

Communities rely on local champions to attract workers

Child care, education and affordability key concerns of recent arrivals

BY MICHAEL STANDAERT
North Dakota
News Cooperative

A relaunched effort to attract workers and families to settle in North Dakota aims to rely on local “community champions” to act as connectors between newcomers and local employment.

Gov. Doug Burgum’s proposed funding of \$25 million for the Find the Good Life campaign – revamped this past June – would focus on marketing North Dakota’s quality of life and initiatives such as bringing potential residents to communities across the state or helping businesses to entice them.

Job Service North Dakota estimates 40,000 openings in the state with at least 4,300 of those being unfilled health care positions.

For a city like Minot, finding enough workers to meet employer needs is a current challenge. An even bigger one looming down the line makes creating a broader workforce base essential.

An expected Department of Defense base redevelopment project over the coming decade is projected to bring \$3.2 billion in construction dollars to the state, and as many as 3,000 workers to upgrade missile silos and B-52 bomber units at Minot Air Force Base.

An influx of workers – teachers, retail, health care, construction – will be needed to cater to arriving military staff and contractors, as well as accompanying family members. Housing availability will also have to expand.

“We’re going to have to be really aggressive in bringing people in and showcasing what’s great about North Dakota and it takes dollars to do that,” Brekka Kramer, CEO of the Minot Area Chamber EDC and a community champion for Minot, said.

Kramer said it might take a lot of hand-holding and connecting people to the right jobs and opportunities. She said that momentum could be made if funding is funneled down to communities that “have

the best line of sight” on local needs.

“I think the first community that cracks the code on how we do it, how do we get people here, wins,” Kramer said.

For Travis High, who was the first newcomer attracted to the state under the revamped Find the Good Life 2.0, besides a warm welcome, affordability was the biggest draw.

When High drove from Washington in July, Kramer was able to set up several interviews upon arrival and within a week he had a job offer.

High is happy to be here, he said, and thinks the state doesn’t do enough to show all the positives about living in North Dakota.

“Everyone I talked to said ‘Why would you move to North Dakota?’” High said. “I guess the outside world doesn’t really know what North Dakota has to offer.”

A place people want to be

A baseline of essential amenities that people can rely on like restaurants, retail, and entertainment is important, but communities also need to be thinking about unique quality of life options that can’t be found anywhere else, Brian Ritter, president of the Bismarck Mandan Chamber Economic Development Corporation, said.

“It’s about creating the place where people want to be, about creating a place that people want to work from,” Ritter said.

Florijs Naas, a community champion from McVille, said the state needs to prioritize changing its image and dispel the notion that it is always in a deep freeze.

While she hasn’t had anyone referred to her yet through the Find the Good Life pipeline, Naas said there’s certainly a need for healthcare workers as well as retail and service workers in her area.

Having adequate childcare in communities where new workers and families relocate to is “absolutely a factor” Naas said, and added that housing availability is another challenge, particularly in smaller communities.

“You need to have all those pieces in place in order to attract people into your communities to stay,” Naas said.

Matty Orr, a mental health counselor who moved with her family to Bismarck in August, is a boomerang returnee. Born and raised in Devils Lake, she later left and has lived out of state for the past 20 years.

While her husband’s career brought her back to North Dakota, she was aided by representatives in the Find the Good Life campaign who helped identify prospective employers and more.

“The representative knew what places around Bismarck were hiring and I even asked her about – my daughter likes horseback riding – and she was able to give us some places around town that provided that, so anything that would make it easier for us to get settled in faster,” Orr said.

Child care challenge

Besides marketing the state, Gov. Burgum also recently proposed \$76 million in spending to address the childcare crisis across the state. That was a concern for Orr even before moving here.

“I was nervous about that, so one of the first calls I made actually, even before I got a job, was to see if we could get her [youngest daughter] on a waitlist,” Orr said.

Amy Jacobson of progressive communication group Prairie Action ND said that while Gov. Burgum’s proposals on childcare are a step in the right direction, they would not solve the day care crisis unless increasing the wages of childcare workers is fully addressed.

Jacobson estimates it would take a least \$150 million, or around double the total of the potential funding, just to address those pay gaps.

