

Benefit for longtime owner of Odin's Belmont Service set for Sunday: Page B1

Herand Forks

**Grand Forks** 

# FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 2019 **HORRIBLY DISAPPOINTING'**

Storm prompts NDDOT to close I-29 between **Grand Forks and Fargo** 

crest soon

**Red River** 

at Grand

Forks to

**By Emily Allen** Grand Forks Herald

The Red River at East Grand Forks stood at 46.81 feet Thursday afternoon, less than 2 feet from its anticipated crest of 48 feet and hours before the area was due for a mid-April snowstorm

The Grand Forks area could receive anywhere from 2 to 7 inches of snow by Friday morning, according to National Weather Service Meteorologist Tom Grafenauer. The storm could bring 45 mile per hour winds and blizzard conditions.

The storm will be more intense near Fargo, which Grafenauer said could receive up to 8 inches of snow.

The North Dakota Department of Transportation on Thursday afternoon closed Interstate 29 between Fargo and Grand Forks because of blowing snow and near-zero visibility.

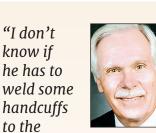
**RED RIVER:** Page A2

### **Two Rivers** River crests at Hallock

Kennedy comments draw wide criticism from community, state leaders



UND President Mark Kennedy discusses the budget as well as the university's strategic plan during his annual University Council address in May 2018.



By Sydney Mook and Tess Williams Grand Forks Herald ND President Mark Kennedy is under fire after community and state leaders described comments he made Wednesday to a Colorado newspaper as "hogwash" and "horribly disappointing." In Colorado, scrutiny of Kennedy's congressional voting record left at least one member of the Board of Regents urging a second look at his status as the lone finalist for the presidency at the University of Colorado and four campuses in its university system. The wave of reaction came following an announcement Wednesday that Kennedy is the lone finalist for the position and is awaiting final approval during a 14-day waiting period. During those two weeks, Kennedy is scheduled to visit the Boulder, Denver, Colorado Springs and Anschutz Medical campuses.

Camera newspaper and was asked about his decision to promote his assistant, Angelique Foster, to chief of staff and allow her to work remotely from Texas That decision, widely reported in February, drew criticism from many in North Dakota. However, Kennedy reconsidered the decision and announced later that month that Foster would instead step away from that post. "I fear that part of the reason that that article got as much attention as it did is some people couldn't understand how a young African-American woman from the South could be as qualified and worthy" to do the job as others, Kennedy told the Daily Camera. "I'm quite confident it is about more than remote working." Thursday, Kennedy provided a statement to the Herald that noted he "took immediate action" and called the Boulder newspaper when he saw his comments "were more

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#### By Anna Jauhola Special to the Herald

HALLOCK, Minn. - The Two Rivers at Hallock crested early Thursday morning at about 807 feet above sea level.

Ice jams and warmer weather, along with Lake Bronson Dam releasing water, increased the levels last week on the Two Rivers throughout Kittson County.

Hallock employees have been preparing for weeks and have all the pumps in place and culverts closed along the levee system. Now they're just taking it day by day, said Dan Larson, city maintenance foreman, while keeping a close eye on the water levels.

The Two Rivers above the Hallock dam was still solid ice Wednesday, but as water flowing out of Lake Bronson's dam made it downstream, the ice broke up overnight and was wide open Thursday morning. Huge chunks of ice were on the shoreline in Gilbert Olson Park, where the Two Rivers runs

#### TWO RIVERS: Page A3

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flaqpole out in front of Twamley (Hall) and say 'I'm here to stay,' or if he makes some kind of five-year, written-in-blood commitment, I don't know. But I think it would be very hard for him to come back now and operate well at the university."

**ED SCHAFER** 

After the announcement, Kennedy was interviewed by Boulder's Daily

**COMMENTS:** Page A5

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## Disagreements on GF south-end bridge location continue

#### **By Emily Allen** Grand Forks Herald

On any given school day, there are roughly 1,000 students on the Cherry Street and 32nd Avenue South block in Grand Forks, according to Parent-Teacher Organization presidents Katy Johnson of Kelly Elementary School and Heather Strandell of Schroeder Middle School.

Meanwhile, the local Metropolitan Planning Organization, or MPO, gave the same street an F rating in 2017 when the transportation agency judged traffic and road conditions on BRIDGE: Page A2

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32nd Avenue South as research for its 2045 Long Range Transportation

plan. "The traffic on 32nd Avenue is already crazy. It is so busy, and it creates great anxiety to me as a parent and the president of the PTO," Strandell said.

The two PTO presidents were among several people at Grand Forks City Hall on Wednesday night for the most recent meeting about the MPO's recommendation to build a

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From Page A1

pointed" than intended. He said North Dakota is welcoming and inclusive.

"I did not mean to offend and for it to give a negative impression of North Dakota and apologize," he said.

