



"WHERE THE WEST BEGINS"

# mandan messenger

## June meetings

**City Commission**, June 7 and 21, 5:30 p.m., City Hall

**School Board**, June 6 and 20, 5:30 p.m., City Hall

**Park Board**, June 13, 5:30 p.m., City Hall

**County Commission**, June 14, 2 p.m., Morton County Courthouse.

**City Planning and Zoning Commission**, June 27, 5:15 p.m., City Hall

## Vote on June 7

An election for three School Board members will be held June 7 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Voters north of the BNSF tracks vote at the Brave Center (former Community Center). Residents south of the tracks should vote at Spirit of Life Catholic Church.

## Community helps school district address increasing enrollment & classroom space issues

The Mandan School Board has formed a committee to weigh pros and cons of ways to address increasing elementary enrollment and resulting challenges for classroom space. About 40 citizens from various cross sections of the community are participating.

At an April 7 meeting, attendees received enrollment and classroom numbers as well as an update on school district finances. Participants then volunteered for subgroups, each assigned to explore a possible alternative: 1) do

nothing, 2) modify the school day or school calendar, 3) purchase and place portable classrooms as needed, 4) renovate and use the former

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| MANDAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS<br>ELEMENTARY ENROLLMENT 2010-2011 |            |            |                 |                |         |
|--|------------|------------|-----------------|----------------|---------|
| Grade  | Enrollment | Classrooms | Avg. # Students | DPI Recommends | DPI Max |
| K  | 248        | 12         | 20.41           | 20             | 25      |
| 1 <sup>st</sup>  | 239        | 11         | 20.90           | 20             | 25      |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | 266        | 11         | 23.72           | 20             | 25      |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | 232        | 11         | 20.90           | 20             | 25      |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>  | 222        | 11         | 19.90           | 25             | 30      |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>  | 228        | 11         | 20.45           | 25             | 30      |
| Total  | 1,435      | 67         | 21.41           | --             | --      |

*Enrollment was up by 112 students last fall with most of the increase at elementary and middle school levels. With population growth and the number of babies born in Morton County also rising, school district officials estimate a need for 4 to 12 additional classrooms by 2015.*

## OPPORTUNITY

The City Commission recently voted to contract one year with a retail consultant to assist with recruiting national retail to Mandan. The firm is Retail Attractions of Owasso, Oklahoma. Household and business surveys find retail growth to be hugely important from the standpoint of quality of life and convenience as well as to provide property tax relief through increased sales tax collections.

Mandan's business development and communications director focuses on assisting existing businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs; retail and service recruitment in the local, state and regional market; management of incentive programs; and redevelopment projects. The City collaborates with the Bismarck Mandan Development Association on primary sector growth, business retention, and development of industrial, retail and office park sites.



## MORTON COUNTY BIRTHS

| Year | No. of Births     | Projected MPS Enrollment  | 2010-11 MPS Enrollment | Variation from Projection |
|------|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2010 | 364 (Preliminary) | 294                       | K fall 2016            | TBD                       |
| 2009 | 390               | 304 1 Yr. Olds            | K fall 2015            | TBD                       |
| 2008 | 364               | 294 2 Yr. Olds            | K fall 2014            | TBD                       |
| 2007 | 367               | 285 3 Yr. Olds            | K fall 2013            | TBD                       |
| 2006 | 350               | 280 4 Yr. Olds.           | K fall 2012            | TBD                       |
| 2005 | 340               | 269 5 Yr. Olds            | K fall 2011            | TBD                       |
| 2004 | 307               | 252 (11 Months)           | 248                    | +17                       |
| 2003 | 314               | 242 1 <sup>st</sup> Grade | 239                    | - 3                       |
| 2002 | 308               | 242 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade | 266                    | +22                       |
| 2001 | 284               | 231 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade | 232                    | + 1                       |
| 2000 | 287               | 223 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade | 222                    | - 1                       |
| 1999 | 301               | 229 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade | 228                    | - 1                       |
| 1998 | 313               | 239 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade | 274                    | +35                       |
| 1997 | 309               | 243 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade | 257                    | +13                       |

*Morton County births have jumped since 2005 as compared to prior years.*

Source: N.D. Health Department. Births recorded by calendar year. Kindergarten classes grouped according to start date (Aug. 1 – July 31). Enrollment projections assume 78% of Morton births will attend Mandan Public Schools. Current kindergarten class has only 11 months of students due to a legislative change. Other years have 12 months of students.

## Increasing enrollment & classroom space issues

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junior high school (most recently the Great Plains Academy), 5) build four permanent classrooms onto Ft. Lincoln Elementary (with land and designed to accommodate potential expansion), and 6) build a new elementary school.

