

polar connections

Summer 2024



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annual meeting

Our 72nd annual meeting
was held on June 6

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strong passwords

Learn the importance of and
what makes a strong password

On the cover:



Members enjoy a meal before the start of the meeting.

Annual Members' Meeting Held

The 72nd annual meeting of members of Polar Communications was called to order by President Amber Meyer at 6:00 p.m. on June 6, 2024, at the Park River American Legion Coliseum, preceded by a welcome given by CEO Karl Blake; an invocation given by Director Cindy Hejl; the Pledge of Allegiance; an introduction of special guests in attendance by CEO Blake; and the introduction of current board members by President Meyer.

Secretary Lori Dahl reported that the official notice was mailed to all members on May 22, 2024. Ninety-five members were registered before the meeting started, a quorum was present, and business could be conducted.

President Meyer requested a motion to dispense with the reading of the 2023 annual members meeting minutes and approval as printed in the Polar Annual Report. Wes Welch moved these minutes to be approved. Gordon Johnson seconded the motion, and it carried.

CEO Blake presented the meeting rules; subsequently, President Meyer called for a motion to approve the meeting rules. Dan Johnson moved to adopt the rules as presented. Jim Longtin seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

A total of ninety-five members registered during the meeting. A total of 150 members/guests were served at the meal before the start of the business meeting.

Attorney DuBois explained that the election process was in accordance with the company by-laws. Polar members seeking re-election were Jim Longtin (District 1), Wes Welch (District 2), and Brian Udby (District 3).

President Meyer requested a motion for a unanimous ballot to be cast for Jim Longtin (District 1), Wes Welch (District 2), and Brian Udby (District 3). Cindy Hejl moved for a unanimous ballot, and Chris Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried. Jim Longtin was declared the director of District #1 for a three-year term. Wes Welch was declared director of District #2 for a three-year term. Brian Udby was declared the director of District #3 for a three-year term.

President Meyer and CEO Blake made a joint presentation to the members.

President Meyer and CEO Blake jointly presented the 2024 John G. Walters Scholarship to Jayden Bondy-Dakota Prairie High School; Madilyn Gauthier-ND Center for Distance Education; Graesen Helgoe-Cavalier High School; Connor Hodek-Park River Area Schools; Amilia Lillehaugen-Dakota Prairie High School; and Siri Olson-Grafton High School

Also receiving the 2024 John G. Walters Scholarship but not in attendance are: Kodi Bell-Park River Area School; Evan Feltman-Valley Edinburg High School; Kelsey Gemmill-Larimore High School; Elyse McMillan-Midway High School; Isabella Moen-Valley Edinburg High School; Kennedy Ostlie-Northwood Public School; Calvin Otto-Valley Edinburg High School; Addison Skibicki-Fordville-Lankin High School; and Ross Thompson-Lakota High School

Secretary-Treasurer Dahl reported to the members.

President Meyer called for any further business.

President Meyer adjourned the meeting upon a motion by Cindy Hejl and a second by Dan Johnson.

The winner of the \$500 prize drawing was Marvin Sola from Park River.



Directors Re-elected to Board

Jim Longtin, Wes Welch, and Brian Udby were re-elected to the Polar Board of Directors at the annual meeting on Thursday, June 6, 2024. All three will serve a three-year term.



Jim Longtin
Neche, District 1



Wes Welch
Park River, District 2



Brian Udby
Lankin, District 3



welcome our New Employee

Kage Eisenbarth from Park River started working with Polar's construction and cable splicing crew in June 2024. Previously, he worked as a HAZMAT driver delivering diesel and propane in the Bakken Oil Field. In his free time, Kage enjoys hunting, fishing, and riding his motorcycle.

We're growing!

Are you looking for a challenging position with one of the nation's leaders in rural telecommunications? Consider a career with Polar Communications. At Polar Communications, we strive to make our company a great place to work and our communities a great place to live. Enjoy the benefits of working with tech-savvy, friendly, and hard-working people! Polar offers an excellent benefits package that includes top-of-the-line health and dental insurance, life insurance, and a 401k retirement plan with employer contributions. All this, in addition to paid time off and free or discounted voice and data services, is available if you reside within our territory. Visit polarcomm.com for information.



FRS Youth Tour

Since 1995, the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) has been offering a unique educational experience to thousands of high school students across rural America through the Youth Tour. This program brings more than 100 high school students and chaperones from rural communities to Washington, DC, for five days. It's a chance to learn about legislative and agency processes and the crucial role of broadband services in rural communities. The students also get to meet peers from other states, visit historical sites, and gain insights into Capitol Hill and the Federal government.

