

GRASS ROOTS REPORT



NOVEMBER 2013

The Official Newsletter of the ND Township Officers Association

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NDTOA 47th ANNUAL MEETING PLANNED

by Ken Yantes, Executive Secretary

The 47th Annual Meeting of the NDTOA will be held at the Grand Hotel located at 1505 North Broadway Minot, ND beginning with registration on December 2 at 8:00 a.m.

All township officers are invited to attend including supervisors, clerks, treasurers, assessors and any other appointed or elected officers of your township.

President Larry Syverson will open the meeting and serve as the Master of Ceremonies until the conclusion at noon on Tuesday, December 3rd.

A special block of rooms has been set aside for ND Township officers **if you make your room reservations by November 15th. Be sure you mention that you are a ND township officer.**

Please call this number to make your reservations: **(701) 852-3161.**

This year's registration fee has been set the same as last year: \$40 for pre-registration and \$50 at the door. The fee includes a noon lunch, an evening banquet and morning and afternoon coffee and cookies supplied by the NDIRF.

Pre-registration deadline is Friday, November 15th.

NDTOA by-laws indicate that

only two votes per dues paid county association may be used in the voting process but you may enter into the discussion of any and all items of business when recognized by the chairman.

The Monday morning session will feature ND Tax Commissioner, Cory Fong, who will speak on the new property tax records required by township assessors.

Steve Spilde, CEO of the ND Insurance Reserve Fund will report on the activities of the NDIRF throughout this last year's business.

We will hear from our new advertiser, the TrueNorth Steel Company, about the products they handle for us.

The Ward County Sheriff's Department will discuss what the new oil boom has created for them.

The ND Local Technical Assistance Program, (known as NDLTAP) will inform us of the programs that they offer to help local road servicing entities do their jobs more effectively.

Al Jaeger, ND Secretary of State, will speak on the most current law changes that affect township voting.

The noon Luncheon awards will honor a township officer who has been serving his/her township with

honor and distinction for a long time. This award program has been in effect for the last 25 years.

Committee Chairman and District 3 Director, Al Bekkerus will present the recipient of this year's award.

The business meeting will start at 1:00 pm on Monday, December 2 and include reports from all standing committees, a Grassroots policy Development session, an election of directors for districts 1, 3, and 5.

Election will also be held for a new NDTOA President and Vice President.

The business meeting will adjourn on or before 5:00 PM.

A no host bar will be set up in the banquet room after adjournment of the business meeting.

The last several years many township officers have called in to the NDTOA state office and inquired as to why and how they got the big increase in their funding from the state and will it continue.

At 6:00 p.m. North Dakota State Treasurer, Kelly Schmidt, will speak on township funding distributions from the State Treasurers office.

Cont'd on page 5

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President's Comments



Hello Township Officers!

I can tell by the snowflakes floating by my window this morning as I write this article that another year is almost over. I hope that you have had a good year of getting road work done, made the roads safer for the public and have some money left in the treasury for the snowy winter that is bound it come, one of these years.

We continue to watch the legislative action as the interim committees prepare for the next session which is now only 14 months away.

The tax committee will meet again in early November and I am sure the other committees we follow will announce meetings soon.

One question has come up in more than one committee, "*Why do the property taxes continue to go up even after we gave them so much state money?*" I believe we have to be ever watchful as they examine this issue to be sure they don't institute laws that will restrict township resident's ability to raise taxes upon themselves or to make expenditures to perform needed work.

We are preparing to compile the new ND Township Officers handbook. Thanks to Steve Spilde and the North Dakota Insurance Reserve Fund (NDRIF), it will be another complete new book printing. So no page swapping required! Just snap open the folder, remove the old filler and insert the new. Thanks so much Steve!

The laws that pertain to townships will be updated, as well as the forms that townships commonly use located in the back of the handbook.

We will have the new revision ready to hand out on the workshop tour which is being planned for February. Watch for the workshop

schedule and plan to attend the one closest to you.

