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The Official Newsletter of the ND Township Officers Association • NATaT Member

Townships Speak Out on Transportation Funding

by Ken Yantes

Your State board is convinced that we must be at the table as an active part of any future transportation discussions. President Kerry Schorsch urged our membership and state board members to participate in the Transportation Steering Committee meetings.

This effort included meetings in Bismarck, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Fargo, Grand Forks, Jamestown, Minot and Williston. Each meeting began with an establishment of goals by Gene Griffin, Director of the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute.

Jon Mielke followed with a report on the

present condition of our existing transportation system, inflationary trends and transportation's role in economic development.

Gene Griffin returned to cover federal funding income projections and the distribution of those funds. Gary Berreth, Director of North Dakota's Local Technical Assistance Program, followed with an explanation of state and local transportation funding and planning processes available to all local governments.

The afternoon segment of the program featured a panel discussion by members

from differing local government levels on why transportation was important to them.

Representing NDTOA at the meetings were President Kerry Schorsch, Executive Secretary Ken Yantes and Board members Chuck Thacker, Ralph Olson, Steve Ginsbach, Floyd Miller, and Larry Syverson.

Their efforts were to assure that townships were not left out of future road funding projects. Larry Syverson's testimony can be found on page 5 and is printed in its entirety.

Right-of-Way Encroachment...Why Worry?

North Dakota Department of Transportation Local Government Engineer, Dave Leftwich, in a memo to the chairpersons of all County Commissioners explains:

Because it's against the Law!

North Dakota Century Code 24-05-33 clearly states that a landowner who encroaches on county roads or ditches is liable to the county for such acts.

If a landowner fails to pay the county for the damages caused, the costs may be charged to the taxes levied against the land in the same manner as other real estate taxes.

If Federal funds were used on a road, most project agreements prohibit encroachment. Sargent County Commissioners pointed out that whether or not federal funds were used on the roads, encroachment is still against the law.

In our new green township handbook, on

page 56 under 24-06-27, North Dakota Century Code says that any person who obstructs or in any way injures any ditch, opened as provided in section 24-06-26, is liable to pay the overseer of high-ways of such road district double the damages caused by such injury.

The law goes on to say that the violator is guilty of a class B misdemeanor and civil damages caused.

If you are aware of violations of these laws, it could be in your best interests to report them to

your County Commission and/or your township overseer of the roads.



Ken Yantes and Jeff Vigesaa

Our travel and transporting of the 2008 workshop supplies were made possible by a reasonably priced van rental from V-W Motors of Cooperstown, ND. Our thanks to them!

NDTOA Officers

KERRY SCHORSCH, *President*

6358 111th Ave. SW
New England, ND 58647
(701) 579-4703
kerry@ndtoa.com

JOANNE ABEL, *Vice President*

2964 20th Ave. NE • Arvilla, ND 58214
(218) 779-3062
joanne4mom@aol.com

KENNETH YANTES

*Executive Secretary/Director of
Governmental Relations & NATaT Director*
P.O. Box 104 • Brocket, ND 58321-0104
(701) 655-3513 • Fax: (701) 655-3513
(Please call before sending fax.)
ndtoa@polarcomm.com
ken@ndtoa.com

BARB KNUTSON, *Treasurer*

2600 236th St. NE • McKenzie, ND 58572
(701) 673-3198
knutsons@bektel.com

CHUCK THACKER, *Past President*

10269 140th Ave. NE • Neche, ND 58265
(701) 265-8981
cthacker@polarcomm.com
Cell: 265-2831

FLOYD MILLER, *District 1 Director*

14954 57th St. NW • Williston, ND 58801
(701) 875-4280
pbmiller@hotmail.com

RALPH OLSON, *District 2 Director*

5054 47th St. NE • Maddock, ND 58348
(701) 438-2344

LARRY SYVERSON, *District 3 Director*

465 150th Ave. NE
Mayville, ND 58257-9011
(701) 786-2697
las@polarcomm.com

KERRY SCHORSCH, *District 4 Director*

6358 111th Ave. SW
New England, ND 58647
(701) 579-4703
kerry@ndtoa.com

BARB KNUTSON, *District 5 Director*

2600 236th St. NE • McKenzie, ND 58572
(701) 673-3198
knutsons@bektel.com

STEVE GINSBACH, *District 6 Director*

16290 91st St. SE • Hankinson, ND 58041
(701) 242-7291
sginsbach@yahoo.com

STEVE GINSBACH

Alternate NATaT Director
16290 91st St. SE • Hankinson, ND 58041
(701) 242-7291
sginsbach@yahoo.com

