

# Wrap Up For The 69th Legislative Session

*NDTOA worked hard to support, defend and advocate for North Dakota townships during the 69th Legislative Session. These bills are the result of dozens of hearings, hundreds of meetings and hours expended on behalf of township programs and values. Here is a summary of the most notable bills.*



**House Bill 1065** – Changes Prairie Dog distributions from equal township payments to the per certified maintained mile basis. (NDTOA supported) Passed and was signed by the Governor, takes effect August 1.

**House Bill 1258** – Gives the PSC oversight of transmission siting, PSC may over-rule local zoning. (NDTOA Opposed) Passed and was signed by the Governor, takes effect August 1.

**House Bill 1374 (NDTOA Bill)** – Exempts township officers from open meeting requirements when acting as township staff, performing on-site inspections etc. Passed and was signed by the Governor, effective August 1.

**House Bill 1382** – 3 Cent fuel tax increase, 1 cent each to counties, cities, and townships. (NDTOA Supported) Passed House 58-35, Failed in the Senate 0-45

**House Bill 1444** – Allows counties to add township roads to the county system with a vote of the commission after a public meeting. (NDTOA Opposed) Passed and signed by the Governor, takes effect on August 1.

**Senate Bill 2027** – Gives Floodplain management authority to the counties, townships can regain authority upon resolution and active engagement. (NDTOA supported) Passed and signed by the Governor. Effective August 1.

**Senate Bill 2208** – Prohibits Prairie Dog payments to local governments that have regulations that interfere with energy projects. (NDTOA Opposed) SB2208 Failed in the Senate 19-27

**Senate Bill 2317 (NDTOA Bill)** – Allows townships to recover zoning authority from the county. Passed the Senate, Failed in the House by 7 votes.

**Senate Bill 2329 (NDTOA Bill)** – Gives townships and counties the ability to vacate streets and alleys in dissolved city townsites. Passed and signed by the Governor, takes effect August 1.

**Property Tax Relief and Reform:** HB1176 increased the Primary Residence Credit to \$1,600. It also limits budget increases of local governments, including townships, to a maximum of 3%. To exceed the 3% cap requires the approval of the voters; townships may vote to exceed the caps at their annual meeting provided there is notice of the election included in the published annual meeting notice.

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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BY LEE BRANDVOLD

Hello Township Officers,

This season has brought considerable fluctuations in the weather. In May, temperatures reached one hundred degrees. Certain regions experienced more than seven inches of rainfall over a period of five days, followed by frost. This weather pattern not only puts added stress upon us, but livestock and wildlife suffer as well. This wet weather can also cause township road damage. I am not complaining, the rain was certainly welcome, and I hope that everyone received much-needed moisture. Why is it that when we have a large rain event there are a few inconsiderate drivers that can't resist the temptation to drive down the township minimum maintenance roads and completely rut up the road. Everyone has a favorite pastime, but testing mud tires damages the road and costs the township money. We need to have a new sign made "Please find another location to test your tires and stop damaging roads!"

The 2025 North Dakota Legislative Session concluded on May 2. Legislative sessions are increasingly challenging for townships. Several bills this year proposed changes to the level of local control in townships. In this Grassroots edition Larry Syverson will go into detail about what changes townships will see and how it will affect us. NDTOA continues to watch all legislative bills that will affect townships. I am incredibly grateful to the NDTOA legislative team, which included Larry Syverson and Scott Meske, along with those township officers that came to Bismarck to testify on bills that would affect townships.

I know that I talked about the upcoming NDTOA annual convention this December in Bismarck in the last edition of Grassroots but would like to remind everyone again. In 2025, elections will be held during the annual convention to fill the positions of President, Vice President and three directors. According to NDTOA Constitution, the President and Vice-President are limited to two-year terms, with a maximum of three consecutive terms. Both the President and Vice-President will term out in December 2025. The districts that directors will be up for election are Districts 1, 3, and 5. (Please reference the map in your township officer's handbook if you are questioning which district you live in). Time is short – just six months remain to identify the right candidates, making it vital that we focus on highly qualified individuals. Their leadership and involvement are essential to maintaining the strength and effectiveness of our association. If you have new ideas to help boost attendance at the annual meeting, or if you are interested in running for a NDTOA board position, please email me at [ljb.ranch4@gmail.com](mailto:ljb.ranch4@gmail.com) or call me at 701-720-5457. Let us keep NDTOA strong and working for North Dakota's Township Officers.

Respectfully,

President Lee Brandvold

**Township Funding:** SB2012 the budget bill for the North Dakota Department of Transportation included funding for townships as well as counties, cities and transit. The funds added by SB2012 bring the total dedicated to township needs to \$79.9 Million for the 2-year period. The Prairie Dog fund has been moved much closer to the top of the order, so it is much more likely to fill. However, it has been reduced in size to \$7.5M and will be paid out based on maintained township miles within the 44 counties that receive less than \$5M in oil and gas tax per year. The eligible townships will receive about \$164 per mile every two years.