Highlights of their trip included touring Mount Vernon, Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian's Natural History and American History museums, the Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the many historic memorials and monuments that were so educational. They especially enjoyed the night tour of the National Mall and visiting the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to hear from its employees about what they do.

For more information on the Youth Tour, visit our website or frs.org/programs.

I wish there were words to describe how much fun I had and the amount of happiness and friendship the trip has given me. I wish I could live it all over again! **Thea**

I had a wonderful trip, and I hope to have the opportunity to visit DC again. Seeing the history was one of my favorite parts of the trip, and experiencing how different the way of life is in Washington versus North Dakota was interesting. **Ingrid**

Polar proudly sponsored Ingrid Myrdal of Edinburg and Thea Thompson of Park River for this enriching trip.



Polar Manages Cavalier School Technology Needs

As the school year ends, students in grades 4–12 at Cavalier drop their Chromebooks in the assigned bins. The students have used them all year as part of their learning. The team at Polar Extreme IT will now go through each computer, check the condition, make repairs as necessary, and update the software. In the fall, returning students will receive their Chromebooks back to use for another year.

In July 2023, The Cavalier school contracted with Polar Extreme IT to manage their informational technology needs. Not only does Polar maintain the 458 student Chromebooks, plus staff computers, but they also assist with Smartboards, printers, and other technical needs. Over the summer, some initial work was done throughout the building to optimize the school Wi-Fi. New cables were run, and additional access points were added.



Not having a dedicated on-site IT staff member required some adjustment, but the benefits have come. With Polar, a team is available to help, and most issues can be handled remotely. More than one task can be accomplished at once. Kelli may be at the school, while Matt and Trevor can handle other needs from the Polar office in Park River. Staff members email their issues to principals Jonathan Moquist and Tara Hartje, who determine the urgency of the request. They then submit trouble tickets via email to the Extreme IT team at Polar, which manages them.

Two student interns, Aydan Doll and Diamond Cano, supported the school staff and Polar. They were available to offer assistance, complete screen repairs, and distribute spare Chromebooks and accessories. Aydan, in particular, found the experience valuable and would recommend it to others interested in a technology or computer career. His dedication, spending about an hour each day on this work, was greatly appreciated.

The school has a technology committee that serves as a platform for staff to voice their needs, which are then collectively addressed. Polar Extreme IT plays a crucial role in this process by assisting the team in implementing solutions as the budget allows. Initially, the committee held online Microsoft Teams meetings with Polar twice a month but later reduced the frequency to once per month to ensure efficient communication and decision-making.

The Polar Extreme IT team has enjoyed their work with the Cavalier School and looks forward to another year.

If your business is looking for a solution to its IT needs, contact us for a free on-site visit and estimate.

284.7221

extremeit@polartel.com



Previous page:
Polar employee Kelli Schatz assists school secretary Sarah Gunderson.

Above: Bins for students to place their Chromebooks at the end of the year.

Right: Polar Extreme IT supervisor Matt Almen and IT Specialist Trevor Callahan.





ENTER OUR Photo Contest!

Share with us the beauty you've captured in your favorite nature, landscape, and scenery photos within the Polar Service territory. Your photos could be prominently featured on our directory cover and in other Polar marketing, giving you a chance to be recognized for your talent and love for nature.

Winners will receive a \$25 bill credit.

Rules & Guidelines:

- Send up to five photos to marketing@polartel.com. Include your name and Polar phone or account number.
- You must be a current Polar customer to be eligible for selection.
- Photos should be in JPG format and preferably at least 300 DPI.

Contest Deadline: September 15, 2024

By submitting a photo, you agree to release freely and voluntarily with full knowledge that you are forgoing any right to claim damages of any kind for the use of your photographic image by Polar. You agree that Polar is authorized to use your photographic image in their marketing materials.

Phone & Internet Assistance Programs

Lifeline is a federal program dedicated to making phone and Internet service more affordable for low-income households. This benefit provides eligible consumers a monthly discount of up to \$9.25.

For our customers in Minnesota, Minnesota's Telephone Assistance Plan (TAP) offers a monthly credit on your landline telephone service. The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission of the Department of Commerce administers and supervises this program. This benefit provides eligible consumers a monthly discount of up to \$10.

individual eligibility

You qualify for a discount if you participate in any one of these government programs:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Medicaid
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA)
- Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

household eligibility

A household is a group of people that share income and expenses. You are only allowed to get one Lifeline discount per household.

—OR—

- Your income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines.

