

**North Dakota Township Officers Association
Board of Directors
DRAFT Minutes**

2026 2nd Quarterly Meeting

July 8, 2026, 10:00 AM Central

Chieftain Conference Center, Carrington, ND – Buffalo Room

Lunch: A noon lunch was served in the meeting room.

NDTOA Handbook Updates will be available, please ask for some if you need any.

Call to order: President Schmitz called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM

Call of the roll: One director (Jason Johnston) absent; quorum present. Jayme Tenneson was also present.

Public Comment Period: No public comments were submitted.

Consideration of minutes: Tom moved to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2026, meeting as presented. 2nd by Leon. Motion Carried.

Treasurer's report: Barb presented a printed report as of June 30, 2026.

Assets: \$384,581.44

Year-to-date income: \$221,485.24

Year-to-date expenses: \$149,989.34

Year-to-date net income (loss): \$71,495.90

Dues behind but still probably normal for this time of year.

Office/Apartment rent increased from \$670 to \$775/month as of April; new management (RJR) in place.

Office/apartment provides cost-effective space for meetings, storage, and operations compared to hotel stays.

Discussion on dues discrepancies:

Some merged townships want to pay less than the set \$400; four townships in Benson County only paid \$125.

Dues increase was voted on to fund a lobbyist; non-payment affects voting rights.

Merged townships: If combined by county commission, pay as one; if just sharing a board, pay separately.

Precedents exist for both combined and separate dues; need to clarify policy at annual meeting.

Some townships consistently do not pay dues; issue persists.

Lee moved to approve the treasurer's report. 2nd by Kim. Motion carried.

Attorney's report:

Attorney (Jayme) reports many zoning questions; plans to compile township zoning ordinances and comprehensive plans for website reference.

Statutory requirement: Zoning is unenforceable without a comprehensive plan.

Comprehensive plan serves as a roadmap; must be current and updated regularly.

Suggestion to provide example plans and ordinances online for guidance.

Open records and open meetings:

Frequent questions about compliance; plan to address at future Township Tuesday sessions.

Emphasis on not conducting township business outside of noticed meetings.

Example: Two board members authorized \$12,000 expense without board approval; not proper procedure.

If on a county road, township not responsible for payment.

Remedy: Public support to call a special meeting and potentially remove board members.

Audit update: Efforts ongoing to schedule audit with Harold Rotunda; \$3,000/year proposed, \$4,000 for first year with \$1,000 setup fee.

Zoning updates:

Many township zoning ordinances are outdated; need annual zoning board meetings and regular comprehensive plan updates.

Regional planning centers (e.g., Jamestown) can assist with zoning/comprehensive plans for \$300–\$500.

Boilerplate ordinances available but require careful review.

Some townships lack capacity for zoning boards due to small/aging populations.

Jayme to contact South Central Planning Council for more info.

Standing committee reports:

Convention Committee: Change of venue and date

Ramada venue unavailable due to fire; Baymont considered but not preferred.

Bismarck Hotel being renovated; toured and found suitable.

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(*indicates abstaining from vote)*

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New sound equipment, flooring, furniture; service-oriented staff.

Board meeting room, ballroom for vendors, meetings, and meals.

Available dates: November 29th, 30th, and December 1st

Lee moved to hold the 60th Annual Convention on November 29th, 30th and December 1st at the Bismarck Hotel. 2nd by Leon. Motion carried.

Legislative pre-session starts December 1; social event to be held Monday night before session.

Banquet: No speaker during meal; focus on awards and socializing.

Candidate introductions: Encourage early notification for newsletter inclusion; consider district-level elections.

Redistricting and moving director elections to districts under consideration.

Difficulty in finding candidates; encourage more outreach and training.

Legislative: Tax Reform and Relief Committee June 23rd Two more meetings being scheduled August and September.

August meeting will include discussion on penalties for exceeding 3% cap

Townships vote on levies annually; seeking exemption from 3% cap.

Need to expand on the ability of Twp Annual mtg to approve increased levy (voter approved)

Proposed legislation would also exempt ambulance/fire districts.

Need for new legislative handout; seeking artistic help for materials.

Local Government Day at Capitol planned for March 27, 2027.