There will be payments from the Flex Fund for townships in the 48 counties that produce less than 10M barrels of oil per year. This \$20.7M will be distributed at about \$412 per maintained township mile. There is also \$31.1M of funds from the Flex Fund for grants for townships in those 48 counties.

To be eligible for these direct payments from the Flex Fund, a township must levy at least 18 mills and cannot have a general fund balance more than \$100,000. Townships that levy at least 18 mills will have priority for the Flex Fund grants.

Townships that levy less than 18 mills will need to consider increasing their budgets to qualify for Flex Fund payments and grants. This will take some planning to work through the property tax caps that we now face. Townships that carry a large balance will need to designate funds to their Special Road Fund, so it doesn't show up in the general fund.

The quarterly township mileage payments are being increased, historically townships have been receiving 2.7% of the Highway Distribution Fund which comes from the fuel tax and vehicle registration fees. The distribution formula is being changed so townships will be getting 3.4% of the fund, that will amount to

about \$7M more. The total annual payout will increase from about \$126 to \$186 per maintained mile. All townships are eligible to receive this payment.

SB2012 also provides \$40.5M to eligible counties for bridge repair and replacement projects.

There is also the possibility of some funding for townships that have a new or expanded animal agriculture development. That funding comes from SB2177; the sales and use tax that is generated from these developments is credited to the county for infrastructure and maintenance in the area of the development, the township may apply to the county for funding to cover such expenses on their part. This is not a new tax, it is the sales and use tax that is already collected. The developer or contractors must submit the invoices to the state to get the collected taxes dedicated to the infrastructure fund.

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## There Are Requirements for Direct Township Funds

There will be direct payments from the Flexible Transportation Fund to townships totaling \$20.7 million, it will be paid out on the maintained township road miles basis. Payments will go to townships in the 48 counties that produce less than 10 million barrels of oil per year. Our estimate is the payments will run about \$412 per maintained mile of township roads.

To qualify for the payments the township must levy at least 18 mills and cannot have more than one hundred thousand dollars in the

general fund. The legislature made these rules to be sure the funds will go to townships that need the funds and will use them to improve the township road network not just add to their bank account or replace their local tax levy. The townships need to be willing to invest their own funds to improve the roads before the state will give any more money.

The mill rate will be what the state tax department has on file for each township by December 31. If it is found the effective mill rate

is less than 18 mills, the budget and resulting levy can be adjusted up until October 10th; this would require a special meeting of the township to amend the budget. If the increase is more than 3% the meeting notice will have to state that there will be an election to exceed the levy cap.

If the township general fund exceeds one hundred thousand dollars, a special meeting of the township can be held to authorize transferring funds to the township special road fund.

# Understanding WSI's Coverage Requirements

## Coverage Requirements –

North Dakota Workforce Safety & Insurance (WSI) workers' compensation coverage is required for paid employees of an organized township. To apply for coverage, visit [workforcesafety.com/employers](http://workforcesafety.com/employers) and select "Apply for Coverage."

## Manage Your Account in myWSI

The myWSI online portal [mywsi.workforcesafety.com](http://mywsi.workforcesafety.com) is an easy, fast, and secure way to connect with WSI. All townships with an active account must have at least one user with an Administrator and/or Payroll Reporting role in myWSI.

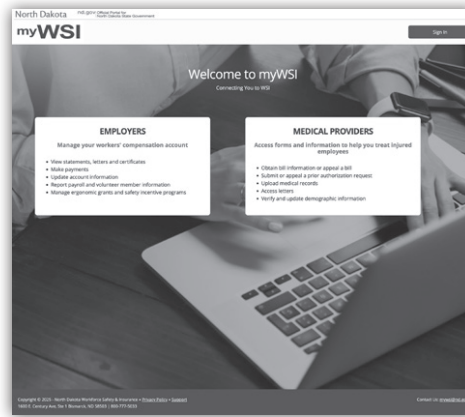
In myWSI, employers can:

- View statements, letters, and certificates
- Make payments
- Update account information
- Report payroll information

For assistance with myWSI access, contact WSI at 800-777-5033 or email [wsiphservices@nd.gov](mailto:wsiphservices@nd.gov).

**Coverage Renewal:** All township policies have an annual reporting period of March 1 to February 28/29. A township must submit a payroll report each year in myWSI. On February 15, WSI sends notice that payroll reporting is available to users with myWSI access. The

notice includes a billing statement for the minimum account premium of \$250. The payroll report and premium payment are due April 30 to accommodate the township's annual meeting held in March.



