



Steele Ozone & Kidder County Press

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2026 bringing some changes to city government in the area

Twenty Twenty-six is just over a month and a half old and we are starting the political process in the area. Many positions are up in the June city councils elections... and some have openings with no one officially running.

Newly appointed city auditor April Rutledge has informed the Ozone there are 3 city council positions up for re-election... Josh Rode, Bob Anderson, and Lucas Reski. Rode is not seeking re-election. At the time of print, there are a few people interested in running.

The Steele Park Board also has one vacant spot open and 3 up for re-election...Lannis Larson, Paul Erdelt, and Megan Jensen. Jensen is not seeking re-election. This board is supposed to be at least 5 people, and they've been running with 4 for a little over

a year. There has been some interest in one of the empty seats, the other seat can be appointed. If interested in any position, please contact the city auditor, or a park board member.

In Pettibone, city auditor, Kayla Leno let the Ozone know 2 are up for city council...Stacy Schumacher and Twila Emery. They both are seeking re-election.

In Tuttle, city auditor Renae Witt advised they have two council member positions and the mayor position up for re-election. The council member positions are both 4-year terms and the mayor position is an unexpired 2-year term. Active council members holding these positions have decided to run again in the 2026 election. The city council members are Micky Ochsner & Glynn Buell and Mayor John

McCormack.

In Robinson...city auditor Donna Morrison reports Mayor William Bender and councilman James Jasper are up for re-election and both are running again.

In Dawson...auditor Pat Zimmerman tells us there are 2 city council seats that are up for re-election. At this time, they are unsure if they will be running again.

In Tappen...city auditor Noa Barnick advised the mayor position held by Brice Barnick and two city council spots are up for re-election. All three are running again.

In Medina...city auditor Rhonda Schlecht notified the Ozone there will be a vacancy for mayor as Myron Gunderson is not seeking re-election. Council



City of Steele Auditor April Rutledge

members up for re-election are Mitch Gunderson and Dacotah Dockter. They are both running again. For Medina's Park Board, there are 3 spots up for re-election

and all 3 holding the positions now are running again. They are Shawn Hieb, Rory Hoffman, and Scott Moser.

These positions are all paid, although not very much. The reason people serve is to share their opinions, help their communities, and serve the people in their area. These are not meant to be permanent lifetime positions...you can serve just one term...or maybe you feel strongly about something that should be happening in your community that isn't...then you should run.

Filing to run is fairly simple. You talk to your city auditor, they have forms for you to fill out, you will probably be given a sheet to get some signatures to get you on the ballot. Then you talk to your friends and neighbors letting them know you are interested in the position and why. On election day, the people will vote.

Kidder Commissioners set upcoming Six County meeting agenda

By Richard Paolinelli

The Kidder County Commissioners held their monthly meeting on Friday, February 13th at the Kidder County Courthouse. While road projects dominated most of the morning session, as the host county, the Commissioners set the time, place, and agenda for the March 6-County meeting.

The meeting, which will be open to the public, will be held at AmVets on March 10th at 10 a.m. While the agenda has not been finalized, some items have already

been set. Water issues, weed control, zoning, and pipelines will be among the items discussed by the leaders of the six counties.

A raffle permit, submitted by AmVets, was also approved by the Commissioners. As the raffle will be held out in the county, and not at AmVets itself, the Commissioners' approval was required.

Tax Director Jim Albrecht reported that the State of North Dakota corrected a calculation error regarding land values in the state. The State had failed to include potato crops in their formula resulting in a slight increase in land values from their previous calculations.

Land values are now \$359.76 per acre, up from the previous calculation of \$356.42. The error impacted several counties, including Kidder.

A bid from Hayward Electric in Bismarck was accepted to install new lighting (See "Comissioners" on Page 15)

School Board sets deadline, election dates for board seats

By Richard Paolinelli

The seats of two members of the Kidder County School Board will be up for election this summer. On Wednesday, during the Board's February meeting, the Board set the deadline for anyone interested in running for the seats as well as the actual election day.

The two seats are currently being held by Jeff Schmidt and Justin Olsen. Olsen was appointed to the board in the fall following the passing of then Board President Jason Schmidt. With Jason Schmidt's term expiring at the end of the school, Olsen will now have to run to remain in the seat.

The deadline to declare an intention to run for the Board is April 6th. Polls for the election will be held at the Steele School between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. on June 9th.

The Board was also presented with an early proposed 2026-27 School Calendar. While the date remain to be official, the early proposal calls for the first day of school to be August 19th and

the final day falling on May 14th. Graduation Day would be May 16th under the proposal presented to the Board during Wednesday's meeting.

The Building Committee presented a report on future projects for the school. For the past three years, one roof area at the school complex has been replaced. That streak could come to an end this summer.

The next area due for replacement, Area 14, is the older portion of the elementary school area and it appears to be in good shape.

If the building funds for this year are not needed for a roof replacement, it would open up funding for other needed projects. These include replacement bleachers for the Main Gym or final removal of the old pool. The committee plans on presenting a proposal on which projects to proceed with at March's meeting.

The two principals presented their report to the Board.

(See "School Board" on Page 15)

Kidder County Quilts of Valor



Char Rau's Kidder County Quilts of Valor team awarded a quilt last eve to Eric Harpole. It was National Quilts of Valor Sew Day on Feb. 7th such a fitting end to the day!

If you know of a veteran who would appreciate a handmade quilt, contact Char Rau to nominate an area vet.

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