Also changing in the new handbook revision will be the Officers and Directors list. My name will move over to the Past President spot as we will be electing a new president. My second term as president ends with the coming annual meeting on December 2 & 3. We will also be electing a new vice president and three district directors positions are up for election.

It has been a very interesting four years and I have gotten to know quite a few of you from townships across the state. Some in person at meetings or workshops and others by phone or email. Many have brought their issues to see if some help could be had.

Of course we don't have the ability to solve all the problems but we try to direct them to someone that might be able to help. I hope all those have found the answers they needed.

I have to thank some really great people for the help I have received during my terms as President. First, the NDTOA Board of Directors for they are the officers from all over the state that take the time to travel to, and attend, our board meetings and the county association meetings in their districts.

They have all been great to work with and I appreciate them representing NDTOA at their county meetings as I could not possibly get to them all.

Our Vice President Roger Olafson has also been great to work with. He has represented the association at many county meetings and Multi-State Conferences. *Cont'd on page 3*

President's Column Cont'd

He has an eye for details that I have come to rely on. If I need something checked out, I just ask Roger.

Barb Knutson, association Treasurer and mailing list upkeep—thanks for keeping the finances in order and the mail going in the right directions. Those are both big jobs!

Kathy Holte, *Grassroots* newsletter composition editor—thanks for putting our news together for us every quarter and for putting up with my being a day(s) late with my articles every time.

Tom Moe, association legal counsel—thanks for the frequent advice.

Kerry Schorch, the immediate Past President, will be retired from the Board of Directors as I will displace him as Past President. Thank you so much for the years of service to the association as a district director, president and past president. Kerry has also served us as webmaster for our website www.ndtoa.com and I hope he will continue in that capacity.

Darleen and Ken Yantes have been so much help to me it would be impossible to list it all but thanks for everything! I am so concerned about them as together they continue to battle her recurrent cancer. Our thoughts and prayers are with you Darleen and Ken.

There may be a new development on filing forms by computer for **all** those annual reports. It is too early to promise anything but some new software might be unveiled at the annual meeting. It might just put an end to entering the same information again and again to file those reports! ***Want to see it? Attend the upcoming annual meeting!***

Thank you for being Township Officers and for being part of Grassroots Government!

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WORKING FOR YOU!

Executive Secretary's Corner

by Ken Yantes



You don't know what you have until you lose it!

In North Dakota we have so many good things, fresh air, clean water, great productive soil, abundant hunting and fishing within minutes of almost anywhere in our state, a great education system, a devoted peoples legislature; not many states legislative process allows its citizens to testify before legislative committees on issues that affect them like we do.

It is not unthinkable to visit our state capitol and run into the Governor in the halls and share ideas with him. In addition to that we do not have billions of dollars deficits like most other states do. I am glad that I was born, raised and lived my life in North Dakota.

In conclusion to this article I must say that I have been serving as a lobbyist in our legislature for the last 48 years and the last few sessions I have been aware of a stronger and stronger influence of out of state lobbying efforts. It scares me!

We must be aware of these efforts and unite before we lose what we cherish most, our ND lifestyle. It is worth fighting for. Grassroots resolutions brought to the NDTOA policy development session are real important.

Let us unite behind what we believe in and work together to implement those beliefs.

The Country Lawyer

by Thomas R. Moe, Attorney-at-Law



Greetings! It's almost November and the year end is approaching. Can it be that the white stuff will be here soon? The government "shut-down" has come and gone, and I'm not so sure that anything was truly accomplished.

It seems that everything now is under federal government control, except the national debt and the budget. The federal government could take a good lesson from North Dakota townships!

With the onset of winter and end of the harvest, township officers probably will still have time to get a road and sign survey in before it's too late.

One advantage of the lateness of the year for doing the survey is that it should be easier to check for sign reflectivity at night time, given the fact that we get nightfall sooner. Make sure you document your survey visit and make plans for changes, especially with signs.

The state convention is soon upon us as well, and I'm hoping that many of you will make the trip to Minot. There's a great program in the offing, with good speakers and information presented.

I enjoy meeting and visiting with the attendees, as it gives me an opportunity to put a name with a face. And, we always have a good question and answer session at the meeting. Attending the convention is valid township business and the expenses for coming to Minot should be paid for by your township.

