WILLIAMS

Gothenburg State bank president Matt Williams is leaning toward a run for state senator.

Sen. John Wightman of Lexington now occupies the legislative seat for District 36 but term limits will force him out of office in 2014.

Williams' name has also been mentioned as a possible gubernatorial candidate.

"I'm still weighing my options," he said Tuesday, "because I feel I have a vision for the state and that I have abilities that would be beneficial to our state in a role like governor or legislator."

The 64-year-old said he doesn't know when he'll decide but noted that the first day candidates can file for office is Dec. 1.

"And there's more that could happen with the continuing mystery of who is going to be a candidate for governor," he said.

Although no one has announced his or her candidacy for Wightman's seat, several Nebraskans have jumped into the governor's race.

Omaha businessman Pete Ricketts announced Sunday and Sen. Beau McCoy was expected to become a candidate Tuesday.

Other Republican gubernatorial candidates are state auditor Mike Foley and Sens. Tom Carlson and Charlie Janssen.

Democratic candidates are Sen. Annette Dubas and former University of Nebraska Regent Chuck Hassebrook.

Williams, who's a Republican, named three issues he describes as desperately important statewide—job creation and economic development, water for agriculture and education.

"Education hits communities of all sizes and taxes are over the top of the whole structure," he said.

Williams will end his year as chair of the American Bankers Association in October. He'll continue to serve on the ABA board and chair the nominating committee.

A 1967 graduate of Gothenburg High School, Williams received his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Nebraska of Lincoln.

He's worked at Gothenburg State Bank for 40 years and said he'll assume more of a role as chairman of the GSB board.

"I'm fortunate to have other management people here to step up and take responsibility," he said.

ebarrett@gothenburgtimes.com

308-537-3636