

STENEHJEM

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House of Representatives in 1976. After four years in the lower chamber, Stenehjøm served two decades in the Senate, including seven years with his older brother, Bob, who later became Senate majority leader.

After a successful bid for attorney general in 2000, Stenehjøm won his last five elections to the office by landslide margins.

"I ran for public office because of my love for North Dakota, and my love for our state has only grown during that time," Stenehjøm said.

In 2016, Stenehjøm had his eyes set on the governor's office and even won the Republican endorsement in a hotly contested race with Bismarck Rep. Rick Becker and Fargo entrepreneur Doug Burgum. However, Burgum prevailed in an ensuing GOP primary election, dashing Stene-

hjøm's chances. Burgum said Friday that Stenehjøm is the "epitome of a dedicated public servant," adding that his "chief concern has always been the safety and well-being of North Dakota citizens."

Stenehjøm noted that he still has more than a year left in office, and he will focus on wrapping up ongoing litigation with opioid producers and marketers, getting the federal government to pick up the tab for policing during the Dakota Access Pipeline protests and prosecuting out-of-state robocallers.

The attorney general said the best advice he can give to his successor in the "incredibly important office" is to follow the rule of the law and hire the best people and let them do their jobs.

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DIVERSION

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about 800 workers, a number that will taper until the project is completed in six years.

The Red River Valley Alliance is comprised of ACCIONA, a construction company based in Spain; Shikun & Binui, a construction company based in Israel; and North American Construction Group, based in Canada.

The Diversion Authority is considering expanding its staff to handle additional responsibilities, Paulsen said.

Employees working for consultants typically cost three times more than those on staff because consultants' fees reflect a profit margin as well as higher overhead costs, he said. An engineer, Paulsen worked for engineering consulting firms before becoming the project's executive director.

"Any public employee we have hired, it has been a net savings for the Authority in our hiring process," Paulsen said.

Since hiring its own

core staff, the Diversion Authority has saved an estimated \$7 million over a couple years by taking on work previously done by consultants, he said.

"As we've been hiring people, we've actually been realizing a net savings in the people," Paulsen said. He has proposed trimming consultants further to annually save an estimated \$1.8 million.

The Diversion Authority's administrative budget is \$1.2 million per year, consisting of pay and benefits for employees as well as supplies.

Early next year, the Diversion Authority expects to move its offices to a building it will share with the Red River Valley Alliance and Jacobs, since the three work closely together and would benefit from being housed close to each other, Paulsen said.

"We're going to have a building with a lot of people," likely located in southwest Fargo, he said.



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