Learn more

Lifeline:
www.lifelinesupport.org

MTAP:
mn.gov/puc/consumers/telephone




Access our handy online directory at polarphonebook.com



Directory Listing Updates

Adamson-Austin Funeral.....	403 W Divide Ave Drayton	701-454-3333
Alkofer Kay L.....	810 Park St W Park River	701-284-6428
Amundson Rita.....	16475 59th St SE Walcott	701-469-2002
Berger Gary.....	1767 22nd St NE Emerado	701-594-9234
Bina Dennis & Patty.....	116 Sandwood Pl Park River	701-284-6158
Clifford Farmers Co-Op Elevator.....	1575 155th Ave Se Hunter	701-874-2112
Coastal Television Of North Dakota LLC.....	15051 109th St Ne Neche	701-886-7474
Connin Landon M.....	110 Millana Ct Cavalier	701-265-4005
Dairy Queen.....	305 Park St E Park River	701-284-6799
Fahey Amber.....		701-247-2103
Hanson Jalicia.....	306 Broadway S Michigan	701-259-2260
Happy Campers Childcare.....	670 Main St Arthur	701-967-8323
Holter Mervin.....	16022 93rd St NE Drayton	701-454-6447
Huhta Sally.....	Edinburg	701-993-8101
KD Cafe.....	105 Main St Hunter	701-874-2100
McVile Motor.....	515 South St W Michigan	701-259-2277
Spencer John M.....	636 Dakota Ct St Thomas	701-257-6444
The Chuck Stop LLC.....	501 5th St Crystal	701-657-2266
Valley Hardware.....	3035 Glendale Ave Hoople	701-894-6352
Westling Lee & Laurie.....	Farm Drayton	218-455-6592



Creating Strong Passwords



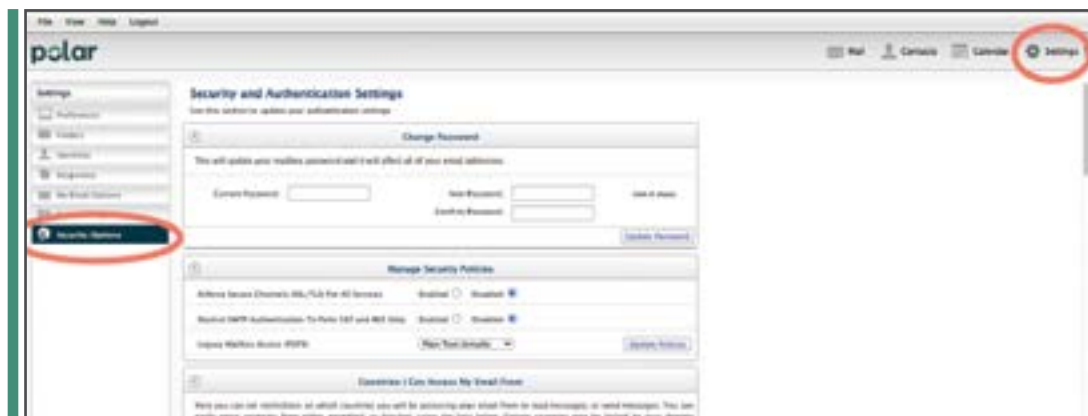
You may have noticed this message when logging in to your Polar webmail account - **WARNING: Your password has been detected as being weak. Please update your password in Security Settings.**



Protecting your email account with a strong password is especially critical. That's because password reset links often go to your email inbox. If a hacker takes over your email account, they can get password reset links for your other accounts. Then, they can change the passwords and take over those accounts, too.

To protect your account from cyberattacks, create a strong password that's hard to guess. Start by making your password long — Polar email requires 12 characters, a number, one uppercase, one lowercase, and a symbol. A long password can be challenging to remember, so you may find it easier to use a passphrase, a longer string of text that makes up a phrase or sentence. Combining uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols will help strengthen your password.

Here are the steps to update your Polar webmail account password:



- Click Settings
- Click Security Options
- Enter your current password and then your new password, considering the requirements above.
- Confirm your new password by typing it again, then click update password.

To help you remember your passwords, a web browser, mobile browser, and password manager can save your passwords for you.

Strong passwords are important for all your online accounts, not just Polar webmail. You create and keep lots of personal information in your accounts, so you want good protections in place.

Please contact us at 701.284.7221 if you need assistance changing your Polar email password.

Our Website Has a New Look!

We are excited to announce the launch of our newly redesigned website! Our goal with this new design is to create a user-friendly browsing experience for our trusted and valued customers. Here's what you can look forward to with the new updates:

Sleek and Modern Design

Our website now boasts a fresh, clean design with a modern look and feel. The new layout is streamlined and intuitive, making finding what you're looking for easier. The updated color scheme and improved visuals provide a more engaging user experience.

Enhanced Navigation

We understand that ease of navigation is crucial. Our redesigned menu structure is now more intuitive, helping you quickly access information about our products, services, and resources. Whether you are a new visitor or a returning customer, you'll find that getting around the site is smoother than ever.

