



March meetings

City Commission, March 4 and 18 at 5:30 p.m., City Hall

School Board, March 3 and 17 at 5:30 p.m., City Hall

Park Board, March 10, 4:30 p.m., City Hall

County Commission, March 10 and 25, 5:30 p.m., Morton County Courthouse

City Planning and Zoning Commission, March 24, 5:15 p.m., City Hall

Architectural Commission meets twice monthly

The Mandan Architectural Review Commission now meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 1 p.m. at City Hall. Applications for commercial building projects must be submitted to the Building Inspection Department no later than noon on the Thursday prior to the meeting at which consideration is desired.

The MARC is a nine-member commission responsible for reviewing site and building plans involving new construction, remodeling and alteration of commercial properties to assure such projects provide a desirable environment for their occupants, are compatible with the character of adjacent developments, and are aesthetically of good composition, materials, textures and colors.

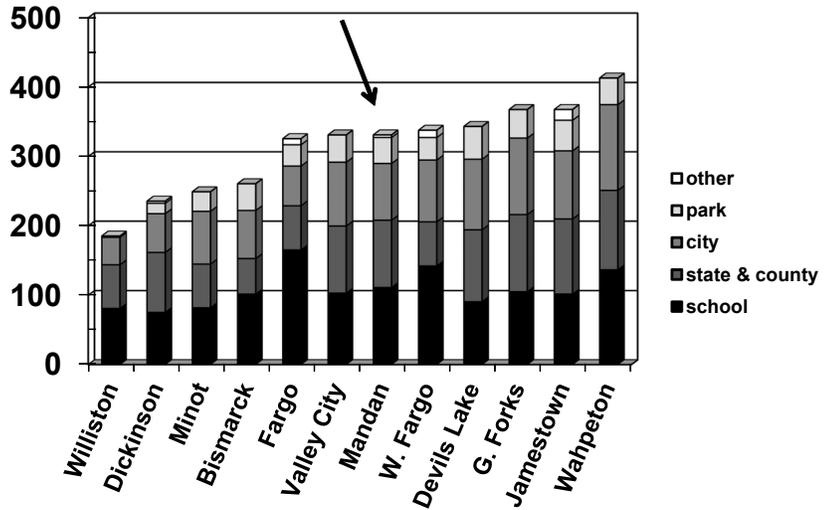
MARC meetings had previously been held each week as long as there were agenda items and a quorum. For more info, contact the Building Inspections Department, phone 667-3232.

Mandan property tax reduction improves rank compared to other cities

A recent North Dakota League of Cities report indicates Mandan's property tax rank improved. The report covers 2013 levies that are payable in 2014. Mandan is now tied for sixth among the state's 12 largest cities with a combined levy of 331 mills. That compares to being eighth lowest or fifth highest in 2012 at 394 mills.

Mandan's levy for 2013 is 1.49% of value on a residential property or 1.66% for a commercial property. These percentages of value are down from 2012's share of 1.78% and 1.97%, respectively.

2013 PROPERTY TAX RANKINGS



Mandan entities (City Commission, County Commission, Mandan Public School District, Mandan Park District) almost all lowered their levies for 2013 to help offset

2013 PROPERTY TAXES AS A % OF PROPERTY VALUE

	LEVY	COMMERCIAL	RESIDENTIAL
Williston	185.42	0.93%	0.83%
Dickinson	235.61	1.18%	1.06%
Minot	249.16	1.25%	1.12%
Bismarck	260.81	1.30%	1.17%
Fargo	325.71	1.63%	1.47%
Valley City	331.10	1.66%	1.49%
Mandan	331.16	1.66%	1.49%
West Fargo	337.93	1.69%	1.52%
Devils Lake	343.34	1.72%	1.55%
Grand Forks	367.71	1.84%	1.65%
Jamestown	367.82	1.84%	1.66%
Wahpeton	413.13	2.07%	1.86%
Average	312.41	1.56%	1.41%

an average valuation increase of 6.8% on existing residential property. Increased state legislative funding for education and a state credit equal to 12% of property taxes is helping to provide local property tax relief.

Factors behind differences in mill levies among cities include sales tax base and whether it benefits from natural resources such as oil, gas and coal. Market values may also vary by city.

see **Property tax reduction** page 2





PARK FEE INCREASED FOR NEW PROPERTY DEVELOPMENTS

The City Commission in December approved an increase in the building permit fee for park land acquisition and development. The previous rate of \$100 per building permit, which had been in place many years, was changed to \$250 per unit in a multi-unit building, \$500 for each single-family residence and \$1,000 per commercial building.

In 2013, the Mandan Parks and Recreation District received \$47,000 under the \$100 fee structure. Director Cole Higlin estimates the district would have received \$240,000 toward park land acquisition and development if the new fees had been in place.

The unit fee is to be paid by either the subdivider or the party requesting the building permit before a building permit is issued. The fees will be placed in a special fund and can be used for land, playground equipment and shelters.