Another opportunity to meet and greet is that our biennial workshop sessions are again being scheduled for next February, 2014.

Please make plans now to attend one of these workshops when we are in your area.

Township officers attending can also have their townships provide for their expenses. Most workshops are close enough so that one can attend and travel home the same day.

These workshops are wonderful opportunities for questions and answer sessions, and going over new legislation and the new version of the handbook.

Here's hoping you have a safe holiday season. I hope to see you down the road at Minot in December and at one of the workshops next February! Following are some of the questions I've received at my office from township officers. TRM

Q. What is exactly the relationship between a township and a water board? We always have problems with figuring out who has authority over a culvert.

A. Remember this simple rule: It's the township's road and the water board's water. Always ask this question of yourself when contemplating a culvert replacement—Who wants the culvert? If it's the adjacent landowner, then the water board will have jurisdiction because it will be a drainage project. The township will have to be notified and involved with the ultimate decision, because the road and road ditch will be involved with the landowner's drainage project.

If however, the township is needing the culvert because the road is being inundated, then the township has the jurisdiction. The water board is supposed to be notified for its recommendation about sizing, etc., but cannot override the township's decision to protect its road.

Cooperation between the two entities is critical, and both townships and county water boards should not

treat each other as adversaries, but rather has two integrated partners in the safe and orderly water movement within the township.

Q. Can townships make charitable donations? How about donations to road projects in an adjacent township? Their improved road "next door" will greatly help some of our residents in getting out in times of high water.

A. Probably not with the charitable idea, as you are talking about using tax dollars for charitable purposes which is not a proper use. But, I think you could assist the adjacent township because it would be for a public purpose.

Make sure, however, to have a special meeting of the township scheduled to approve this expenditure, as no doubt there will be legitimate concerns about use of your budget in this manner. And, I would also advise a written agreement with the adjacent township to outline the reasons and concerns about this one-time appropriation for future reference.

Q. Are supervisors required to meet monthly now?

A. No, monthly meetings of the supervisors are not required, but interestingly, I know of several townships whose supervisors are meeting monthly because it makes it easier to give notice to the county auditor—i.e. "supervisors meet the fourth Wednesday," or "supervisors meet the 5th of each month."

They are "finding that by handling business on a more regular basis the meetings are shorter and they can keep better track of monthly bills,

cont'd on page 7

NDTOA 2013 Standing Committees

Annual Meeting

cont'd from page 1

Legislative Committee

Roger Olafson, Chairman
Barb Knutson
Larry Syverson
Ken Yantes, ACIR Designee
Steve Gingsbach
Chuck Thacker

Budget Committee

Larry Syverson, Chairman
Barb Knutson
Larry Syverson
Roger Olafson
Mark Shipley

Audit Committee

Larry Syverson, Chairman
Roger Olafson

Resolutions Committee

Al Bekkerus, Chairman
Steve Gingsbach
Don Malcomb

Nomination Committee (4)

Mark Shipley
Leon Monke
Steve Gingsbach

Awards Committee (3)

Bruce Krabseth
Barb Knutson
Al Bekkerus

Legislative Awards Committee

(Directors of Inter-Governmental Relations)
Ken Yantes
Larry Syverson

Executive Committee

Larry Syverson, Chairman
Kerry Schorsh
Roger Olafson
Barb Knutson
Mark Shipley (3)

Handbook Committee

Larry Syverson, Chairman
Tom Moe
Mark Verke
Ken Yantes

Convention Committee

Ken Yantes, Chairman
Barb Knutson
Bruce Krabseth

Workshop Committee

Tom Moe, Chairman
Ken Yantes
Barb Knutson
Mark Verke

Newsletter Committee

Ken Yantes, Chairman
Darleen Yantes
Kathy Holte

Membership Rolls

Larry Syverson, Chairman
Ken Yantes
Darleen Yantes
Barb Knutson

Rules and Policy Committee

Ken Yantes, Chairman
Leon Monke, Parliamentarian
Tom Moe

Dues

Barb Knutson

Ad Sales

Ken Yantes

- (1) Constitutional Required Seat
- (2) District Director in Rotation
- (3) Term Expiring Directors
- (4) Non Term Expiring Directors

This presentation before the banquet is different than normal as she must catch a flight out of state.