A committee meeting is scheduled May 12 for subgroup reports on findings and to prioritize alternatives for presentation to the School Board in June. As stakeholders consider the

options, Superintendent Wilfred Volesky explains a challenge is the status of the district's long-term debt. In the spring of 2012, the district will pay off bonds levied for Ft. Lincoln Elementary. However, principle payments on the Middle School bond only start in 2012. Payments to date on the middle school have been for interest only. When the district begins to make principle and interest payment, an additional 8 mills will be needed to service long-term debt based on the current value of a mill. This increase in mills creates difficulty for the committee in finding a viable solution.

| MANDAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS<br>2015-2016 PROJECTED ENROLLMENT |            |            |                    |                   |            |
|---|------------|------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Grade   | Enrollment | Classrooms | Avg. #<br>Students | DPI<br>Recommends | DPI<br>Max |
| K   | 304        | 12         | 25.33              | 20                | 25         |
| 1 <sup>st</sup>   | 294        | 11         | 26.72              | 20                | 25         |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>   | 285        | 11         | 25.90              | 20                | 25         |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>   | 280        | 11         | 25.45              | 20                | 25         |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>   | 269        | 11         | 24.45              | 25                | 30         |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>   | 252        | 11         | 22.90              | 25                | 30         |
| Total   | 1,684      | 67         | 25.13              | --                | --         |

*Projects put classroom sizes above N.D. Department of Public Instruction maximums for accreditation. The average size is projected at 23.71 students with 4 additional classrooms and at 21.32 students with 12 additional classrooms..*

## State's program provides tax exemptions for seniors & disabled

Citizens who are 65 years of age or older, or who are permanently and totally disabled, may be eligible for the N.D. Homestead Credit Program. Qualified homeowners receive a credit to reduce property taxes on their home. Qualified renters receive a partial rent refund. To be eligible for the senior citizen tax credit, an applicant's total income from all sources may not be more than \$26,000 after medical expenses. Assets may not exceed \$75,000, including the value of any assets gifted or otherwise divested within the last three years, excluding the first \$100,000 value of the home. The program for disabled persons requires proof of total disability with a certificate from a licensed physician approved by the governing body in the city of residence. The same limitations on income and assets apply. For more information, please contact the City of Mandan Assessing Department, phone 701-667-3230 or visit the department's section of the website at [www.cityofmandan.com](http://www.cityofmandan.com).

## Sales tax collections linked to reducing property tax

Expanding Mandan's retail sector is important to reducing property taxes. In 2010, Mandan's sales tax collections totaled \$1.5 million. While a record, the amount pales compared to Bismarck's \$12.4 million. In other words, Mandan's collections were one-tenth of market area collections despite accounting for one-fourth of the population. Both cities use sales tax collections to reduce property tax and infrastructure costs as well as for economic development. The much smaller amount of sales tax revenue simply doesn't go as far toward property tax reduction in Mandan as it does in Bismarck.

## Contact us

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### Mandan City Commission

Mayor Tim Helbling  
Dot Frank  
Thomas Jackson  
Dennis Rohr  
Sandra Tibke

### City Departments

Administration ..... 667-3215  
Airport Authority ..... 663-0669  
Assessing &  
Building Inspection . 667-3230  
Business  
Development ..... 667-3485  
Cemetery ..... 667-6044  
Engineering, Planning &  
Zoning ..... 667-3225  
Finance ..... 667-3213  
Fire ..... 667-3288  
Human Resources . 667-3217  
Landfill ..... 667-0184  
Library ..... 667-5365  
Municipal Court ..... 667-3270  
Police ..... 667-3455  
Public Works ..... 667-3240  
Special  
Assessments ..... 667-3271  
Utility Billing ..... 667-3219  
Waste Water  
Treatment ..... 667-3278  
Water Treatment .... 667-3275

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### QUESTION OF THE MONTH

**How should the school district address increasing elementary enrollment?**

Visit [www.cityofmandan.com](http://www.cityofmandan.com) by June 1 to respond.

### ON-LINE POLL RESULTS

## Marketing theme may need more exposure for people to weigh in

The on-line poll for April asked, "What do you think of 'Made in Mandan' community marketing projects so far?" There were 72 respondents. Thirty-three percent selected "I have seen applications of the marketing theme. I like it. It portrays Mandan positively." Thirty-two percent indicated they have not yet seen or heard any applications of the "Made in Mandan" marketing theme. Thirty-five percent chose "I have seen applications of the marketing theme. I do not like it. A different theme would better promote Mandan." No additional comments were received.