Legal Counsel

THOMAS R. MOE, *Attorney-At-Law*
39 1st Ave. NW • Mayville, ND 58257



President's Message

Kerry Schorsch

Hello Township
Officers,

This winter has been a busy and productive one for me and your state board of directors.

In January, Larry Syverson, District 3 Director, Ken Yantes, Executive Secretary and District 6 Director, Steve Ginsbach attended a meeting of the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR) in Fargo.

One of the purposes of this meeting was to address, discuss and investigate issues concerning extra-territorial zoning authority of cities and its effect on townships.

Township officers from around the state provided excellent and persuasive testimony on this matter. Townships interests are well served on the ACIR by your Executive Secretary, Ken Yantes, who is a long-standing member of that committee. Your state association will make sure that township concerns are well known when the 2009 legislature addresses extra-territorial zoning authority of cities.

The workshop tour was held in February and is well reported in this newsletter. It was great to see a record turnout at the winter workshops.

The overall feeling was of optimism and enthusiasm in rural North Dakota. Township officers from around the state let us know what matters are concerning them and also let us know what they hope for from the state organization.

Hopefully, we'll be able to work on those issues for you and help township government in your area. I am sorry that I was unable to attend the Larimore workshop and want to thank our Vice President, Joanne Abel for so aptly assuming my responsibilities there.

All of you should have received your new township manual updates at the workshops. If you didn't, please contact your district director and they'll be able to provide you with the new manual.

I would like to thank all of the district directors and state officers for the great work they did in organizing the workshops in their district.

Mark Verke from the North Dakota Insurance Reserve Fund drove a lot of miles and spent a lot of time at the workshops helping the townships to recognize and learn how to manage their safety and liability responsibilities.

The new contractor services agreement has been placed at www.ndtoa.com. Check it out and use it if you are doing some road work this summer in your township.

In March, I traveled to Watford City to provide information and assistance to township officers who were considering forming a county association in McKenzie County.

I am happy to announce that the new McKenzie Township Officer's Association has been organized. On behalf of the state board, I congratulate you and welcome you. Let us know if we can be of assistance.

Your state association is active in the Upper Great Plains Transportation Workshops being held around the state. Did you know that there are over 56,000 miles of township roads in the state?

That is more than the total, combined mileage of all other city, county, state and federal roads in North Dakota. Ken Yantes and Director Larry Syverson have provided excellent testimony on behalf of townships at these meetings.

I have been asked to represent townships on a discussion panel in May at the Great Plains Institute statewide conference. Your state association is actively pursuing additional funding for township roads in the upcoming legislative session.

Right now, your state board is finalizing plans for the 2008 state convention in December. We'll have an announcement for you in the next newsletter. Let us know if you have any suggestions for the 2008 convention.

As I write this, many areas of the state need moisture for crops and pastures. Hopefully, the spring rains will fall where needed this year.

Big John Passes the Membership Torch

John Oxton of Hope, North Dakota has been in charge of keeping our membership roll current for the last 30 years.

In 1980, John was elected President of NDTOA and served as National Director to NATaT. Throughout this period, John led our association and trained those who followed him by the examples set in his daily activities.

We have so many things to thank John for. He worked tirelessly to secure statewide membership of NDTOA. He led the effort to secure the one cent per gallon gas tax, which all townships count on today for a large part of their road maintenance funding.

Big John led NDTOA's lobbying force in the State Capitol for over 20 years. I remember seeing on the marquee in front of the Bismarck Days Inn, in 12 inch letters, **Big John Stays Here!** I stopped and asked, "Which John is it?" The desk clerk said, "It is Big John Oxton from the townships."

Prior to his departure from the legislative arena, he trained what turned out to be one of the most successful lobbying teams that has served NDTOA—Bryan Hoime and Ken Yantes.