The banquet will start after Kelly Schmidt's presentation and will feature this year's Legislator of the Year Award presentation.

A special workshop on township zoning will be held at 9:30 a.m. on December 3. The presenter will be Mr. Joel Quanbeck, North Dakota Planning Association.

Katie Haarsager, representing the Enbridge Pipeline Company, will explain the Sandpiper Pipeline Project and hold an open question and answer period following the Joel Quanbeck presentation.

The workshop will conclude before noon.

Quotes for the Lighter Side

Busy-ness

It's not so much how busy you are, but why you are busy. The bee is praised; the mosquito is swatted.

Catherine O'Hara

Teamwork

Snowflakes are one of nature's most fragile things, but just look at what they can do when they stick together.

Vista M. Kelly

On Marriage

Only two things are necessary to keep one's wife happy. One is to let her think she is having her own way, and the other, to let her have it.

Lyndon B. Johnson

Check out our website: www.ndtoa.com

47th NDTOA Annual Meeting Agenda

AGENDA for DECEMBER 2, 2013

8:00 AM Registration Grand Ballroom
 8:30 AM Opening Ceremonies
 President Syverson – Welcome
 Pledge to Flag - Introductions
 9:00 AM Cory Fong ND State Tax Commissioner
 New property records for Assessors
 9:30 AM TrueNorth Steele—New Advertiser
 10:00 AM Steve Spilde - CEO, NDIRF
 10:30 AM Ward County Sheriff’s Department
 Oil Boom Law Enforcement Changes
 11:00 AM NDLTAP Report - Denise Brown
 11:30 AM Al Jaeger—ND Secretary of State
 Update on 2013 Election Law Change
 12:00 AM Grassroots Government Leadership
 Awards Lunch—Al Bekkerus
 1:00 PM **Business Meeting**
 Call to Order /Rules of Operation
 Roll of Townships present
 Minutes - Ken Yantes
 Treasurer Report - Barb Knutson
 President Report - Larry Syverson
 Executive Secretary Report – Ken Yantes
 Legal Counsel and Workshop
 Committee Report – Tom Moe
 Audit and Budget Committee Reports–
 Larry Syverson
 Other Committee Reports

Old Business
New Business
 Act on proposed Budget
 Resolutions Session—Don Malcomb
Elections – Districts 1, 3, and 5
 Nominating Committee
 President, Vice President Elections
Other Business
 5:00 PM Adjournment
 6:00 PM **ND Treasurer – Kelly Schmidt
 speaks on township funding distributions
 from the State Treasurer’s office. How and
 why do we get the funding we receive?**
 6:30 PM **Banquet** – Legislator of the Year
 Award

AGENDA for DECEMBER 3, 2013

**Workshop on Zoning &
 Sandpiper Pipeline Project**
 9:30 AM **Zoning**, Joel Quanbeck – ND Planning
 10:30 AM **Sandpiper Pipeline Project**
 Katie Haarsager - Enbridge, Minot

NDTOA 2013 Annual Meeting Registration Form December 2 and 3, 2013 Grand Hotel, Minot, ND

Name(s) _____ Officer Position(s) _____

City, State Zip _____
 Township _____ County _____

Total No. Attending ____ @ \$40 per person PRE-REGISTRATION (\$50 at the door) Total Amount Enclosed
 ____ @ \$10 spouse attending the Monday Night Banquet \$ _____
 ____ @ \$ 7 spouse attending the Monday Luncheon

Please complete and send this registration form, along with your check payable to NDTOA by **November 18, 2013**
 to Barb Knutson, 2600 236th St NE, McKenzie, ND 58572.

NOTE: Townships may pay from their general fund for officer’s registration fees and expenses.

