ Editor Emeritus

The Devils Lake City commission met in regular session Monday, March 2 at 5:30 p.m. in City Hall.

Following the Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, and approval of minutes from the Feb. 2 and Feb. 17 meetings a certificate of Appreciation was awarded to Alex Schwab for his five years of service with the Devils Lake Police Department.

No action was required in a Change of Zoning public hearing set for 5:30 p.m.

Visitor Cindy Schmidt from the Lake Region District Health Unit discussed Opioid Settlement Fund usage within the community of Devils Lake and the surrounding Lake Region. She talked about what efforts are presently being done in the community with younger and younger students and about possibilities for more outreach as funds may be available. In support of her efforts, the commission voted unanimously in support of her work with the youth of the community as well as other surrounding communities.

During Commission Portfolio Reports we heard from the Fire Department and City Attorney regarding Nuisance Enforcement: a majority of the blighted

structures have been dealt with, over 80% of them, however there are yet some that remain, like the old church on Second Street NE, for example.

The director of the Devils Lake Regional Airport, Dominic Eritano, reported on the Economic Impact Survey provided to the city from KLJ that shows just how valuable the increased usage of the airport is to the entire Devils Lake Community. (See the graphic included with this story)

New business included the second reading of Ordinance 1036 - Floodplain Regulations bringing local regs in line with FEMA regulations. The Memorial Building was designated as the official polling location for the Primary Election. Bravera Bank and Western State Bank will be providing CDs at 4.5% for 24 months semiannually, approved unanimously. An amendment to the 25-06 Year End Budget was approved of, and a request to purchase the final available (buildable) property in the city's Roundhouse Subdivision was also approved.

The city is authorized to enter into a contract with local architects for services for the City Hall remodel ahead. Plus a release of Request for Qualifications for Construction of New Police Department was dis-



Alex Schwab

cussed, as was the timeline for that project.

The city crews were complimented on their efforts to clear the city streets given the 14+ inches of snow they were dealing with in double bouts of storms and drifting. It was decided to attempt to clarify what is determined to be "normal street maintenance" and "storm or emergency clean-up" - since some residents were unclear about the difference and when ticketing would take place and when it would not. A number of residents had called commissioners asking about the policies and ordinances involved.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Devils Lake City Commission will take place at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, March 16, 2026, in the City Offices.



Photo provided by North Dakota Council on the Arts

ND Poetry Out Loud 2026 finalists from left to right: Madison Vick, Bismarck H.S. (Fourth Place); Adalyn Picken, Wahpeton H.S. (Second Place); Aspen Geist, Wyndmere Public School (First Place); DeLainis Kroh, Mandan H.S. (Third Place); Sawyer Wilhelm, Starkweather School (Fifth Place) (Photo provided by North Dakota Council on the Arts)

ND Council on the Arts announces results of 2026 Poetry Out Loud Championship

By Devils Lake Journal staff

BISMARCK, N.D. (Feb. 25, 2026) – The North Dakota Council on the Arts (NDCA) issued a press release announcing that Aspen Geist of Wyndmere Public School is the 2026 State Champion and first place winner of the North Dakota State Poetry Out Loud (POL) contest. Adalyn Picken of Wahpeton High School received second place honors with third place awarded to DeLainis Kroh of Mandan High School.

Master of Ceremonies Alicia Hegland-Thorpe, Poetry Out Loud Coordinator Matthew Anderson, POL Assistant Coordinator Brenna Lahren, and NDCA Executive Director Jessica Christy presented the awards to the participants. All contestants received a swag bag full of small promotional gifts and included a certificate of participation. First place winner Aspen Geist received a trophy, medallion, \$200, and an all-expenses-paid trip (with adult chaperone) to Washington, D.C., April 27-29, to compete at the National Finals. Wyndmere Public

School received a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books and the honor of displaying the POL Traveling Trophy. Second place winner Adalyn Picken received a trophy, a medallion, and \$100, with Wahpeton High School receiving \$200.

Poetry Out Loud is a national program supported by the National Endowment for the Arts that inspires students to engage with poetry through performance and interpretation. This year's program carries special significance: in recognition of America's 250th anniversary, the 2025-2026 POL season highlights poems that celebrate the rich tapestry of American history and culture.

