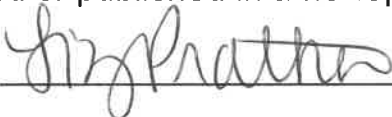


## Affidavit of Publication

Liz Prather, being duly sworn, states as follows:

1. I am the designated agent, under the provisions and for the purposes of, Section 31-04-06, NDCC, for the newspapers listed on the attached exhibits.
2. The newspapers listed on the exhibits published the advertisement of: **Public Service Commission, Basin electric power coop, Case no PU-24-236, 1** time(s), as required by law or ordinance. NDNA IO: 24073PP3.
3. All of the listed newspapers are legal newspapers in the State of North Dakota and, under the provisions of Section 46-05-01, NDCC, are qualified to publish any public notice or any matter required by law or ordinance to be printed or published in a newspaper in North Dakota.

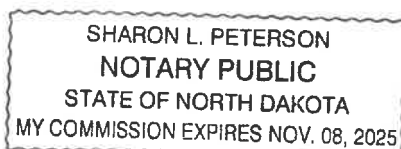
Signed: 

State of North Dakota

County of Burleigh

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 25<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2024.





# Dickinson State president announces he is quitting

## Departure follows mass resignation of nursing faculty

BY JEFF BEACH  
North Dakota Monitor

Dickinson State University President Stephen Easton on Monday announced he will resign his position.

The announcement comes on the heels of the resignation of the school's nursing faculty. Easton also led the university through a reorganization last year that included program cuts and testified in favor of a bill last year that would have made it easier for DSU to fire tenured faculty.

"I have also been advised that some who have supported DSU, financially and otherwise, might not do so if I continue as president. So it is time for me to leave," Easton said in a Monday post on the college's website.

Easton, a Dickinson State alum, was named president in March 2020, after serving in an interim role for more than four months. It was not immediately clear when the resignation would take effect.

Easton's post said that when he became president, the school "was on a path to financial disaster that threatened the future

of the university."

Regarding the resignation of nursing faculty, Easton noted that the most recent graduating class produced 16 students eligible to take the registered nurse exam.

"We cannot spend over half a million dollars in compensation expenses for 16 Registered Nurses. That does not work financially," Easton wrote.

He also said the North Dakota Board of Nursing has prohibited the college from trying to find new faculty.

Stacey Pfenning, executive director of the North Dakota Board of Nursing, issued a statement Monday saying that the organization did not force Easton's resignation or prevent the hiring of a nurse administrator or faculty by DSU.

Changes implemented by Easton related to the number of students per class and teaching load for the nurse administrator preceded the unraveling of the DSU nursing program.

Easton, in his letter, said he had set a standard of 13.3 students per class. He said the nursing faculty requested an exemption to that standard, which Easton refused to do.

He said the nursing faculty refused to sign a contract that would hold them to that standard.

On July 10, Nursing Director Lucy Meyer and six full-time faculty members resigned.



COURTESY OF DICKINSON STATE UNIVERSITY

Stephen Easton was named president of Dickinson State University in 2020. He announced his resignation on July 15, 2024.

When Dickinson State informed the Board of Nursing of the situation, the board on July 12 sent a document listing how the situation put the program out of compliance with state law on college nursing programs.

One state requirement is that the administrator of the program, which had been Meyer, oversee faculty recruitment.

Without a nurse administrator in place, "I cannot work on behalf of DSU's students, by trying to find them new Nursing faculty. If I cannot work for DSU's students, I am no longer a benefit to DSU. So I will step aside," Easton wrote.

But before the July resignations, Dickinson State had already posted nursing faculty positions without Meyer's approval on May 21, a report from the Board of Nursing dated June 4 says.

When DSU leadership was asked about the position posting, "the response was that

there was a concern that several faculty members were going to leave, so a nursing faculty position was posted in anticipation that new hires may be needed."

The same report said the nurse administrator reported administrative support for the Department of Nursing has been reduced from full time to two days a week and is shared by other programs in the School of Applied Sciences and the dean.

It also noted that the nurse administrator's contract will be reduced from 11 months to 10.5 months, and teaching load was increased from 12 credit hours per academic year beginning fall 2024.

"This leaves no time for the administrative oversight of two nursing programs," the report said.

The report referred to earlier Board of Nursing reports in 2016 and 2022 that even an 11-month

contract did not provide a nursing administrator enough time to adequately perform all their duties.

Easton's letter said the only realistic option "is for us to hire back the former faculty that created the entire problem by resigning their positions at DSU."

