Del Norte Triplicate COMMUNITY

Favorite Person of the Week: Jon Olson — The County Engineer

By Linda Sutter September 17, 2026

Every week, someone in Del Norte County quietly makes a difference. This week, that recognition belongs to Jon Olson, County Engineer for the Del Norte County Community Development Department — a man whose diligence, integrity, and practical judgment saved local taxpayers nearly half a million dollars.

Olson leads the engineering and surveying division under the Community Development umbrella, overseeing county infrastructure, public works planning, road systems, and the complex web of projects that keep Del Norte functioning. His work is often technical, often invisible, and almost always underappreciated. But this month, his commitment to fiscal responsibility became impossible to overlook.

When the Roy Avenue Lift Station Emergency Power Project went out to bid, the County received three proposals ranging from $481,000 to $540,000 . Although the bids were technically within the $500,000 budget, Olson saw something others might have missed: the county already owned a generator and transfer switch suitable for outdoor installation. Instead of approving a costly construction project, he recommended rejecting all bids and simply installing the equipment the county already had.

His analysis was clear and grounded in the Board Report: a straightforward replacement would cost approximately 10% of the bid prices, or about $50,000, saving sewer users and taxpayers roughly $450,000 in unnecessary expenses .

In a time when public agencies everywhere struggle with rising costs, aging infrastructure, and limited budgets, Olson’s decision reflects something rare — a public servant who treats every dollar as if it were his own. He chose the practical path over the flashy one, the responsible solution over the expensive structure, and the community’s financial well-being over convenience.

It wasn’t glamorous. It wasn’t political. It was simply the right thing to do.

And that is exactly why Jon Olson is our Favorite Person of the Week — a conscientious engineer whose thoughtful leadership saved Del Norte County hundreds of thousands of dollars, proving that good stewardship still exists in local government.