April 7 filing deadline for local elections

Morton County. Two county commission seats are up for election, those held by Jim Boehm and Andy Zachmeier. Also on the ballot will be the positions of county auditor, state's attorney, sheriff, treasurer and recorder. The Morton County primary is June 10. Top candidates advance to the Nov. 4 election. County candidates make pick up petitions at the auditor's office in the Morton County Courthouse. Petitions may be filed no later than 4 p.m. April 7.

Mandan City Commission. Mandan residents will vote on two, four-year seats, currently held by Dot Frank and Dennis Rohr. Candidates must file with the city administrator by April 7 at City Hall. Filing requirements include a petition containing signatures of qualified electors, not less than 10 percent of the number who voted for that office in the last city election. Three hundred signatures are recommended to allow for any that are invalid.

City representation on the Southwest Water Authority is also up for election. Bob Leingang is the current representative.

Mandan Park Board. Park Board. Three terms are up in 2014. The seats are held by Jason Arenz, Ann Keller and Tracy Porter. Candidates for park board also file with the city administrator by April 7 at City Hall.

Mandan School Board. Three seats are up for election in 2014, those currently held by Donna Fishbeck, Lee Fleischer, and Jay Volk. School candidates should file a statement of interest by April 7 with the Mandan School District business office.

July 1 deadline approved for bid of street improvement projects

The City Commission has approved a recommendation by the Mandan Planning and Engineering Department to establish a July 1 deadline in 2014 for bid opening of street improvement projects to be eligible for special assessment. The deadline is applicable to new developments in which the developer is asking the City to finance the street paving, sidewalk, curb, gutter, storm sewer and street lights and special assess these costs to the property. Developers still have the option of moving forward with projects beyond this timeline if they finance above-ground infrastructure costs themselves.

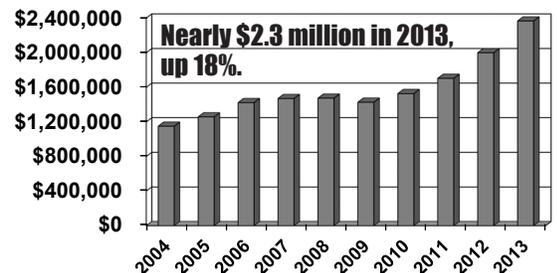
Department Director Justin Froseth explains that the deadline promotes proactive planning and minimizes the risk of assessment district projects not meeting contractual deadlines. The July 1 deadline means plans and specifications for projects will need to be approved no later than the June 3 meeting of the City Commission. For info, call 667-3225.

Property tax reduction

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Mandan's situation is helped by increasing sales tax revenue, up significantly each of the last two years. The Mandan City Commission lowered its levy to 81.78 mills in 2013, down from 94 in 2012, and yet at the same time is hiring additional police officers and fire fighters to maintain safety with population growth. This is made possible through a 25-mill, or near \$1.3 million, contribution from sales tax revenue to the general fund.

MANDAN 1% SALES TAX REVENUE





Business lending program receives more funding

The North Dakota Opportunity Fund has received an additional \$3.3 million in funding for small businesses in 38 communities that are part of a consortium receiving a third disbursement from the U.S. Treasury Department’s State Small Business Credit Initiative.

The City of Mandan Business Development and Communications Office and the Lewis and Clark Regional Development Council applied for the funding in 2012 on behalf of Mandan, 36 cities and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. So far, the group’s loan program, known as the North Dakota Opportunity Fund, has leveraged more than \$55 million in private sector financing for 24 businesses in 12 communities.

The group of municipalities is receiving more funds after making business loan commitments totaling \$7.5 million. In October, when the consortium surpassed loan commitments for 80 percent of the \$6.4 million received in its first two disbursements, it issued the request for its third disbursement. Loan approvals since then have been contingent upon receiving the final round of funding. Repayments from business loan recipients replenish the program fund, which allow it to revolve and continue to provide assistance for years to come.

The consortium was originally awarded a total allocation of \$9,710,768 in September 2012. Cities benefitting from projects so far are Beach, Bismarck, Beulah, Carson (providing sponsorship for a project in Heil), Casselton, Dickinson, Fargo, Mandan, Minot, Watford City, West Fargo (providing sponsorship for a project in Mapleton), and Williston. Types of businesses assisted include three manufacturers, 10 retail stores, three restaurants, two hotels, and six service sector businesses. Loans range from \$8,000 to \$1 million. The fund has helped retain 105 jobs and create 270 jobs with the participating businesses.

The U.S. Treasury Department recently increased the total allocation for the Mandan-led group by \$23,873 after recalculating its pro rata share based on the population represented in the consortium as compared to North Dakota’s other consortium, led by Carrington.

Lenders are more apt to approve business loans by partnering with this program which can fund up to 50 percent of an eligible business project. Minimum owner equity is 10 percent and there must be a private lead lender. The maximum direct loan size is \$1 million, supporting total loan packages up to \$10 million.