Pfenning's statement said the nursing board "will continue to work with DSU to restore its nursing education program following Mr. Easton's resignation and continue the education of the more than 111 students left in the lurch due to the conflict between administration and faculty which resulted in this crisis at the institution."

North Dakota University System Chancellor Mark Hagerott has described Easton's work at DSU as "transformational," as the school has added more two-year and technical programs.

"I appreciate all that he has done to lead the dual mission focus to create a viable workforce and sustainable programming that North Dakota needs, and North Dakota students want," Hagerott said Monday in an emailed statement.

Easton said he felt supported by the University System.

"I did not come here to make life comfortable for faculty, though I have tried to support them as much as possible. I did come here to do whatever

I could for students, including what needed to be done, even though unpopular, to keep DSU here for future students," Easton said in his statement.

During the 2023 North Dakota legislative session, lawmakers considered a bill that would have made it easier for presidents at Dickinson State University and Bismarck State College to remove tenured faculty.

While the bill failed, tenure has continued to be a controversial topic in the state University System, especially within two-year programs.

Easton in May declined an interview request from the North Dakota Monitor on the topic of tenure.

In a recent survey of North Dakota University System colleges on the topic of tenure, Dickinson State noted that "tenure interferes with the institution's ability to focus limited resources on the growing programs that students want."

"Our institution is attempting to overcome this drag on efficient distribution of limited resources, but tenure makes this more difficult," the response said.

Easton graduated from Dickinson State in 1980 and went on to get a law degree from Stanford University. Easton practiced law for more than 20 years before returning to higher education, according to his university bio.

### Classifieds Marketplace

#### Public Notices

##### Public Notice STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Basin Electric Power Cooperative Case No. PU-24-236  
Antelope Valley-Neset 345kV Trans Ln-Williams Cty  
Siting Application

##### NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR HEARING

On April 23, 2014, the Commission issued Corridor Certificate No. 152 and Route Permit No. 164 to Basin Electric Power Cooperative authorizing approximately 197 miles of 345 kV and 230 kV electric transmission line and associated facilities from the Antelope Valley Station near Beulah to the Neset Substation near Tioga, North Dakota.

On June 10, 2024, Basin Electric filed an amendment requesting the addition of a new 345/115-kV substation, a 250-foot tall microwave tower, 6.8 miles of 115-kV line and 1,560 feet of new 345-kV line and one new 345-kV structure in Williams County, approximately 10 miles northeast of Williston, ND. The location of the new 345k-kV tower and line is T156N, R100W, Section 36.

The issues to be considered in this proceeding are:

1. Will the location and operation of the proposed facility produce minimal adverse effects on the environment and upon the welfare of the citizens of North Dakota?
2. Is the proposed facility compatible with the environmental preservation and the efficient use of resources?
3. Will the proposed facility location minimize adverse human and environmental impact while ensuring continuing system reliability and integrity and ensuring that energy needs are met and fulfilled in an orderly and timely fashion?

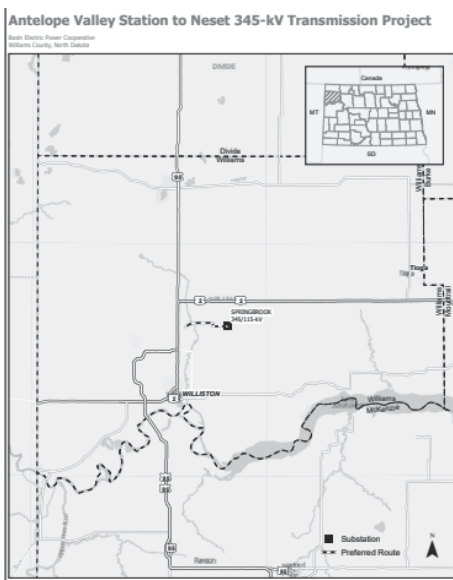
Those interested are invited to comment on the application in writing. Persons desiring a hearing must file a written request identifying their interest in the proceeding and the reasons for requesting a hearing. **Comments and requests for hearings must be received by August 24, 2024.** If deemed appropriate, the Commission can determine the matter without a formal hearing.

For more information contact the Public Service Commission, State Capitol, Bismarck, North Dakota 58505, 701-328-2400; or Relay North Dakota 1-800-366-6888 TTY. If you require any auxiliary aids or services, such as readers, signers, or Braille materials please notify the Commission.

Issued: July 8, 2024

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Sheri Haugen-Hoffart Commissioner Randy Christmann Chair Julie Fedorchak Commissioner



Legal # WHM001643 - Published July 17, 2024

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