In a recent visit to Big John's home in Hope, I observed one of the most intelligent and dedicated township leaders that I have ever known. Displayed on the wall was a collage of pictures of John and President Reagan shaking hands and pictures of John with many Governors of our state.

Proudly displayed amongst them all is the **1989 NDTOA's Mr. Township Leadership Award**. I felt humbled in his presence. He spoke of his dedicated efforts to keep our membership list up to date.

"Township officers must fill in the change of office forms sent out by the county auditors every year in order for us to know who our members are," said John.

It is a big job to keep track of the names

and addresses of about 6,000 officers. It requires calling county auditors several times to get those changes. It would be made easier if, at the close of the annual township meeting on the third Tuesday in March, every township would send this list to their county auditor as soon as possible.

This updated list of officers and their addresses is used for our mailing list for the *Grassroots* newsletter. No names—no newsletters.

John was pleased when he heard that the State Board of Directors had appointed Darleen Yantes to be the keeper of the membership roll, as he has been coordinating the updating of new officers with her for many years.

Here again John's training of those who follow him is prevalent. We need to take our hats off and say a thank you for his unselfish contributions and dedication to NDTOA.

Thanks from our hearts to...Big John Oxton!

2008 NDIRF ANNUAL MEETING

As the old tune goes, "April showers bring the flowers that bloom in May..." Another bad news to good news, April/May segue might be April 15 (IRS Day) to May 14 (the NDIRF Annual Meeting)—not nearly so lyrical but it does get us to an important day for NDIRF members.

The time is fast approaching for the 2008 NDIRF Annual Meeting. I'd like to use this space as a "commercial" and encourage NDIRF members to attend.

As always, fund members will receive important information regarding the financial nuts and bolts that, when assembled, provide a clear picture of the NDIRF's strong foundation and structure.

In addition, this year, I'm also pleased to announce that North Dakota's Insurance Commissioner, Adam Hamm, will be in attendance to visit with the membership regarding matters of importance to all of us who are interested in risk management and insurance issues.

Please review the packet that was mailed to Fund members last month and use the means provided in it to let us know if you can join us on May 14th (and stay for lunch!).

Treasurer's Report

Barb Knutson, Treasurer

Time for another newsletter—how time flies!

Since we met last, I was glad to be able to be a part of the workshops that were put on all across the state. In that two week time, I saw parts of North Dakota that I had not seen before, and I met people I had not met before. I want to thank you all for being out there doing what you do.

The attendance at these workshops was great! It was nice to put faces with some of the names of those I have talk to over the phone.

It was great to see new officers that have joined the ranks in keeping Grass Roots Government at the grass roots. Thank you for that!

The dues have been coming in at a good rate with some new members—which is good to see. Together we can do more than each township can do on their own.

Just a couple of things that we need to clarify. *If your county has an association, please do not include the county dues in the check you send to the state.* Otherwise, I'll have to make sure that it gets back to the county, and that is just an extra step in the process.

I would like to thank those of you who have included lists of townships when paying those dues. Makes for better records.

If you have questions, please free to contact any board member to get your answers.

Have a great Spring!



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NATaT Report of Congressional Action _____ Ken Yantes

Your NATaT Director, Ken Yantes, attended a national board meeting in Washington, DC on March 4-7, 2008.

The agenda included an in-depth review of the national legislative platform, position papers and talking points to use during the all day lobbying effort at Capitol Hill.

The No. 1 plank in the national platform was passage of S. 2154 which exempts townships and other governmental boards, whose members make under \$1,300 a year, from filing and paying federal payroll taxes. All national board members spent March 6th lobbying their Congresspersons and Senators in support of the passage of S. 2154.

It is important that the right congressional representatives work on our

ills; Congressional power rankings count. ND Representative Pomeroy ranks 60th from the top in the House of Representatives, North Dakota Senator Conrad ranks 30th and Senator Dorgan ranks 15th from the top in the Senate. We clearly have congressional ranking above many other states.

It was a decision of the national board to have a companion bill introduced in the House of Representatives to hurry along our payroll tax exemption idea.

The national board delegated ND Director Ken Yantes and SD Director Gail Brock to ask Representative Earl Pomeroy to introduce this bill. Pomeroy's response was, "Sure, I will do it. Thanks for asking me."