Providing paid family leave was another policy Jacobson said could help attract and retain workers, along with providing universal school lunches.

“That’s what makes the slogans into reality, when you invest in real policies,” Jacobson said.

Getting people already

in the state who have opted out of the workforce because of pressures related to costs of childcare to return, is another important factor.

“There’s people that can’t go to work because they can’t find child care, or affordable childcare,” Landis Larson, North Dakota’s AFL-CIO President, said.

Solid educational base

For Frank Matus, who moved to West Fargo in December after spending most of his life living in central New York, finding a quality school system for his son was one main factor in the move.

Matus, director of digital aviation solutions at Thales Aerospace, which was chosen as the systems integrator for North Dakota’s unmanned aerial systems network Vantis in 2021, had frequently traveled to the state before deciding to settle down here.

Facilitators at the Find the Good Life campaign helped ease the transition as the family planned its move, he said.

“They’ve been helpful in providing information about the school districts, what Fargo has to offer in terms of culture and nightlife and real estate and those sorts of things,” Matus said.

“It certainly allows people to feel like they are welcome when they come here and they’re not on their own or stuck inside trying to figure out how to navigate the winter,” he added. “It’s been a good process.”

Matus said he felt North Dakota had not been “as broadly promoted as it should be” and added the big deciding factors for his family were finding a good work-life balance, affordable living, and excellent education opportunities.

The North Dakota News Cooperative is a new non-profit providing in-depth coverage about North Dakota for North Dakotans. To support local journalism, make your charitable contribution at <https://www.newscoopnd.org/>

Comments, suggestions, tips? E-mail: michael@newscoopnd.org

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50.00; Smith, Kyle, 100.00; Taylor Vasek, 800.00; Willow Johnson, 150.00; Wyatt Pollert, 760.00.
Kimary Edland,
Business Manager

Joel Lemer, President,
Carrington Public School
Board of Education
(Publish January 30, 2023)

MINUTES OF MEETING CITY OF SYKESTON DECEMBER 12, 2022

Present: Rick Richter, Jerome Hoheisel, Dennis Johnson, Eric McCann, Kathy Lesmeister.

Minutes were read and approved with these adjustments: Monthly water samples to be mailed at Carrington Post Office for \$10.00 priority over night bulk instead of Sykeston Post Office for \$26.95 priority over night mail; Central Regional Council instead of Tom Klabunde in the UPDATE. 1st by Dennis and 2nd by Jerome.

December bills were read and approved 1st by Dennis and 2nd by Jerome.
Central Plains \$3675.59; Ottentail Power \$470.08; Ottentail ½ Power \$179.09; DCT ½ \$43.06; ND, Health Dept \$14.00; Double M Sanitation \$2183.79; Independent \$158.25; Jerome Hoheisel \$92.35; Dennis Johnson \$46.17; Rick Richter \$209.32; Kathy Lesmeister \$461.75; Jon Oatis \$277.05; Runnings \$14.99; Postage \$70.00; Chad Halle \$1200.00.
Income: Garbage \$1770.00; General \$1275.57; Hiway 744.78; Interest \$0.95; Sewer 330.00; Water Tower \$2275.00; Water \$1388.50.

Rick is going to contact the County Commissioner or Wells County Auditor about the Prairie Dog Fund and the Covid Relief Fund to find out what paperwork is needed and where to send the request.

The results from the water samples that are sent to the ND Health Department were presented. Rick asked if the quarterly paperwork is being done. The Auditor explained that an email is received with the form and is filled out and emailed back.

7:00 pm The Water Tower Grant paperwork for South Central District Regional Council was done again due to notice being sent to wrong newspaper. There were no comments or questions. Approved 1st by Dennis 2nd by Jerome.

With the sale of property recently, water deposits were checked into. Karen Neumiller’s deposit will transfer to the new property and Dennis Johnson donated his deposit return to the City of Sykeston.

When the sale of property between Chad Allmaras and Eric McCann is finalized, then a statement will be sent to Eric about the deposit and Chad’s refund will be returned when final water bill is paid.

Paperwork was received dealing with the possibility of Wells County qualifying for financial assistance for snow removal from the storm in November. Received the snow removal bill from Chad and will send a copy to Tammy Roehrich.

