Township Forum meeting includes pertinent information for townships

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The Adams County Commission held an informal meeting open to the public to enlighten townships of new legislation which was passed in the ND Legislature and will effect townships directly. Also included in this meeting was an update from road supervisor Justin Blade and public input meeting for 911 re-addressing.

Although the township forum part of the meeting was not well attended, the information was extremely important to townships.

This year the ND Legislature passed five bills which directly affect townships.

Senate Bill 2180 is summarized in that all townships must develop a policy for public input at regular meetings. A template for this policy can be found through the North Dakota Township Officers Association website at www.ndtoa.com/image/cache/TOWNSHIP_Public_Comment_Policy

House Bill 1176's key mandates are in the Legacy Earnings Fund which establishes a legacy earnings fund to distribute a portion of the fund earnings to support property tax relief. It allocates 7 percent of the 5-year average balance every two years.

This bill triples the primary residence property tax credit from $500 to $1,600 per year, mandates a 3 percent cap on tax levy and requires townships to hold budget hearings.

Townships are exempt from the cap if voted on at their annual meeting as it is then considered a voter-approved tax levy, having been approved by township residents.

At annual township meetings, the officers determine a budget and tax levy for the next year. Those budgets need to be submitted to the county auditor by August 10th with a budget hearing held sometime between September 7th and October 7th of the current year. The county will mail out a notice of the budget hearing date and time and notify township residents that the budget may be viewed at the office of the county auditor or to contact a township officer.

The third bill was the Flexible Transportation Fund which had grants available 2023 through 2025 The fund is distributed to non-oil-producing counties and townships. These statewide monies are based upon the amount of taxes collected, number of townships levied at 18 mills and under a $100,000 budget according to the 2026 budget reported in 2025. They will be dispersed statewide according to the number of certified miles of roadway in each township. This ensures unorganized township roads also see maintenance work.

Townships do not have to apply for the direct. Payments will be made starting in April and each quarter thereafter.

Adams County received $1,000,000 grant to redo unorganized township roads.

Ten miles have been selected by road supervisor Justin Blade. They include three miles on 5th Ave. NW in Holt Township up to the Bucyrus Township line, 3 miles on 9th Ave. NW on the Argonne and Holt Townships shared road, and 4 miles on 11th Ave NE in Kansas City Township.

Through the Prairie Dog Fund taxes are collected on the oil extraction in North Dakota and disbursed to counties, cities and townships. Once the fund reaches $80 million, the state will disburse $40 million in grants and another $40 million in direct payments. The state is expecting to have $80 million by the end of this year or early 2027. However, with the price of oil going up, so do the taxes. Therefore it might meet the target of $80 million earlier than expected.

However, the state is not planning to open these funds up to applications. The intent is roll the grants made to the Flexible Transportation Fund that were not accepted into this Prairie Dog funding for review.

And the final bill is Century Code 58-03-20 which is opening up the ability of two township supervisors to meet at a road project and discuss what they believe needs to be done without it being considered an official meeting, requiring the need to notify the public. Commissioner West stated, "This bill is very helpful and was needed to allow roadwork to be handled in a timely manner."

During this time, Adams County Road Supervisor Justin Blade explained his department's plan on maintenance of the county roads which include unorganized townships. As stated earlier, there is an intent to gravel 10 miles of unorganized township roads along with other gravelling of county roads. Blade stated his first priority is Threemile Bridge road and a portion of the Bucyrus Road north of US Hwy 12. The rest would be in the northwest corner of the county, probably Whetstone and Lemmon Township.

Blade stated that is a lofty goal considering they are very short-handed so they will probably hire outside help.

The rest of the meeting was the 911 re-addressing portion. Commissioner West was very impressed with the attendance. The majority of the group was in favor of changing the rural addresses due to safety concerns. Ward, Grand Forks and Burleigh counties in northeastern North Dakota and Adams County, are the only 4 counties in the state not using the state addressing system. The northeastern counties are not planning on changing their signage due to being more populated and need more signs which in effect would cost more. In re-signing Adams County, there are approximately 800 rural signs to be changed.

Representatives from several emergency organizations expressed the issues involved when they call for mutual aid involving departments outside of the county. Bruce Hagen, Reeder Fire Dept., stated it is difficult when they answer calls into Bowman County which is on the state system. A private citizen talked about how confusing it is when the Regent Fire Dept. comes down and the avenues turned into streets at the county line. The Lemmon Fire Dept. spoke on their need to have special training for new firefighters to explain that avenues do not go north and south and the streets do not go east and west in Adams County.

This creates a great safety concern when travelling through smokey situations. But it is also a hazard for the ambulance crews.

News & ad deadline is Monday @ Noon

Employment Opportunity

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
ADAMS COUNTY
HETTINGER, ND

Part-Time Veterans Service Officer

JOB SUMMARY: Carry out the statutory responsibilities, operations, functions and activities of the County Veterans Service Officer as outlined by the North Dakota Century Code.
REQUIREMENTS: Successful applicant must be willing to become acquainted with the laws, both state and federal, enacted for the benefit of returning servicemen and servicewomen to assist such returning members of the armed forces in the presentation, proof and establishment of such claims, privileges and rights as they have.
SALARY: Dependent upon experience.
TO APPLY: Applications are available at the Adams County Auditor/Treasurer's Office in the Courthouse in Hettinger, ND or on the website: www.adamscountynd.com

Application deadline is 1:00 pm on March 9th, 2026.

Adams County provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.

Hettinger Public School Senior Spotlight

Samantha Salazar

Family Members:
Jessele & Paul Salazar, Victoria, Naomi & Charlie the dog

Nicknames:
Slammy, Sammie, SamSam

Favorite Class:
Math / Chemistry

Favorite Teacher:
Mr. Fordahl

Favorite App:
TikTok

Favorite TV Show:
The Summer I Turned Pretty or Grey's Anatomy

Favorite Musician:
Morgan Wallen, Megan Moroney

Favorite Food:
Acai Bowls

Least Favorite School Lunch:
Tater Tot Hotdish

How do you stay informed on current events:
TikTok, the news

Least favorite chore to do at home:
Putting away groceries

Favorite midnight snack:
Drizzlicous and grapes

Favorite holiday and why:
Christmas
Revovled around Jesus and brings everyone together

Plans after high school:
Attend the University of Alabama to major in Biology and go to pre-med

What do you do in your spare time:
Golf, go shopping, go to the lake, go on a long drive, hang out with friends

What are your pet peeves:
When teachers have to repeat instructions 10 times

Who is your role model and why:
Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone. She's changed the standard for track. I admire her hard work and drive.

If you could choose a super power, what would it be and why:
Teleporation
I hate driving and I'm always late

If you could meet one person from history, who would it be:
Jesus

What would you do if you won the lottery:
Go shopping, invest the rest & donate to St. Jude's Children's Hospital

What is your dream job:
Orthopedic surgeon

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