We spent the rest of the day lobbying the offices of our respective Senators to

confirm the need to pass S. 2154.

We urged passage of HB. 1195, which is our Federal Highway Funding Bill. This bill has since passed the Senate by an 88-2 margin on 4-17-08 and last March it passed the House of Representatives by a 422 to 1 margin.

The bill, supported by all ND and SD Senators, allocates 286.5 billion dollars for our nation's road projects through the year 2009. We also supported passage of the Farm Bill and other pending bills.

The Annual Legislative Conference of NATaT will be held in Washington, DC on September 30 and October 1, 2008. We will visit Capitol Hill on October 1st and will have appointments to meet with our Congressional representatives.

TRANSPORTATION STEERING COMMITTEE STATE CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

For information call 701-231-7767

THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2008 • SEVEN SEAS – MANDAN

10:00 a.m.	Welcome & Introductions (Griffin)
10:10 a.m.	Overview of Local Workshops & Presentation Highlights (Mielke)
10:30 a.m.	Summary of Workshop Input (Caron)
11:00 a.m.	Panel: Infrastructure and Personal Mobility Needs NDDOTFrancis Ziegler TribesPete Red Tomahawk DHSLinda Wright CountiesRod Ness AARPLinda Wurtz CitiesJim Brownlee NDDACJim Moench TownshipsKerry Schorsch SURTC/ParatransitCarol Wright
12:30 p.m.	Lunch & Small Group Discussions
1:15 p.m.	Updated Infrastructure Needs Assessment (Dybing)
2:00 p.m.	Managing Major Needs (Griffin)
2:15 p.m.	Workshop Findings & Participant Suggestions (Mielke)
2:30 p.m.	Panel: Legislative Perspectives: Senator David O'Connell, Rep. Kathy Hawken, Senator Gary Lee, Rep. Robin Weisz, Senator Larry Robinson, Rep. Eliot Glassheim, Senator Rich Wardner
3:30 p.m.	Coffee
3:45 p.m.	Participant Reactions & Input – Open Microphone Session
4:15 p.m.	Panel: Effectuating Change – Where Do We Go From Here?
5:00 p.m.	Adjourn & Hosted Social

2008 Resolutions

By Ken Yantes

It's not too early to begin to develop resolutions for the next annual meeting. Whenever you think there should be a law on a subject that pertains to township business, write it down.

Think about how and why the change should be made and take those thoughts to your county annual meeting and share them with your fellow township officers.

If your county association agrees with you and passes a supporting resolution, it then should be sent to the state resolutions committee for their consideration.

The next step is to elect two from your county association to go to the state annual meeting as voting delegates to the grassroots policy development meeting. These two delegates then have the responsibility to defend this idea at the committee meeting and on the convention floor.

You may well be one of the delegates to represent your county and to give your reasons for the passage of your idea. Upon passage at the state level, it becomes the duty of NDTOA's legislative arm to get a bill introduced in the legislature and to work to get it passed into law.

When you hear, *there ought to be a law*, think of this article. *It can happen, it has happened and we will continue to make it happen for you our members.*

Larry Syverson's Testimony as the Steering Committee Panel Member

Good afternoon, I am Larry Syverson—a Township Supervisor from Roseville Township of Traill County.

I have held this office for more than 20 years and the last several years I have served as Chairman of that board. I have also been a district director of the North Dakota Township Officers Association for nearly 10 years representing Cavalier, Pembina, Walsh, Nelson, Grand Forks, Griggs, Steele and Traill Counties.

Roseville Township is responsible for 48 of the 56,500 plus miles of township roads in North Dakota.

Road expenses have increased dramatically in recent years; the fuel costs have driven up the price of gravel, as well as road grading costs.

A few years ago Roseville Township was doing 11 miles of maintenance graveling each year and having the roads maintained every three weeks.

Now the roads are maintained every four weeks and the last gravel order was for just over seven miles. Even with these reductions Roseville is spending more to get the job done.

This is a common situation in Traill County townships as it also is in most of the eastern part of the state. Funds are shortest for the areas that have had to deal with excess moisture conditions and road damage for the last several years. At our association meetings we get reports of more localized problems in the rest of the state.