Nonetheless, the comment was the subject of criticism Thursday.

Ed Schafer, former governor of North Dakota and interim president at UND before Kennedy's arrival, called Kennedy's comments "hogwash' and said Foster was welcomed with open arms on campus. He praised her work with the school.

"This wasn't about Angelique," he said. "This was about President Kennedy bumping her position, without notice and without posting to an unneeded chief of staff, and then a large salary increase and then saying 'oh, you don't have to work here.' It didn't have anything to do with her color or her race or gender. It had to do with his actions."

Foster received a \$30,000 pay raise late last year, bringing her annual salary to \$114,000. The move to Texas included an additional \$25,000 for travel.

Grand



Kennedy "called people in our community as well as in the state – he called us racist misogynists. That's pretty negative. I don't think you can get any more negative than that.

"To me, it's horribly disappointing," Sande said. "I think, as someone born and raised in Grand Forks, I think the people in Grand Forks don't look at skin color. We look at people's capabilities and history and we also are very, I believe ... very pragmatic and look at situations individually.

"To imply the fact that because Angelique Foster is African American and a female that we wouldn't think she's qualified is utterly amazing," he said. "It's amazing that anyone could ever imply that. Sande said Foster does great work but that the community generally "didn't think a chief of staff could work from out of town." "I think that is all there was to it, and I'm horribly disappointed. If President Kennedy actually feels that way, he hasn't spent enough time getting to know the people of Grand Forks," he said.

manages the day-today happenings at the campus, but should he be appointed president of the University of Colorado he would be overseeing four campuses, Sharkley said. The chancellors of each campus report to the president, Sharkley said. Sharkley said Kennedy's experience in business, higher education and government was a "trifecta" for the board. Kennedy's nomination

as the finalist for the position is a good reflection on UND, Sharkley said.

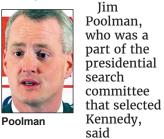
#### 'Negative vortex'

Many have been critical of changes Kennedy made during his tenure, while others praised him. Schafer said Kennedy can be polarizing because "he has tackled some tough issues and forced some needed change at the university. That never goes well. People don't like change, employees don't like change, faculty don't like change, the community doesn't like change."

"You're in this sort of negative vortex to start with when you push change."

Kennedy is viewed by some community members as "arrogant" and aggressive, Schafer said.

"He seems, and I don't think he is this way when I deal with him personally, but he seems to be in the public a little arrogant. He comes across as a little all-knowing and that rubs people the wrong way," he said.



Kennedy "is not afraid to make hard decisions," which made him

appealing as a candidate. He has an incredible ability to articulate a vision and articulate his strategic plan for UND – it made me excited," Poolman said. "Unfortunately, he had a knack of making missteps where he seems to be tone-deaf."

News

years ago.

Colorado.

Smith told the Daily

Camera she wants to see

various issues raised by

community members in

visits in Colorado and

and addressing any

questions and how

Kennedy said.

at noon.

tweeted.

meeting the individuals

together we can elevate

Schafer noted the

very liberal, especially

The Committee on

**Rights and Compensation**,

an independent graduate labor union at CU Boulder,

tweeted about Kennedy's

April 26 campus visit and

asked students to protest

coalition of students and

student orgs speaking out

so that Mark Kennedy will

not be President of the CU

system," the organization

Grand Forks resident

Grant Shaft, co-chair

search committee that

nominated Kennedy for

the UND presidency, said

Kennedy's congressional

record when vetting him

for the position at UND.

members were aware of

in a legislative body for

that I would weigh very

I would think that they

would fit the position

heavily as far as whether

one party or another

would not be a factor

his political past, but "the

fact that somebody served

He said committee

the group did not consider

of the presidential

"We stand with a

compared with UND.

Boulder campus is

CU's impact and renown,"

across the CU community

"I look forward to my

how Kennedy responds to

feels today, rather than 15 somewhere else." Schafer said when

> companies and institutions attract good people, they often lose good people, as well. He said he wasn't surprised to learn Kennedy was looking for another job or was recruited by headhunters.

Although he wasn't on the search committee, Schafer said it would take a while for a president to settle in and develop long-term.

"For President Kennedy to be leaving after three years, it sort of gave us a false start," Schafer said.



ment Corp., also said Kenendy's early exploration of the Florida job hurt him at UND.

"From a momentum standpoint, I think the strategic plan had strong momentum and that took a little wind out of sails," he said.

Schafer said he has a good relationship with Kennedy, and the president asks for Schafer's advice on a regular basis.

"I think he's done well in the operations of the university (in his tenure)," Schafer said. "He's made some changes financially. He has moved the campus forward. He developed the strategic plan, which I think is a good one for the university. All the measurements of education are good."

While Kennedy has done well at providing a vision for the school, he has also struggled in other areas.