Water tower and water usage was discussed. To get a more accurate comparison between how many gallons the City uses and how many the City is charged for, it was determined that Jon will read the water plant meter the same time he read the citizens water meters. The water tower will be checked periodically for ice. Jon from Moore Engineering will be present the 1st time that someone climbs the tower for training and document the training. Pictures of the inside shall be taken each time for comparison. The water level in the tower was discussed again. Is this level going to have enough gallons for city usage and Fire Dept if something happens to the water supplier? What happens if the power is off for any length of time? If the lift station is down then the sewer would start backing up eventually. As for the water level in the tower, that is tabled till pictures have been taken and the new controller is installed.

The 140th Celebration coming up was talked about. It will cost \$50.00 an hour for policing. Rick will be going to a Community Club meeting to discuss who will be paying for the policing during the celebration. The Sykeston Dam Bar and Grill and the Sykeston Legion will be reminded that no beer gardens will be allowed to sell alcohol inside the Fire/City Hall due to that is where the meal is to be held.

A motion was made and approved to pay the Auditor the same amount as the Council members when there is a special meeting. 1st by Jerome and 2nd by Dennis.

In the up comings meetings, lawn mowing and hay rental will be discussed. Auditor was reminded that the On Line training needs to be completed within one year. The League of Cities will be contacted to find out exactly what paperwork needs to be kept and what can be disposed of since the file cabinets are full.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.
Next Meeting is January 9th, 2023 at 6:30 pm

Kathy Lesmeister, Auditor
Rick Richter, Mayor,
City Council, City of Sykeston
(Publish January 30, 2023)

SECTION 00 0200 – INVITATION TO BID

PROJECT. Foster County Courthouse Remodel Carrington, North Dakota

BIDS OPENING.

February 21st, 2023-2:00 PM
Foster County Courthouse
Community Room (lower level)
1000 5th Street North
Carrington, ND 58421
PROJECT #. 20214851
DATE OF ISSUE.
January 30, 2023
BY. EAPC Architects
Engineers
112 Roberts Street North,
Suite 300 Fargo, ND 58102
PHONE: (701) 461-7222

OUTLINE OF PROJECT.

Base Bid shall include the remodel of approximately 6,267 SF of the existing Lower Level of Foster County Courthouse and a new Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Systems for the Lower Level and First Floor Level (approximately 6,056 SF). ALTERNATE G-1 shall include the installation of a new Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning System for the Second Level, approximately 5,545 SF of the Foster County Courthouse.

TYPE OF BIDS. Single combined bids will be received for all portions of the work. The successful bidder will be the single Prime Contractor for the Project.

THE OWNER.

Foster County
1000 5th Street North
Carrington, ND 58421

BID PLACE.

Foster County Courthouse
1000 5th Street North
Community Room
(lower level)
Carrington, ND 58421

Bids received after the designated time will not be accepted. All interested parties are invited to attend. Bids will be opened and publicly read aloud. It is the bidder’s responsibility to see that mailed or delivered bids are in the hands of the Owner prior to the time of the bid opening.

OBTAINING DOCUMENTS. Drawings and Specifications may

be examined at the Architect/Engineer’s office, and the Owner’s office at the address shown above and:

CMD (Construction Market Data)
Dodge Plan Room and SCAN in Minneapolis.
North Dakota Builders Exchanges at Bismarck, Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot
One set of bidding documents may be obtained by prime bidders and major mechanical and electrical sub-bidders from EAPC upon request. No deposit is required.

BID SECURITY. Each bid shall be accompanied by a separate envelope containing a Bidders Bond in a sum equal to five percent of the full amount of the bid, including all add alternates, executed by the bidder as principal and by a Surety Company authorized to do business in this State, conditioned that if the Principal’s bid be accepted and the contract awarded to him, he, within ten days after notice of award, will execute and effect a contract in accordance with the terms of his bid and a Contractor’s Bond as required by law and the regulations and determinations of the governing Board. Cash, cashier’s checks or certified checks will not be accepted. See Instructions to Bidders 00 1000, Article 7.

NORTH DAKOTA LAW. All bidders must be licensed for the highest amount of their bids, as provided by North Dakota Century Code Section 43-07-05; and no bid will be read or considered which does not fully comply with the above provisions as to bond and licenses, and any bid deficient in these respects submitted will be re-sealed and returned to the bidder immediately.