Joint event with counties, cities, park districts, school boards.

CAFOS Model zoning ordinance committee meeting July 27;

Possible legislative challenge to township zoning authority expected in the coming legislative session.

New AI legislative committee formed, first meeting next week, Rep Johnathon Warry chm

Rules and Policy:

Proposal to elect directors by district at annual meeting; need to draft language.

There were concerns about quorum and vacancies if no district representatives are present at the convention.

Discussion of moving elections to district meetings, possibly including workshops.

Minnesota's district meeting model referenced; training could incentivize attendance.

Communications:

Barb had received samples of notebooks for give aways at convention door.

Lanyards and name tags for annual meeting: Sufficient supply, but may need to order more.

Notebooks for meetings: Decided to order 200 small, lined notebooks with NDPOA logo; color and style discussed.

Lee moved to order 200 notebooks. 2nd by Kim. Motion carried.

Committee assignments:

Awards, legislative, and resolution committees updated; chairpersons to be decided by committees.

Parliamentarian to be secured for annual meeting.

Committee lists to be updated and distributed.

Old business:

Audit RFP: Harold Rotunda to be approached for 2025 and possibly 2024 audits at \$3,000/year. (\$4,000 first year)

Leon moved to engage Harold Rotunda to do the audit. 2nd by Lee. Motion carried.

Insurance offering (Benafica): Group life insurance for township officers/staff to be offered; age-based reductions may limit eligibility.

Participation voluntary; program to launch in September if enough interest.

Julie moved to go ahead with the Benafica insurance program. 2nd by Kim. Motion carried.

Notice to be published; possible Zoom info session.

Scanner for bills/vouchers: ScanSnap purchased for \$400; to be delivered to Barb for use.

Website: Minutes and audio recordings now posted under About Us tab.

Lobbyist search: Clearwater Communications proposal reviewed; \$1,000/month interim, \$4,000/month during session.

Leon moved for further negotiations with Clearwater to proceed; preference for year-round engagement. 2nd by Tom. Motion carried.

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Past lobbyists often represented multiple associations; desire for dedicated representation.
Email/domain issues: Some directors have access issues; group text reminders implemented.
Increased phishing and scam attempts noted; caution advised.

New business:

District 6 Director vacancy: No candidates yet.

Lee moved to leave the district 6 position open until annual meeting unless a candidate volunteers. 2nd by Leon. Motion carried.

Potential candidate (Shelley Schwab) identified for follow-up.

NDTC priorities:

Support for dedicating 100% of motor vehicle excise tax to transportation.

Preference for formula-based funding over merit-based grants for flex/prairie dog funds.

Discussion of township burden for frontage roads and interstate overpasses; possible new grant category suggested.

Issues with DOT cooperation on drainage and road maintenance.

State's financial constraints noted; focus on maintaining current funding.

Suggestion to address natural gas production tax distribution.

Tim Leopard's resolution:

Request for NDTOA support; board prefers a neutral resolution supporting local control and opposing loss of township authority.

Jayme to draft simple resolution for review.

Contracts for Jayme and Larry:

Reviewed; amendments made to reduce email frequency and remove implementation plan requirements.

Lee moved to remove item #1 from Jayme's contract, change the requirement for weekly email updates to monthly updates in Larry's contract and eliminate the implementation of the strategic and communication plans. 2nd by Leon. Motion carried.

Leon moved to remove line #1 from Jayme's contract. 2nd by Kim. Motion carried.

Final versions to be approved at next meeting; contracts to run from October meeting to year-end.

Apparel: Option for members to order NDPOA-logo shirts, vests, sweaters; samples and ordering info available.

Engineering requirements: Clarification on when professional engineers are needed for township projects; bid process required for private contractors over \$250,000.

QuickBooks reporting issues: Difficulty generating split reports; seeking better solutions.

Consideration of Bills and Vouchers: Lee moved to pay all bills and vouchers. 2nd by Leon. Motion carried.

Next meeting: Sept 29, 10 AM, Chieftain Inn, Carrington

Adjournment: Km moved to adjourn the meeting. 2nd by Deb. Motion carried. Dale declared the meeting adjourned.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Larry A Syverson
NDTOA Executive Secretary*

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