



News & Notes



ELECTION DAY IS NOV. 3, 2026

MEET YOUR LOCAL CANDIDATES

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2026 – make your voice heard and exercise your right to vote. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 3. Visit the Carver County Elections website at

www.carvercountymn.gov/elections to check your voter registration, find your polling place, view a sample ballot, and explore absentee and early voting options.

CITY OF COLOGNE

MAYOR, COUNCIL CANDIDATES

While there are Minnesota, Carver County, City of Cologne and Township elections on the ballot this year, this issue of *News & Notes* is focused on introducing the candidates for the City of Cologne Mayor (one 2-year term,) and City Council positions (two four-year terms).

Each candidate was asked the same questions; excerpts from those who responded are included in this issue and the full unedited responses and “about me” bios are posted on the City’s website at <https://www.colognemn.com/government/city-council/>

Residents are also encouraged to view the recording from the City of Cologne Candidate Forum that was held Sept. 9, 2026. The Forum, which was hosted by the League of Women Voters of Eastern Carver County, provided an opportunity to hear candidates discuss the issues that are important to community members. To view the recording, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDPm8NE4oRc>



In September, the League of Women Voters of Eastern Carver County hosted a Candidate Forum in Cologne. Pictured, from left to right, are the City of Cologne candidates who participated in the forum: Mayoral candidates Lona Hendricks and Matt Lein; and City Council candidates Cassie Broll, Jayson Read, Matthew “Wally” Waldack and Scott Williams. Not pictured are Council candidates Jon Howard and Sean Ulvila.

CITY OF COLOGNE REMINDER: STAY INFORMED

To receive future issues of the *News & Notes* newsletter and other email alerts from the City, please sign up here: www.colognemn.com/residents/email-alerts/ Each issue will also be posted on the City’s website at www.colognemn.com/residents/cologne-newsletter/

CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Note: Each candidate was asked the same questions; excerpts from those who responded are included in this issue and the full unedited responses and “about me” bios are posted on the City of Cologne’s website at <https://www.colognemn.com/goverment/city-council/>

CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR: LONA HENDRICKS, MATT LEIN

Q: What are the top three strategic priorities for the City of Cologne over the next four years, and why?

Lona Hendricks: My first priority is to create a vision for our community so when our wastewater treatment plant is replaced (second priority) we can align our decisions with the direction we are going. In the meantime, we can work on my third priority which is revitalizing our downtown. To accomplish this, we need to create an environment where resident feedback is welcome and each resident’s voice weighs the same as their neighbor’s. We need to encourage civic engagement by creating commissions and working collaboratively with our town’s businesses, non-profits, and community initiatives.

Matt Lein: Build a new wastewater treatment plant. Cologne is nearing the end of its capacity and will not grow any further without this in place.

B: Plan for housing growth. With the commute into the bigger cities becoming easier and faster, Cologne could have a big demand for new housing. Keeping the small town feel with responsible growth will be the key to success.

C: Plan for bringing in new businesses. This starts with supporting the businesses we already have, since they’re our best ambassadors. I’ll also focus on the types of businesses that fit our community and strengthen our main street and quality of life, because that’s what makes people want to locate here.

Q: How would you balance responsible growth, infrastructure needs, and preservation of Cologne’s character?

Lona Hendricks: Cologne’s growth is stunted by our wastewater treatment plant’s capacity. As replacement plans are finalized, we should use our time to plan for our future. Responsible growth is setting clear distinctions between our “needs” and “wants” before setting priorities.

Residents have expressed that they want to preserve our “small town feel,” but what does that mean? If we want to stay small then we need to be ok driving a distance to get groceries, attending events, and commuting for work. If we want to avoid franchises then we need to support our small businesses even when it’s more expensive.

Matt Lein: I see responsible growth, infrastructure, and Cologne’s character as one decision, not three. Growth should happen at a pace our water, sewer, and roads can actually support, so we plan infrastructure ahead of development and make sure new projects pay their fair share instead of passing costs to current residents. At the same time, we guide where and how we grow through our comprehensive plan and zoning, keeping the small-town feel residents value: a walkable downtown, nearby neighbors, and the surrounding open space. Growth that fits Cologne is welcome. Growth that strains our budget or changes who we are needs a closer look.

CANDIDATES FOR COUNCIL: CASSIE BROLL, JON HOWARD, JAYSON READ, MATTHEW ‘WALLY’ WALDACK, SEAN ULVILA, SCOTT WILLIAMS

Q: What are the top three strategic priorities for the City of Cologne over the next four years, and why?

Cassie Broll: My top three priorities are community engagement, developing the Cologne 2050 Plan, and addressing our wastewater treatment plant. While the treatment plant limits our ability to grow, it also provides an opportunity to thoughtfully plan and invest in the Cologne we want. With resident input, we can identify priorities, plan for infrastructure, and begin cultivating relationships with businesses that complement our community. We also need stronger communication between city government and residents. Residents cannot provide meaningful input on issues they don’t know are being considered. Making information accessible and creating clear opportunities for feedback is essential to Cologne’s future.

Candidates cont. on page 3

Jon Howard: No response submitted.