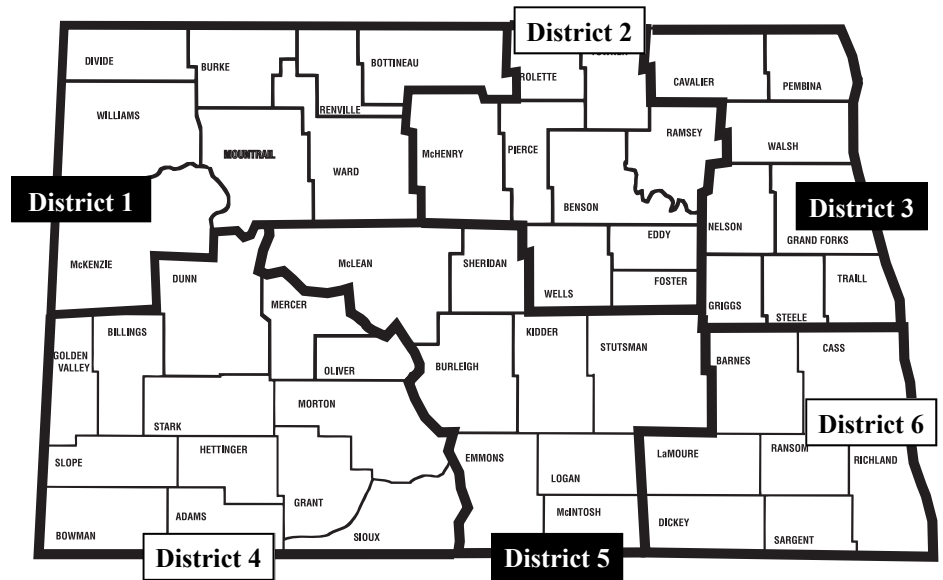
NDTOA Director Positions Open for Election

District Directorships to be filled this annual meeting are as follows:

District 1 consists of the following counties: Divide, Burke, Renville, Bottineau, Williams, Mountrail, Ward and McKenzie. *Directorship has been held by Bruce Krabseth, Alamo.*

District 3 consists of the following counties: Cavalier, Pembina, Walsh, Nelson, Grand Forks, Griggs, Steele, and Traill. *Directorship has been held by Al Bekkerus, Grand Forks.*

District 5 consists of the following counties: McLean, Sheridan, Burleigh, Kidder, Stutsman, Emmons, Logan and McIntosh. *Directorship has been held by Barb Knutson, McKenzie.*



To be eligible to serve on the State Board of Directors, you must currently be a township officer. Anyone interested in serving on the NDTOA Board of Directors for those districts should **contact a nominating committee member**: District 2 Director Mark Shipley, District 4 Director Leon Monke or District 6 Director Steve Ginsbach. (Contact information can be found on page 2.)

The Country Lawyer *cont'd from page 4*

Interestingly, our public political subdivision counter parts—city councils, school boards, county commissions, park districts, etc., all meet monthly and have been doing so for years. It’s probably time for our busier and more active townships to think seriously about getting together more often.

Q. We have an absentee landowner who came to our annual meeting last year and wanted the floor to speak. **Did we have to let him do that?**

A. Under Roberts Rules, there should be a time on the agenda for the public to comment—especially in a public gathering such as a township meeting. The amount of time given for each to comment doesn’t have to very long, and should be controlled by the chairman or moderator of the meeting-- e.g. no longer than 5 minutes, etc.

And, remember that the absentee

cannot vote at the meeting because he is not a resident, but it would seem appropriate to allow a township taxpayer such as the absentee to register his thoughts.

Interestingly, this is why notice of annual and special meetings of the township are required to be in the local newspaper, so that interested parties who don’t necessarily reside locally can learn of the gatherings.

Q. I notice there is a space on the year-end recap sheet for “meals”.

When is it appropriate to use township funds for meals?

A. Any time a township officer is on official business and is on duty over a meal hour, then meal expense would be allowed. So, if the officers are at an all-day meeting, then the township should pay for their meals. If a half-day meeting is contemplated, then one meal would be appropriate.