Mobile Optimization

In today's fast-paced world, accessing websites on the go is essential. Our new website is fully optimized for mobile devices, ensuring you can easily browse from your smartphone or tablet. The responsive design automatically adjusts to fit any screen size, providing a seamless experience no matter what device you use.

Improved Content and Resources

We've enriched our website with a wealth of new content and resources. From detailed product descriptions and high-quality images to informative blog posts and helpful guides, you'll find everything you need to make informed decisions and stay up-to-date with the latest trends and insights.

Faster Load Times

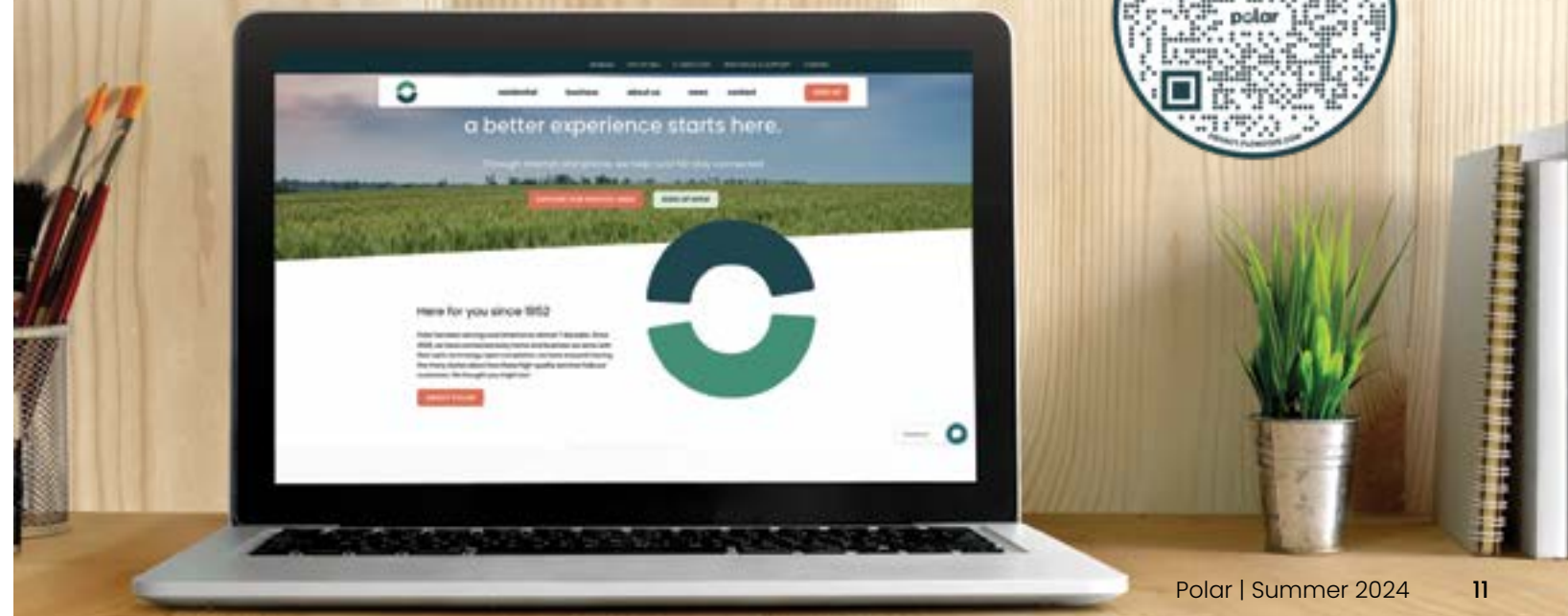
Nobody likes waiting for pages to load. Our new website features enhanced performance with faster load times, ensuring you can access the information you need without delay. This improvement enhances your overall browsing experience and allows you to accomplish tasks more efficiently.

Interactive Features

We've added several interactive elements to make your experience more engaging. From live chat support to Internet speed comparisons, our website offers more ways to connect with us and explore our offerings.


We invite you to explore the new website and discover all the exciting changes we've made. Your satisfaction is our top priority, and we believe these enhancements will provide you with a superior online experience. Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to serving you better with our redesigned website!

www.polarcomm.com





PO Box 270 | 110 4th St E
Park River, ND 58270



Whether commercial or personal, summer often means outdoor projects, and outdoor projects often mean digging. But what happens if you damage a utility? The cost could mean thousands of dollars in repairs and fines. Soon, that little project is a big project.

There is a free solution – Call 811!
Let them know about your project, and all your underground utilities will be located and marked so you can avoid damage.

Dial 811 or visit call811.com to submit a request online.