THE OWNER reserves the right to waive irregularities, to reject Bids and to hold all Bids for a period of 30 days after the date fixed for the opening thereof.

By order of: **Ellen Rounly, Foster County Auditor**
END OF SECTION 00 0200
(Publish January 30,
February 6 & 13, 2023)

AD & PUBLIC NOTICE COORDINATOR

North Dakota Newspaper Association seeking full time Advertising and Public Notice Coordinator to work from Bismarck office. Ideal candidate will be an organized multi-tasker with great customer service skills. Need to be adept at juggling multiple emails/advertising requests, processing orders, updating data, and overseeing tear sheeting/order confirmation functions. Work with all 85 newspapers in North Dakota, as well as various other state associations, ad agencies, state agencies and private businesses. Must be proficient in Excel/Word, and possess good math skills. Generous benefit package, including 13 paid holidays and single medical/dental/vision/life insurance.

Send resume & cover letter including at least two work references to: director@ndna.com



ation policy summit series on innovations in teacher recruitment and retention and also the session on three class system; that March 2nd will a storm make-up day for November 10th; presented Mrs. Page’s 6th grade WIN Groups “The Cardinal Times” paper and she presented the school district taxable valuation report with the total taxable valuation being \$31,669,537; she presented updates from Dakota Fence on the fencing for the bleachers, track, and buildings; and reported that the legislative session begins on January 3rd.

The Board reviewed the progress that has been made on the Strategic Plan.

Discussion was held on the three options presented for a second agricultural education teacher. It was moved by Hooley, seconded by Kutz and carried (all members voting yes on voice vote) to approve advertising for a 5/7 agricultural education instructor and 2/7 FACS instructor.

It was moved by Kutz, seconded by Hooley and carried (all members voting yes on voice vote) to approve an open enrollment request with transportation for a student from Kensal to attend Carrington School.

It was moved by Wolsky, seconded by Kutz and carried (all members voting yes on voice vote) to approve an open enrollment request with transportation for a student from New Rockford Sheyenne to attend Carrington School.

It was moved by Hooley, seconded by Wolsky and carried (all members voting yes on voice vote) to approve an open enrollment request with transportation for a student from Midkota to attend Carrington School.

It was moved by Kutz, seconded by Wolsky and carried (all members voting yes on voice vote) to approve an open enrollment request with transportation for a student from Midkota to attend Carrington School.

It was moved by Hooley, seconded by Wolsky and carried (all members voting yes on voice vote) to approve an open enrollment request with transportation for a student from Midkota to attend Carrington School.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be January 10, 2023, at 4:00 PM. Adjourn at 9:00 A.M.

Bills: General Fund: Acme

Tools, \$71.97; Anderson, Kamae, 17.50; Angie Blahna, 40.50; Arrowwood Prairie Co-op, 5,194.64; Auto Value Carrington, 1.18; Bank Forward, 400,000.00; Baymont Inn & Suites, 96.00; Bio-Rad Laboratories, 190.23; Brickyard, 254.65.

C&J Oil Co., 4,463.02; Cengage Learning, 16.25; Central Business Systems, Inc., 1,037.27; Central City Lumber, 329.85; City of Carrington, 1,928.64; Comfort Inn & Suites, 88.20; Dakota Central Telecommunications, 593.93; Demco, 169.86; Edland, Kimary, 12.78; Edland, Teresa, 98.00; Engraphix, 95.00.

Family Vision Center, 25.00; Follett Content Solutions, LLC, 2,061.01; Foster County Independent, 286.44; Glass & Screen Repair, 260.00; Hagel Storage, 110.00; Helm, Janelle, 425.00; Helseth, Jenna, 35.00; Holiday Inn of Fargo, 88.20; Jarrett, Bobbi, 35.00; JW Pepper & Son, Inc., 167.99; Katie Peterson, 168.39; Larsen Plumbing, Heating & A/C, Inc., 295.32; LEAF, 396.00; Leevers Foods, 205.65; Linde Gas & Equipment, 76.14; Lisa Weninger, 350.00.