Eligible uses include business start-up costs, working capital, business procurement, franchise fees, equipment, inventory, and the purchase, construction, renovation or improvements of an eligible place of business.

SSBCI funding was approved as part of the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010. Businesses and lenders may obtain more information about the North Dakota Opportunity Fund by calling the Lewis and Clark Regional Development Council at 701-667-7620 or by visiting www.lewisandclarkrdc.org.

Businesses invited to partake in community marketing



The Mandan Tomorrow – Leadership, Pride and Image Committee continues to implement the “Great Things: MADE IN MANDAN” community marketing campaign with support from the City Commission, Park Board and School Board. The committee and City of Mandan Business Development Director invite Mandan businesses to become more involved in 2014. Businesses are asked to participate in testimonial ads for purposes of business attraction and improving the image of Mandan’s business community as a whole. The ads revolve around the theme “Opportunity: Made in Mandan” and feature stories about successful businesses in Mandan. For information about costs and criteria to participate, contact Ellen Huber at phone 667-3485 or send an e-mail to ehuber@cityofmandan.com.

COMMUNITY MARKETING

Here are ways businesses can market “Great Things: Made in Mandan.”

Customer gifts

- Community: MADE IN MANDAN” doormats for new residents
- T-shirts or diaper covers for newborns
- Wearables for all ages (caps, t-shirts, etc.)
- Bumper stickers, window clings, or magnets

Business-sponsored ads

- Champions: MADE IN MANDAN” headline to applaud winning teams.
- “Achievement: MADE IN MANDAN” to announce an award earned by your business or employees.
- Focus on an attribute associated with your business. For example, “Innovation: MADE IN MANDAN,” with information about unique services provided by your company.

“Made in Mandan” logos are available at 667-3485 or send an email request to ehuber@cityofmandan.com.



"WHERE THE WEST BEGINS"

Shaw promoted to city assessor

Personnel changes within the City's Assessing and Building Inspection Department are prompting some reorganization. Appraiser

Shirley Shaw recently achieved her tax director certification and was promoted to the city assessor position.



Shirley Shaw

The city assessing department is responsible for equitably valuing each parcel of real estate. This is an ongoing process of gathering and reviewing information, measuring and listing new construction, and analyzing sales of real estate to provide accurate and current values annually. All real estate is valued as of Feb. 1 annually.

The Assessing Department also processes applications for homestead credits for senior and disabled persons, disabled veteran and paraplegic veteran exemptions, wheelchair exemptions, blind exemptions, remodeling exemption, and exemptions for new and expanding businesses. Shaw can be reached at 667-3528.

ON-LINE POLL RESULTS

71% of respondents shop for groceries in Mandan, 83% consider a grocery option on West Main to be important

January's informal, on-line poll focused on grocery shopping. There were 161 respondents. Among respondents, 96% indicated they live or work in Mandan.

Asked where they currently shop for most of their groceries, 71% indicated Mandan stores:

- 47% Walmart,
- 23% Dan's Supermarket,
- 1% Butcher Block,
- 0% Grama Brauns and Lisa's Gluten Free and More,
- Others options that have been noted are Thrifty White Drug and Family Dollar.

Responses for Bismarck stores were as follows:

- 13% Dan's Supermarket locations,
- 12% Cashwise,
- 2% Walmart locations,
- 1% Sam's Club.

In response to the question, "How important to you is a grocery option on Mandan's West Main Street?" 65% of respondents chose "very important," 18% selected "somewhat important," and 17% picked "not at all important."

What's next? City of Mandan officials have reached out to grocery businesses that serve the region to encourage them to consider the Mandan market and to provide information.

Principals of Joersz Land, LLP, which owns the property, are exploring options for lease or sale of the property. Central Market has three years remaining on its lease. Grafe Auction Company is advertising an equipment auction to be held Feb. 12 at 10:30 a.m.

Some community members have suggested grocery options not currently present in the region. Business Development Director Ellen Huber notes that in conversations with retailers, they are looking for logical supply chain and transportation linkages. In addition, operators like Whole Foods and Trader Joes typically have site specifications for a higher population, higher average household incomes and other differing demographics.

City officials will keep assisting in ways possible to find another grocer for the community and to bring daily activity to the West Main location.

City Contacts

Mandan City Hall
205 Second Avenue NW
Phone 701-667-3215
Fax 701-667-3223
www.cityofmandan.com

Mandan City Commission

Mayor Arlyn VanBeek
Mike Braun
Dot Frank
Dennis Rohr
Sandra Tibke

City Departments

Administration	667-3215
Airport Authority	663-0669
Assessing	667-3528
Building Inspection	667-3230
Business Development	
& Communications	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

Receive E-mail Notices

Sign up to receive notice of city meetings and news in the "E-mail Updates" section of www.cityofmandan.com. Meeting dates and agendas are available.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

If Mandan were to limit the use of special assessments for street improvements for new development, do you think it would slow development?

Visit www.cityofmandan.com by Feb. 28 to respond.