"Obviously, he's had a personality conflict with a major donor or two, he's had some controversy with things like the golf course," Šchafer said. "Anything you're going to do is going to have some controversy, but it seems that he's chosen some high-profile-type controversies that have raised eyebrows."

Not everything was a controversy, however, said Barry Wilfahrt, president/ CEO of the Grand Forks-East Grand Forks Chamber of Commerce.

"Mark had some good vision and good direction. He looked at how we can move the university forward in a changing world," said Wilfahrt. "I think he did a good job engaging people in terms of getting us to take a look at all of the possibilities."

Kennedy's contract with the State Board of Higher Education is through June 2020. NDUS spokeswoman Billie Jo Lorius said the North Dakota University System has not received a resignation letter. The board has not taken any action on the matter.

#### Could he stay at UND?

As talks swirl in Colorado about whether to return to UND at this point.

"That depends on him, but it would be tough," Schafer said. "... I don't know if he has to weld some handcuffs to the flagpole out in front of Twamley (Hall) and say 'I'm here to stay,' or if he makes some kind of five-year, written-inblood commitment, I don't know. But I think it would be very hard for him to come back now and operate well at the university."

Poolman said he thinks it would be hard for Kennedy to return to UND after the comments made to the Daily Camera.

"I think he threw critics and supporters both under the bus to claim that there was some sort of sexism or racism involved in the critique of that poor decision, and it's just not factual," Poolman said. "And what I told him was, 'If you're going to leave, leave gracefully."

Poolman said he is concerned Kennedv "does not want to be here" amid the job searches, but he has faith the university will move forward – with or without Kennedy.

"The institution has survived a number of transitions and will survive and thrive in this one, as well," he said. "UND is bigger than any one person.

Mook is the higher education and UND reporter. Call her at 701-780-1134 or email her at smook@ gfherald.com. You can also follow her on Twitter @sydney\_mook.

of president. I think it's unrelated." "I think going forward, even if we had President Kennedy in front of us again, I don't think that that would be a concern to us," Shaft said.

Schafer said it isn't fair to go after Kennedy's congressional voting record because it was many years ago and is not pertinent to his role as president.

"The way he talks and acts, I don't find him to be a particularly conservative Republican, but maybe he is. I don't know," Schafer said. "But I don't think that should be an issue when hiring



#### **Regents chair** praises Kennedy

University of Colorado Board of Regents Chair Sue Sharkley said she appreciates Kennedy's knowledge and vision of higher education. She said Kennedy spoke of his UND strategic plan and what his plans would be as the president of the University of Colorado during his interview.

Kennedy's efforts in rural North Dakota and in online education were also impressive, Sharkley said. Sharkley represents the state's fourth congressional district, which is a primarily rural area and includes the cities of Greeley and Parker, Colo.

The regents also discussed various controversies Kennedy has been involved with in his time at UND. Sharkley said regents were satisfied with Kennedy's answers regarding various controversies at UND.

She did not have any concerns with Kennedy as a candidate. At UND, Kennedy

#### Voting record

Late Wednesday, Colorado regent Lesley Smith, a Democrat who is an at-large representative, tweeted about Kennedy's candidacy, and his congressional voting record.

"There's a 14-d vetting period before we vote for President. Some information about Mark has come to light that is concerning; my colleagues and I will be exploring this further,' she tweeted.

Kennedy was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 2001 to 2007. He voted to restrict abortion rights and voted in favor of an amendment banning same-sex marriage.

Smith told the Daily Camera that regents had not explicitly discussed Kennedy's voting record during his interview and she was not aware of it.

"We all want to be aware of anything that might be a flash point," she told the Boulder newspaper.

Sharkley said the regents had discussed Kennedy's voting record during the interview process.

"I issued a strong anti-discrimination and harassment policy covering sexual orientation and gender identity at UND, Kennedy said. "I remain committed to being a strong advocate for diversity."

Sharkley said Kennedy's views on issues like same-sex marriage matter based on how he

a president. You hire them for their capability in administration and their understanding of education, for their commitment to student education. What that has to do with political stripes is beyond me."

#### Job searches

Kennedy has attempted to leave UND before.

In February 2018, he was announced as one of four presidential finalists at the University of Central Florida. Kennedy ultimately was not offered the position.

This February, UND told the Herald that Kennedy had no interest in jobs outside of the university. At that time, rumors were circulating that Kennedy had applied to be the president of the University of Minnesota. He told the Herald in December he did not apply for the position.

Schafer said he believes Kennedy was using UND as a stepping stone last year when he applied at the University of Central Florida, noting he had only been at the university for a year and a half.

Schafer said when Kennedy returned from Florida it seemed he had "learned his lesson" and traveled the state on a "proverbial apology tour," saying that he loved UND and was committed to the school.

Then, Kennedy said he was recruited for the Colorado job.

Poolman said he's "disappointed that it seems ever since he stepped foot on campus, he's wanted to go



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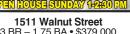
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