## Complete a Payroll report in myWSI:

To submit payroll report online:

- Go to [mywsi.workforcesafety.com](http://mywsi.workforcesafety.com)
- Select Sign In and enter North Dakota login information
- Select Payroll Reporting

All wages for employees and officers, including supervisors, clerk(s), assessor(s), and treasurer(s), are reportable. Officer compensation should be reported in the employee section of the payroll report. If

officers do not receive compensation but still request to be covered, enter \$0 in the payroll amount. Upon WSI's receipt of the payroll report, actual premium will be calculated. If it is greater than the \$250 already billed, WSI will send an additional bill. If officers are the only members who are compensated and are not employed by the township in any other capacity, the township can elect to opt out of coverage.

A township can request an account closure in three ways:

- Indicate to close the account on the payroll report in myWSI, or
- Complete and return the "To Close Your Township Account" section on the billing statement, or
- Provide WSI with a written request.

## Payments and Proof of Coverage:

A township can make a payment in the myWSI portal or mail a payment to WSI. If an account balance is not paid by the due date and becomes delinquent, WSI may close the account. When WSI receives payment, we will issue a Certificate of Payment for proof of coverage.

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## Training Webinars for Zoning and Property Tax Caps Held and Recorded

Two informative webinars are being held in early June, one to give training on zoning issues and the other dealing with the property tax caps that affect all local governments.

The North Dakota Planning Association is hosting the zoning webinar; "Zoning for Large Rural Industrial Land Uses: Updates on Local Authority After the 2025 Legislative Session" on June 5. This

presentation will be recorded and will be available on [NDTOA.COM](http://NDTOA.COM).

The other topic "HB 1176 Budgeting in a World of Caps" will be held on June 16th, 1:00 to 4:30 pm at the BPS Career Academy (1221 Schafer St, Bismarck – on the BSC Campus). There may still be time to register at [www.ndaco.org/tax-caps-training](http://www.ndaco.org/tax-caps-training). You can also register to receive the link for the recorded session sent directly to

you. The recording will be available on [NDTOA.COM](http://NDTOA.COM) under Resources, Videos.

Notice of these webinars was sent out by email a few weeks ago to those that are on our email list. If you wish to receive such timely notices make sure we have your email address. Also be sure to open the emails we send you!





# TREASURER'S REPORT

BY BARB KNUTSON

Things looking a lot better since the rains came. Earlier it was getting pretty scary with all the fires. Thankful for the moisture.

Annual Membership Dues were due on the 1st of May. If you have an association in your county, be sure to pay through the association so they can get their portion and send the \$200 dues on to the state. In talking to people across the state, I would suggest that county associations would send bills out to each township with what is due the county and what is due the state. If your townships never get a bill, it's possible they are not even aware that they owe, especially if there has been a change in officers. Another suggestion, make sure

ALL your officer names, mailing addresses, phone, cell phone and email address are provided to the county as they need this to keep you informed. There is a fill-in form on [www.ndtoa.com](http://www.ndtoa.com) that you can fill in information and get to the county. We would also like the names, addresses, and phone numbers for the officers of the county associations in the counties that have them and would be helpful to know how much each county dues are. We can then post them on the website so they are available to all that may want them. I get this question often, how much are our county dues. Please check to see that all your officers are getting the Grass Roots

Newsletter and Constant Contact emails. If they are not, contact me or email information to me. My contact information is on address sheet in this newsletter. It is important to all to supply this information as the ones that do not pay are riding on the shirt tails of those that do and getting the same privileges. Not good!

Thanks to all the township officers and county auditors that share this information with us.

Hope everyone has a great summer and I look forward to seeing many of you in December for annual meeting. Information in this issue.

Thank you for being township officers, it is important!

*Save the*  
**DATE**

*December*  
*8th & 9th*  
*2025*



**2025**  
**ANNUAL**  
**MEETING &**  
**CONVENTION**

*Bismarck, ND*  
*Ramada Inn*

**SEE PAGE 7**  
**FOR MORE**  
**DETAILS**

## NDDOT Prepares for Flex-Fund Grants

This summer the NDDOT will be inviting townships to apply for the Flex Fund grants. Townships in counties that produce less than 10 million barrels of oil per year will be eligible. That is townships in all counties other than Dunn, McKenzie, Mountrail, and Williams Counties. There is \$31.1 million available for grants from this fund so there will be a lot of opportunities to improve township roads.

Priority will be given to projects in townships that levy at least eighteen mills and have a general fund balance less than one hundred thousand dollars. Priority for

projects in unorganized townships will be given to counties that levy eighteen mills for township road and bridge purposes. Priority will also be given to projects on local corridors (roads that connect between qualified county major collectors (CMC) or state or tribal highways). The mill rates used will be those the tax department has on file on December 31, those rates can be adjusted prior to October 10th and general fund balances can be transferred to the township's Special Road Fund to be below the limit.