I know many supervisors now meet monthly for a couple hours to keep abreast of things, and as long as those get-togethers are officially noticed meetings, then meals are appropriate.

In addition when attending the February workshops (see above) meal expense and mileage should be paid for officers attending. This is all subject, of course, to the budget which the patrons approve at the township annual meeting, and obviously, to monies available.



WORKING FOR YOU!

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 specific reference to the following features of the nominee's accomplishments as applicable:

- ❖ 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. **Nomination deadline is November 15, 2013.** If additional nomination forms are needed, contact:

Al Bekkerus
1890 12th Ave. NE
Grand Forks, ND 58201
(701) 741-2120

A nomination form is below for your convenience. Just complete and mail. It's that easy!

North Dakota Township Officers Grassroots Government Leadership Award NOMINATION FORM

Name, title, local government, address and phone number of NOMINEE: _____

Your name, address and phone number _____

Please provide name, address, day phone, title and affiliation of two objective references who can evaluate the nominee's accomplishments:

1) _____

2) _____

Please attach a brief biography of the nominee summarizing positions held, civic and professional affiliations, and other relevant personal data. (Not to exceed two typewritten, double-spaced pages.) Also attach a summary of the major accomplishments for which the local official is being nominated, keeping in mind the examples and criteria listed above. (Not to exceed four type-written, double-spaced pages.) The award will be presented at the County Association Annual Meeting and the NDTOA Annual Meeting in December.

Property Records for Assessment Officials

by Cory Fong, Tax Commissioner

Assessment officials now have available three Property Records to consider using for recording each parcel of taxable property in their jurisdiction.

The three property records are for agricultural, commercial, and residential property. To ensure easy access to these records, the Tax Department is hosting the records on our web site at www.nd.gov/tax/property/forms.

County, city, and township assessors, the North Dakota Township Officers Association and the Tax Department worked together to identify and develop the minimum requirements for each property record.

The goal was to design a useful tool that assessors could consider using in order to meet the state requirement for recording each parcel of taxable property.

The group also wanted to create a record that could be saved and used in an electronic or paper format. Previously, property records could consist of a few random hand-written notes on piece of paper. That format is no longer acceptable.

The resulting property records are simply a resource to ensure the core elements as set out by the State Supervisor of Assessments are recorded.

The team recognized that some assessment officials might have a robust property record system in place, others might not.

Those assessors with a more developed property record system will likely not need to use these new property records.

However, for those assessors who do not have access to an automated

system, they might want to consider using the new property records.

The property records may be in electronic or paper form and must contain certain information to document data that affects property valuation.

This also helps ensure consistency throughout a jurisdiction, whether the jurisdiction is a township, city, or county. Keep in mind that the County Tax Director must retain the property records for townships and cities in which the population is less than 5,000.

While there is certain information that is standard for each type of record, such as the parcel identification number, property classification and legal description, there are also differences between the records depending upon the type of property.

So, if you decide to use these records, be sure to use the correct record when completing the information.

The records are in a fillable PDF format. You can download and save these records to your computer. And, you can choose to complete the records using your computer or handwrite the information.

For more information, please visit the Tax Department web site at www.nd.gov/tax or contact the Property Tax Division at 877-328-7088, option 6.

Other forms available online are:

Application for Disabled Veteran Property Exemption, Application for Farm Residence Exemption, Application for Mobile Homes for County Registration, and other important information including Homestead Credit Tax Application and brochure.



Cory Fong, Tax Commissioner

GrassRoots Report newsletter not handy when you need it?
Go to www.ndtoa.com to find information and websites for the following:

- ◆ Officers and Directors Information
- ◆ Calendar of Events
- ◆ The *GrassRoots Report* Newsletter
- ◆ The Officer's Handbook
- ◆ Workshop Information
- ◆ Discussion Forums
- ◆ How to Access the ND Century Code
- ◆ North Dakota Insurance Reserve Fund (NDIRF)
- ◆ Legislative Updates
- ◆ Zoning Ordinances
- ◆ Technical Assistance
- ◆ Contractor Services
- ◆ NDTOA Dues
- ◆ Taxes and more!

