

January 5, 2026

Citizens of Jasper,

In 2018, I stepped forward to serve as Mayor of Jasper, filling a vacancy that marked the beginning of an incredible journey. I was elected in a caucus among several strong candidates, and after completing my initial term, I committed to running for a full term in 2019. At that time, my plan was to retire at the end of that term, in December 2023, at the age of 70. However, despite challenges such as the COVID pandemic, economic uncertainty, staff retirements, rising medical costs, competitive recruiting, and aging infrastructure, I found great joy in my role with the city. I was easily convinced to run for another term to see key projects through. Over the years, I've learned that there will always be priorities and projects. It would be easy to say, "the city needs me to finish these before I retire," but the truth is, it's time to pass the torch. While I still love serving Jasper and Dubois County, it is time that I turn over the leadership to individuals with the passion and energy to execute our new long-range plan and guide the city into the future. I also want to devote more time to my family, who have been incredibly supportive throughout these past seven years. They have endured long work weeks, late evenings, missed birthdays and outings so that I could serve with passion and a smile. Now, I need to focus on my health and family by reducing my work commitments. My doctor, friends, and peers have all supported this decision, and I know it is the right one for me personally. Serving as Mayor has been the most rewarding role of my life, second only to being a husband, father and grandfather. I've fulfilled my passion to give back to the community that I love. In many ways, I have lived out my dream of coaching through this position.

Thank you to everyone who has supported me and made this experience so meaningful. I will do my best to live up to your expectations as I "downshift". While I am stepping away from a full-time role, I plan to remain engaged and continue contributing to a bright future for Jasper and Dubois County.

My resignation will take effect March 31, 2026, allowing ample time for a smooth transition and the selection of Jasper's next Mayor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dean Vonderheide".

Dean Vonderheide