Cropping practices have changed, where wheat and barley produced 30 to 70 bushels in late July and August, usually the driest period of the year. We now have corn yielding 140 bushels and sugar beets producing more than 20 tons per acre, harvested later in the season often during fall rainy periods.

Small grain harvest would come to a stop from a one inch rain, now after a three inch rain they hook four-wheel drive tractors to beet and corn trucks and drag them across the field and up to the road. Today's huge trucks running on saturated roads take a terrible toll.

Not all the increased cost is due to farm practices, more and more township residents travel township roads to work; they need and demand better road maintenance.

A resident cannot wait three or four days until the snow is plowed to drive to work, an employee can't miss work because the roads are too muddy to get through.

The population of Roseville Township, while not as large as it was a few years ago, is not as sparse as the areas of the state a little further to the west.

This population is dispersed around the

township so it is necessary to maintain several roads at a high level of service. Other roads are given a lower priority.

Another fact in eastern county townships is that there is little non-productive land. Nearly every acre is cropped and needs road service, these are not maintained at the same level as roads to residential areas but still need service at a minimum level to be useable. These acres are heavily taxed and deserve at least a road to haul away their product.

I once saw where seven of the counties of North Dakota account for more than half of the bridges of the state. Traill County is one of those "Bridge Counties" ranking high on that list even with surface area smaller than some of the other counties.

The aging bridges demand great cash outlays for maintenance and even worse for replacement. The Commissioners must choose between stream crossing and road surfaces as they try to prioritize the spending.

The residents are caught in this no win balance, if they lose a crossing they must drive many miles to get to another. If the road surfaces are lacking the roads become impassable in rainy weather.

When the county highways become impassable the township suffers as traffic detours from the wide flat county roads to the more crowned township roads, these roads cannot stand up to such heavy traffic.

Additional miles of township roads are also needed to get around closed and deficient bridges.

My relationship with rural transportation started at an early age, when I was growing up on the family farm. In those days township funds were even more scarce than they are today, more than once my Dad bought gravel for the road past our farm out of his own pocket. He would work to fill in the ruts in the road, and after the neighbors had done their mowing in the fall he would often go out and re-do them to have a proper job done just so the roads would be less likely to block with snow.

If the roads did get heavy with snow he would run the snow-blower down to the state highway so that the blade would not have to pile up so much snow when it came to open our road.

Dad never served on the township board or got any compensation for the work he did or money he spent, but he took transportation seriously. I learned that from him and I continue the mowing and snow blowing because I take transportation seriously.

Speaking with township officers from across the state, I have heard that this is not uncommon, many of us, officers and

residents alike, must have learned from our dads to chip in to make rural transportation work.

Now in addition to chipping in on our own we must learn to work together at all levels, as all levels of transportation are challenged today. There are proposals to make more funding available for transportation by changing the allocation formulas, putting taxes and fees already collected to highway and road use, in addition, we most likely will have to bite the bullet and contribute some new funding.

It will take a concerted effort from the transportation teammates to make these proposals a reality and to find a funding mechanism that will be responsive to both inflation and changing demands.

This is the third of these workshops that I have attended; I was also in Bismarck and Devils Lake. At each of these meetings, I saw and heard of the local interest in making transportation continue to work at all levels in North Dakota.

Our Association Executive Secretary, Ken Yantes, has attended seven of the eight workshops and he reports the same from all across the state.

The North Dakota Township Officers Association will be developing further policy on transportation issues and will be a team player. We will join with the ND Department of Transportation, the North Dakota Association of Counties and individuals that seek to develop and maintain transportation for the future of North Dakota.

The Chairman of the House Committee on Transportation, Representative Robin Weisz, said that when his committee has a transportation bill for hearing they get little or no public interest, nobody comes to the hearing, no calls nor e-mails. This will have to change.

I have told the Legislators that any time they get together to discuss property taxes they can expect to see townships in the room. As they like to discuss property taxes so much you can guess where we have to spend a lot of time. Now we will have to find the time and people so that we can also say that any time you talk about transportation you can expect to see Townships along with Counties and DOT in the room.

Larry urges the members of NDTOA to attend the May 1st Transportation Steering Committee meeting in the Seven Seas Motel in Mandan. We need to continue to build co-operative relationships with our other partners in transportation to form a united front for future joint endeavors.