Townships that are below 18 mills or have large general fund

balances will need to hold a special meeting of the township to amend their budget or authorize the transfer to their special road fund. The notice for a special meeting of the township to amend their budget will require notice that there will be an election to exceed the 3% budget cap; it is recommended this special meeting take place in September when the taxable value of the township is known so the levy rate can be accurately determined.

Keep an eye on the Flex Fund website (<https://www.dot.nd.gov/flexfund>) for additional updates.

## Grassroots Government Leadership Award

To recognize the leadership, creativity, and dedication of township officials, the NDTOA has established a leadership award to pay tribute every year to an individual whose community service exhibits the highest standard of dedication, ability and service.

### ELIGIBILITY

The award will be presented to an individual, locally elected official, currently in office. It will recognize him or her for their outstanding contributions on a sustained basis or from a single performance.

Nominees should have responsibility for accomplishing or causing to be accomplished significant programs or projects within their area of responsibility, to the ultimate benefit of the general public.

Examples of such professional accomplishments include local government cost-cutting, coordination of a major local volunteer effort, and promoting townships at the national level, establishing new local services or programs, and success in securing public or private funding for local projects.

### SELECTING CRITERIA

Nomination should include as much information as possible, such as:

- **Complexity of the problem(s) addressed.**
- **Measurable improvements resulting from nominee's accomplishments.**
- **Use of original, innovative or creative approaches and solutions in difficult situations.**
- **Long-term or lasting benefit of the nominee's accomplishments.**

### NOMINATING PROCEDURE

Nominations may be submitted by member townships and counties of the NDTOA. A nomination form is below for your convenience. Just complete and mail (or e-mail [larry.ndtoa@gmail.com](mailto:larry.ndtoa@gmail.com)). **Nominations must be received by November 20<sup>th</sup>.**

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## North Dakota Township Officers Grassroots Government Leadership Award

### NOMINATION FORM

NOMINEE: Name, office, Township, County, address and phone numbers.

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Your name, office, address and phone numbers.

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Other objective references: name, office, address, phone numbers.

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Please attach a summary of the major accomplishments for which the Township official is being nominated. Also attach as much information as you can, such as a brief biography of the nominee summarizing positions held, civic and professional affiliations, and other relevant personal data. The more information you can provide the better chance your candidate will be selected.

The award will be presented at the NDTOA Annual Convention in December.

Mail (or email) the completed form to: NDTOA; 465-150th Ave NE; Mayville ND 58257-9011

For questions or for copies of this form please phone 701-430-1735 or email [larry.ndtoa@gmail.com](mailto:larry.ndtoa@gmail.com).

This form is available as a fillable PDF on NDTOA.COM under Resources / Forms.

*Save the*  
**DATE**

*December  
8th & 9th  
2025*



**2025  
ANNUAL  
MEETING &  
CONVENTION**

*Bismarck, ND  
Ramada Inn*

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**The 2025 Annual Meeting and Convention will be held on December 8th and 9th, at the Bismarck Ramada.**

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**There will be presentations on topics important to township officers and an expanded exhibit hall.** We have several more vendors that have told us they are interested in taking part in our convention.

There will be door prizes including cash drawings for attendees.

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**There will be educational sessions on grants as well as dealing with the property tax caps.** Townships will have questions about how they can raise their levies to qualify for the grants while under the property tax caps, those questions will be addressed in these sessions.

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**There will also be elections for association president, vice president, and three district directors.**

President Brandvold and Vice President Weber are not eligible for re-election to those offices.

Directors for districts 1, 3, and 5 are also up for election. Current Directors, Tom Wheeler, District 1 and Rod Meyer, District 3, are eligible for re-election. For District 5, Gerald Miller is no longer a township officer and not eligible for re-election.

Anyone that wishes to be considered for election to any of these offices should contact the Nominations Committee Chairman, Tim Geinert.

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**An important part of each convention is the recognition of individuals that have done outstanding service for townships and grassroots government.**

Each year we recognize a legislator for help in achieving our goals at the state level.

We also recognize parties that are not township officers whose actions and service benefited our association and the townships of the state.

Our favorite award is for a township officer that has performed extraordinary service for his township and community, the Grassroots Leadership Award. For this award we depend on you, the township officers of the state, to nominate these individuals for consideration. The nomination form is included in this issue and is available on the website as a fillable form. Please remember that the nominee must be a currently serving township officer at the time of the award, so nominate that outstanding township officer now!



## Grass Roots Report

North Dakota Township Officers Association  
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McKenzie, ND 58572

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