Jayson Read: Planning is crucial to keeping growth in line with our small town values. We must set a plan for how we'll grow, what we'll avoid, and what defines our town and residents, and keep revisiting it as constraints and lifestyle change. Community engagement brings residents' voices into the council chambers and keeps the council accountable to their wants and needs. Fiscal responsibility and careful spending are critical while we wait on the needed Waste Water Treatment Facility upgrades to expand. Costs to run the city continue to rise, and we're nearing the point of maxing out our ability to add more rooftops.

Matthew "Wally" Waldack: I believe controlled growth, budget stability and infrastructure maintenance are the three largest priorities and struggles for our city in the next four years and beyond. Growth is fickle, we want to grow however our current opportunities are limited by the lack of available properties. Responsible budgeting means keeping taxes predictable, the unpleasant reality is taxes are probably not coming down. Therefore, making sure every single dollar spent brings real value to our residents. Some of Cologne's most valuable assets are our roads, water, sewer and city equipment. Proactive maintenance protects the investments we've already paid for and investing in its future while budgeting for improvements ahead of time is critical to keeping harsh tax impacts at bay.

Sean Ulvila: No response submitted.

Scott Williams: No response submitted.

Q: How would you balance responsible growth, infrastructure needs, and preservation of Cologne's character?

Cassie Broll: Growth should be intentional, not simply pursued for the sake of getting bigger. We need to thoughtfully plan for infrastructure and ensure we understand the long-term costs and benefits before making development decisions. The Cologne 2050 Community Plan will be an opportunity to engage residents and existing businesses in shaping our future. By prioritizing development that supports our community, investing in Main Street and shared spaces, and preserving our open spaces and small-town character, we can welcome thoughtful growth while

protecting what makes Cologne special. My goal is to help build a community we'll be proud of in 50 years.

Jon Howard: No response submitted.

Jayson Read: Most Cologne residents love our small town feel, and I want it to remain a core value. As we begin the Met Council's 2050 regional planning, we must consider what Cologne will look like over the next 20+ years. A key question is what housing we'll need to support growth without sacrificing our values. Being strategic about housing types, and the infrastructure beneath them, will clarify our future costs to build and maintain as we grow. We need to look beyond "more rooftops" and ask "what KIND of rooftops" will shape Cologne for years to come.

Matthew "Wally" Waldack: It comes down to being realistic and cautious with our resources. Right now, our infrastructure demands have us in a bit of a stalemate. Current needs (e.g., waste water treatment plant) are financially hindering our future growth. To break that cycle, we need to move carefully while opening up opportunities for commercial and industrial expansion. Bringing in businesses builds our tax base so existing homeowners aren't carrying the burden alone. As for Cologne's character, I firmly believe our character isn't just in the buildings, it's in the people who live and work here. If we protect our residents' wallets and grow smartly with light industrial and business/commercial space, we preserve what makes Cologne special while building a solid foundation for the future.

Sean Ulvila: No response submitted.

Scott Williams: No response submitted.

READ MORE FROM OUR CANDIDATES

To read more from the candidates, please see additional questions and responses on the City of Cologne's website at

<https://www.colognemn.com/government/city-council/>

For the most current schedule and activities at the Cologne Community Center, visit www.cologne.mn.com and click on the Digital Bulletin Board.

1211 Village Parkway
PO Box 120, Cologne, MN 55322



Leadership Team

Diane Davis, ddavis@carvercountymn.gov
Lona Hendricks, lona.j.hendricks@gmail.com
Jayson Read, read.jayson@gmail.com



Scan the QR code at left to follow the Communities of Belonging Facebook page.



City of Cologne

1211 Village Parkway, PO Box 120, Cologne, MN 55322

Phone: 952-466-2064

Emergency/after-hours public works: 952-466-5601 and leave a voice mail message.

Email: info@colognemn.com

Website: www.colognemn.com

City Office is open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday-Friday

City Hall holiday closures: Tuesday, Nov. 11 (Veterans Day);

Thurs., Nov. 27-Fri., Nov. 28 (Thanksgiving); Thurs., Dec. 25 (Christmas)

City Administrator: Michelle Morrison

Utility Billing Clerk: Jenna McInnis

Cologne City Council: Mayor Matt Lein, Sarah Bruss, Carol Szaroletta, Jeri Bowers, Selmer Olson

The City Council meets on the 1st and 3rd Mondays, 7 p.m.

Planning Commission meets on the 1st Wednesday, 6 p.m.

Citizens are welcome to attend meetings and learn about City Council work.

ALSO ON YOUR BALLOT: MINNESOTA CONSTITUTIONAL AMMENDMENT

On Election Day Nov. 3, Minnesota voters will be asked to update our state's constitution by voting on an amendment to modernize how Minnesota's Permanent School Fund (PSF) distributes revenue to public schools.

Visit the [Minnesota Permanent School Fund Constitutional Amendment website](#) for more information. As a reminder, a blank vote is a No vote on this ballot question.

CA COLOGNE ACADEMY

MINNESOTA CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

KNOW BEFORE YOU VOTE

EVERY MINNESOTA SCHOOL DISTRICT BENEFITS.

BLANK = NO
Leaving the amendment blank has the same effect as voting No.

WHAT YOU'LL SEE ON YOUR BALLOT

"Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to increase the funding going to all school districts from the permanent school fund, which is a fund that supports school districts without raising individual income or property taxes, effective July 1, 2027?"

YES NO

NOVEMBER 3, 2026 *Your Vote Matters!*