The Country Lawyer

Thomas R. Moe, Attorney-at-Law



Greetings to all—Sure it is nice to have the winter over! I don't think any township was overburdened with a lot of snow removal expense, but it sure was cold!

We got to meet several of you at the workshops and happily, we had increased attendance over past years. It's still disappointing, though, to have several of you call the office in the weeks after the workshops and many still have no idea that the workshops were held, or that they didn't think there would be anything at the workshops that would interest them.

Those of you who did attend could help us out by spreading the word to your neighbors who don't attend and encourage them to come next time—especially for the upcoming annual state NDTOA convention this coming December.

Tax time has come and gone, along with the March annual township meetings. I have several tax clients in my office and I saw several W-2's from townships showing wages paid. It's good to see that townships are following the law, even though NDTOA is leading the charge to promote legislation in Congress to do away with this IRS requirement!

Speaking of clients, a lot of you don't realize that I actively practice law and that my township work is more a labor of love—rather than a full-time endeavor. I'll continue to field your calls to my office, but unfortunately, my full time clients do have to take precedence!

I've talked with several county sheriffs at the various county township association meetings, and they all agree that township officers are oftentimes the “eyes and ears” for suspicious activities happening out in the countryside.

Many drug busts have come about because of a tip received in the sheriff's office from a township officer. It's unfortunate, but I guess some of this criminal activity is a fact of life, so we all must be vigilant.

Now is a good time to inspect your roads and signs and detect if there has been any damage over the winter. Use the road and sign inspection forms that the Insurance Reserve Fund puts out as this is a great way to document your trip.

If you don't have one of the forms, give myself or Ken a call and we'll get one off to you and then you can make copies.

Hope everyone has a good Spring—keep it safe and remember, the game of baseball is the only game where the offense never touches the ball! Following are some questions I've received in the office lately. TRM

Q. We decided to change the date of our annual meeting to an evening in April—after all our snowbirds came back. Was this legal?

A. I doubt it. The state law is pretty clear: “...the citizens of the township shall annually assemble on the third Tuesday in March...” There really isn't any wiggle room in the law. We've talked about going to the Legislature for a change, but we would have to satisfy the concerns about tax equalization. I think because that meeting is in early April each year, and the township annual meeting would have to be before that; thus the historical reason for the March meeting.

Q. Do minimum maintenance roads receive the gas tax?

A. Yes, they do. This is one of the advantages of making this designation for some of your low-priority roads. You only have to do a little maintenance, yet you still can list the road on your system.

Q. Luckily, our township has a few mineral rights and now they are doing some oil exploration in our township. Can a township enter into an oil lease?

A. I don't see why not. My only caution would be that you should probably have a meeting of the township patrons where there is a motion on the books authorizing the supervisors to enter into the agreement. Glad to see that some townships will also share in the good fortune!

Q. We elected a new supervisor in March who has decided to move away and he has already resigned. Now what do we do?

A. You treat the position as vacant, and the remaining two supervisors have the authority to appoint a successor in the interim between now and next March's

annual meeting—at which time the patrons would elect someone to fill the remainder of the unexpired (3 year) term.

Q. What's the difference between a “deed restriction,” a “variance,” and a “conditional use permit?” Our zoning board seems to get many requests for these, but nobody can keep the differences straight.

A. All of these terms deal with restrictions or controls on how someone uses their land, which is what zoning is all about. Recall that a township (or a county or city for that matter) is divided into zoning districts which designate how the land within that district is to be used. Most townships are zoned “agricultural,” meaning that only farming operations are allowed on the land—no industrial, no commercial, and no residential (other than farmer's homes), etc.

A **conditional** use is where the landowner wants to do something other than what the zone calls for—e.g. a beauty shop (commercial endeavor) inside their home which is in a residential zone. The zoning body could allow this person permission to construct and operate the beauty shop upon satisfaction of certain “conditions”—off-road parking for example, or having the beauty shop certify that it has all the appropriate licenses before opening for business.

A **variance** does not deal with a change of use, but rather a change in some measurement contained within the zoning rules. For example, the township has a 75 foot setback from the road for all new buildings or newly planted trees, and the farmer wants to build a new shop which will be 65 feet (rather than 75) from the road.