NAPA Auto Parts, 39.31; NDCEL, 150.00; Network Services Co., 278.80; North Dakota Science Olympiad, 340.00; Pitney Bowes, Inc., 144.00; Popplers Music Store, 5,869.14; Postmaster, 275.00; Quill, 117.10; Revolving Fund, 40.85; Ringerud Piano Service, 100.00; Runnings, 1,483.04; SEEC, 3,900.00; Skadberg, Jessica, 20.17.

Summit Physical Therapy & Sport Performance, PC, 218.75; Tecta America, 848.56; Time Management Systems, 147.58; US Food Service, 334.68; Weber, Connor, 122.50; WEX, 79.25; Wingate by Wyndham Fargo, 529.20.

Building Fund: Gussiaas Electric, LLC, \$11,561.39.

Sinking & Interest: US Bank, 55,430.00.

Hot Lunch Fund: Cash-Wa Distributing, \$542.91; Central City H20+, 486.00; Central Valley Health District, 160.00; Dept. of Public Instruction, 2,301.24; Erickson, Jacey, 8.30; Leevers Foods, 13.76; Meadow Sweet Dairy, 2,908.26; Network Services Co., 1,824.19; Pan-O-Gold Baking Co., 608.44; Pizza Ranch - Carrington, 1,742.00; School Nutrition Association, 50.00; US Food Service, 10,248.43.

Activity Fund: Ashley School, 150.00; Braaten, Andrew, 146.00;

BSN Sports, 1,616.86; Carrington Health Center, 855.32; Carrington School Activity Acc., 880.00; Central City Concepts, 875.00; Central CityH20+, 2,275.30; Copenhaver, Joan, 1,000.00; Dakota East, 56.75; Foster County Independent, 78.00.

Jayden Shipman, 454.00; Jostens, 2,904.00; Leevers Foods, 111.68; Linton School, 200.00; Michaelson, Karla, 78.28; Morgan, Brady, 168.00; NASP, Inc., 209.00; National FFA Organization, 319.00; ND State Girls BB Tournament, 132.00; NDCEL, 105.00; Network Services Co., 348.47; Pizza Ranch - Carrington, 247.00.

Ranum, Timothy, 432.00; Russel Neumiller, 219.25; Skytland, Josey, 43.49; Training Room, 300.55; Tyler Riedesle, 252.00; US Food Service, 720.77; Valley City High School, 50.00; Valley Popcorn Company, 359.90; Weber, Connor, 42.00; Wede, Jennifer, 175.00; Weninger, Bradley, 45.00.

Bills Already Paid: Carrington School Payroll, \$400,000.00; Carrington Motor Co., 8,966.99; MDU, 5,823.07; Otter Tail Power Company, 9,913.39.

Bisonettes, \$110.00; Casey Henderson, 206.25; Fresh Alternative, 9,746.50; HUDL, 1,098.00; iBenzer, Inc., 587.50; Jamestown Tournaments, 175.00; Minot Early Bird Tournament, 150.00; NDADD, 500.00; Rugby School, 200.00; Velva School, 250.00.

Added Bills: General Fund: Adminpartners, \$100.00; Commercial Card Solutions, 29,867.63; Foster County Medical Center, 500.00; Helm, Janelle, 177.50; Leevers Foods, 19.88; McGraw-Hill, 79.09; MDU, 6,310.21; Sanford Health Occupational Medicine, 129.00.

Hot Lunch Fund: Carrington School General Fund, \$734.74.

Activity Fund: Anthony Hoisington, \$501.25; Bradee Schroeder, 150.00; Brandon Gussiaas, 50.00; Carl Klocke, 100.00; Carr, Travis, 150.00; Carrington School General Fund, 390.73; Casey Henderson, 627.50; District 6, 184.00; Freeman, Dennis, 545.00; James Rindy, 100.00; Jenna Gerhardt, 390.00.

Karmen Freeman, 300.00; Leevers Foods, 66.52; Michael Pazdernik, 710.00; Minot Early Bird Tournament, 200.00; Pank, Michael, 100.00; Peter Zieg, 50.00; Reed Edwardson, 370.00; Ross Edison, 455.00; Sapphire Gallery, 294.64; Shipman, Wayne,