The program starts at the local level with a school or participating organization. Winners then may advance to a regional and/or state competition, and ultimately to the national finals. Since the program began in 2005, more than 4.5 million students and 81,000 teachers from 20,000 schools across the U.S. have participated in Poetry Out Loud. At the national finals, a total of \$50,000 is awarded

annually including a \$20,000 award for the National Champion, \$10,000 for 2nd place, \$5,000 for 3rd place, and \$1,000 for 4th-12th places.

The 2026 North Dakota state competition judges included: Sacred Pipe Resource Center Executive Director Dr. Cheryl Ann Kary (Haunkuotawin); award-winning journalist, poet, and co-founder of Young Poets Anna Paige; retired Prairie Public Director of Radio Bill Thomas; Associate Professor of English at Bismarck State College Michael Tomanek; and acting as accuracy judge, retired North Dakota State Fiscal Officer and NDCA Grants Administrator Robin Bosch.

Entertainment during the event included DJ music by David Diebel of D&N Cinematics and a special keynote presentation by culture bearer Prairie Rose Seminole, enrolled member of the MHA Nation.

For further information on national Poetry Out Loud, visit www.poetryoutloud.org or contact North Dakota's POL Coordinator Matthew Anderson at 701-328-7593 or mabander-son@nd.gov.

Today in History: March 5, the Boston Massacre

(AP) - Today is Thursday, March 5, the 64th day of 2026. There are 301 days left in the year.

Today in history: On March 5, 1770, the Boston Massacre took place as British soldiers who had been taunted by a crowd of colonists opened fire, killing five people. The killing fueled colonists' outrage in the run-up to the American Revolution.

Also on this date:

In 1856, a major fire destroyed Covent Garden's royal theater and opera house in London, marking the second time fire destroyed a theater on the site since 1808. (The theater was rebuilt and has since undergone major reconstruction and modernization.)

In 1933, in German parliamentary elections six days after the Reichstag fire, the Nazi Party won 44% of the vote;

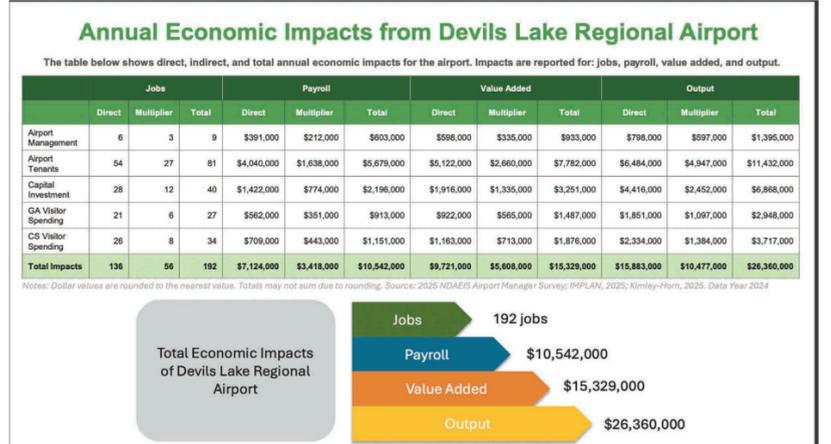
the Nazis joined with a conservative nationalist party to gain a slender parliamentary majority.

In 1946, Winston Churchill delivered a speech at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, in which he marked the onset of the Cold War, saying: "From Stettin in the Baltic, to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent."

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION LAKE REGION AMBULANCE SERVICE on Tuesday, March 17th 7:00 p.m. RAMSEY COUNTY DISTRICT COURTHOUSE in the Basement Meeting Room 524 4th Avenue NE, Devils Lake, ND 58301

Minnewaukan Township Annual Meeting & Zoning Meeting TUESDAY March 17th, 2026 5pm the Armory Room in the Memorial Building

Starkweather Fire Protection District ANNUAL MEETING Thursday, March 5th 6:30 pm at the Starkweather Fire Hall 217 Main St. Starkweather, ND



The economic impact of increased activity at the Devils Lake Regional Airport is approximately \$26 million annually, according to the research provided by KLJ and this graphic. (Graphic supplied by KLJ and the Devils Lake Regional Airport)