The farmer would ask the zoning board for permission to vary the rule and put the shop ten feet closer to the road than what is allowed—a variance.

A **deed restriction** is an attempt by a prior owner of the land to control what happens to the land after it is sold.

For example, a seller writes in the deed which he gives to the buyer of the land a statement that says, “the land must always be used for farming;” or “the land must be used for church purposes;” or “only one outbuilding may be constructed on the premises.”

Deed restrictions are private controls only on the land affected by the deed, whereas zoning ordinances are public controls and are to be applied township wide.

ACIR Meets in Bismarck

One of the agenda items heard by this Interim Committee on March 26, 2008 was the Grand Forks Municipal solid waste landfill site. Curt Kreun, Grand Forks City Council member and Grand Forks City and County Planning and Zoning member, addressed the Commission and told them that the city has a close relationship with the townships, the county and concerned citizens.

He indicated the landfill will be sited in Section 13 of Rye Township. He also stated that after Grand Forks expanded the extra-territorial zoning plan to the four mile limit, the landfill became an issue.

Kreun said he would expect Rye Township would vote in favor of having the landfill. He said he is not against giving Rye Township the right to vote on the landfill, but that the township has given no indication that it wants to be able to vote on this issue.

He assured the Commission that if the township would vote against the site, the city would ask them what their concerns were and that the city would address them.

In a response to a question from Commission Member Yantes, Kreun said, "He would not mind a landfill in his backyard, but as a practical matter it is best to place a landfill as far away from people as possible due to the stigma of living by a landfill."

NDTOA's representative on this commission, Ken Yantes, would like to hear from the residents of Rye Township on this matter.

The commission asked their counsel to draw up a bill that would require a city

Ag Land Valuation Committee Meets

Tax Commissioner Cory Fong set up this committee to establish a guide for all assessors on the changes that HB. 1303 made in valuing North Dakota's agricultural land.

Ken Yantes is your representative on this committee which, met for the third time in Bismarck on March 28. Ken, recognizing the need and value of an experienced township assessor, invited State Board member Larry Syverson to join him at the discussion table.

Larry was readily accepted by all other committee members. We reviewed previous accomplishments and sought to improve the proposed Guide to Assessing

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zoning authority to have a public hearing on a particular landfill at a particular site.

Several bill proposals on resolving city extra-territorial disputes were drawn up by Legislative Committee Counsel:

- Having the office of Administrative Hearings handle disputes.
- Having joint jurisdiction in the outside one half of the extra-territorial zoning areas.
- Having the County Commissioners resolve disputes.
- A bill draft on the restriction on density requirements in extra-territorial areas.

All bill drafts, including one brought forward by the League of Cities and others, will be considered at the next meeting.

Larry Syverson, District 3 Director, testified in favor of returning the right to vote to the people that have been denied

their right to vote within city extra-territorial zoning areas.

2008 Workshops Held

By Ken Yantes

During February, the North Dakota Township Officers Association held 12 educational workshops across the state. We met with our member township officers in Bowman, Steele, Jamestown, Lisbon, Casselton, Larimore, Park River, Devils Lake, Bowbells, Williston, Newburg and Minot.

These educational workshops featured the following: A welcome and opening address by State President Kerry Schorsch; financial report by State Treasurer Barb Knutson; distribution of the 2008 green handbook; a review of the laws passed in the 2007 session that affect the duties; and responsibilities of township officers by Executive Secretary Ken Yantes.

Mark Verke Risk Management Specialist for the ND Insurance Reserve Fund presented a new slide show and information on how to reduce liability in your township.

Tom Moe, our legal counsel, held an open forum with the members getting answers to their legal questions.

At the conclusion of the workshops, President Schorsch was asked what he felt the memberships reaction to the workshops was. He said "Township officers comments were very positive after each of the workshops.

Township officers appreciated the time and effort that went into the preparation and presentation of the information. They found the content useful and we heard a lot of thanks for the great meeting.



Grass Roots Report

ND Township Officers Association
P.O. Box 104
Brocket, ND 58321-0104

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Kenneth Yantes
P.O. Box 104 • Brockel, ND 58321-0104
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