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Check it out today!

Treasurer's Report

by Barb Knutson Dist. 5 Director and Treasurer



Here we are, getting ready for another annual meeting. Where has the year gone?

I think all but one county that pays dues in one check have paid some or all of their township's dues. That is the best yet for this time of the year.

Thank you all for getting this handled. Any township that has not gotten their dues in still have until the end of October to pay and be credited to the correct year.

I have so appreciated the mailing lists that have come from the counties that are in alphabetical order, current addresses, phone numbers

and zip code plus 4 numbers included in their lists. This is a great help. Once again, they can only give me what they have been provided with from the townships. Keep up the good work!! I also appreciate those of you who have kept me up to speed with changes in your townships.

REMINDER:

There is no limit as to how many can come from each township.

Plans are to have speakers and information available to you to make each of your jobs easier. I hope to see many of you there!

Resolutions

All written resolutions should be sent to committee members **no later than Friday, Nov. 23, 2013:**

Mark Shipley
PO Box 494
Devils Lake, ND 58301

Leon Monke
5645 B 106th Avenue SW
Regent, ND 58650-9119

Steve Ginsbach
16290 91st Street SE
Hankinson, ND 58041

Or to the NDTOA office:
Ken Yantes, PO Box 104,
Brockton ND 58321-0104.

They will be presented at the Resolutions Committee meeting on Sunday evening December 1, 2013.

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Snow Removal Safety by NDIRF

WINTER PREPARATION ALREADY?

The winter season of 2013-2014 is already showing signs of approach. In fact, while writing this in early October, we are in the process today of receiving several inches of the wet white stuff in Bismarck and more in southwest North Dakota – doesn't really seem fair after that late spring we had but, ready or not, here it comes.

Therefore, we need to be ready, rather than not, and be about the business of ensuring safety for winter operations.

Accumulations of snow, whether occurring naturally or as the result of snow removal efforts, can obscure driver sight lines, impede traffic and create access problems – not only for motorists but also for public equipment operators.

Winter snow removal operations create a migrating work zone for which the motoring public often has little regard.

They are a repeated source of accidents and NDIRF notices an up-tick in related claims whenever we experience an above-average snowfall season.

If your township is among those who do your own snow removal there are a number of ways to

enhance the safety of these operations, including the following:

Rotating strobe lights increase the visibility of snow removal equipment.

- Back-up alarms reduce the possibility of an incident by providing an audible warning.
- “Warning – Stay Back 50 Feet” signs, mounted on the rear of snow removal equipment, can provide an additional defense against claims.
- Equip all snow removal vehicles with adequate outside mirrors to assist drivers in observing the sides and rear of the unit during operations.
- Check all vehicle and equipment heaters, fans and blowers to ensure they properly remove frost and fog on interior glass.
- Winter survival kits should be assembled and placed in each vehicle and piece of snow removal equipment.
- Consider running public service announcements through local media outlets, reminding citizens of the hazards involved in snow removal operations.

Heavy use and/or an abundance of snow, if that occurs this season, may have you scrambling to find additional snow removal equipment. Often, this equipment lacks some or

all of the appropriate safety items. If you haven't already, now is the time to make sure each piece of road working equipment has a strobe or beacon mounted on the top.

Also, rear-mounted SMV and “STAY BACK 50 FEET” signs, visible from a distance of 500 feet, should be installed.

When renting heavy equipment, check that the necessary warning apparatus described above has been installed. Be prepared – and have a **safe** winter.

Quotes for the Lighter Side

Mistakes


Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new. Albert Einstein

Taxes

When I asked my accountant if anything could get me out of this mess I am in now, he thought for a long time and said, “Yes, death would help.” Robert Morley

Work

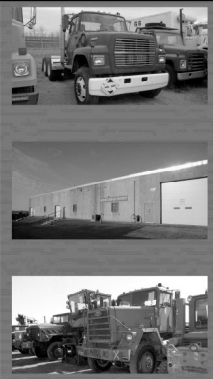
If you think your boss is stupid, remember: you wouldn't have a job if he was smarter. Albert Grant



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