

Meeting Minutes
NDACo Board of Directors
December 12, 2024
NDACo County Office Building

President Ruland called the meeting to order at 8:43 AM and declared a quorum based on the ILG Board roll call just taken.

Members Present:	Jayne Tenneson	Trudy Ruland
Becky Hagel	Tony Grindberg	Scott Ouradnik
Don Flaherty	Erica Johnsrud	Kim Jacobson
Dana Larsen	Shirley Murray	Robert Wilson
Nick Moser	Joshua Frey	Wanda Knutson
Kelly Palm	Chad Kaiser	Joan Hollekim

Members Absent:	Beau Anderson	Aaron Mork
	Jamee Folk	

Also Present: Aaron Birst, NDACo Executive Director
Genny Dienstmann, NDACo Staff
Michelle Tabbert, NDACo Staff
Donnell Preskey, NDACo Staff
Linda Svihovec, NDACo Staff
Jeff Eslinger, NDACo Staff
Peter Halbach, NDACo Staff
Ryan Gellner, NDACo Staff
Angie Wentland, NDACo Staff
Michael Casey, NDACo Staff
Ron Henke, ND Department of Transportation

The President asked if there were any requested changes to the agenda. There were no suggested changes. Moser moved to approve the agenda as printed. The motion was seconded and passed on a voice vote.

The Board Warm-Up Question was proposed, and each Board member was given an opportunity to respond. The question was: "What steps do you think the state legislators should take (or avoid) to address the concerns about property taxes based on assessed values?" The comments included:

- A lot of discussion on personal property tax relief as well as caps. Had a meeting with the Fargo area legislators to share ideas on property tax relief and giving local officials flexibility to make decisions.
- State has provided personal property tax relief; if they want to expand on it, that would be great – this should be continued. This option keeps decisions local and provides relief to citizens.

- Look at tax credits/exemptions and see if there is more that can be done for the elderly or veterans, give it to those that really need the help. Don't want to have them mess with assessed values.
- Take measured and thoughtful action – first step is to concentrate on personal property tax relief. Encourage legislature to put together subcommittees and review the property tax bills to consolidate and vet the bills to bring forward bills that make sense, not for just one legislative session, but something that works into the future.
- New legislators and committee leads in tax committees may not have the background they need to understand property tax process. Being proactive in providing information and being a resource to them is critical.
- Complex topic; need to make sure the property tax relief does not hinder services provided to citizens. We need to help provide clarity on this issue, there is false information out there and we need to provide the facts to make sound decisions.
- Property tax credit was good idea, but the application process was not the best way to offer to citizens as some citizens didn't apply.
- Difficult to track the property tax credits for citizens. Would like to see state look at school funding to reduce mills.
- Incarceration costs are different across counties, there is no standardization of reimbursements; transfer these costs back to the state for transients. State mandates that are requiring counties to be paid should go back to the state.
- UND School of Medicine and Garrison Diversion mills should be removed from tax roll. Specials were discussed greatly with Measure 4. State could look at an infrastructure fund to assist counties in this area.
- When you look at where taxes go, a large amount is schools, so consider funding more for schools from the state. Concerned about caps, if there is a 3% and inflation is at 8%, we will be working backwards; no flexibility.
- Schools and primary residence tax relief seems to be the main discussion points with people I meet. Farm residence tax credit could be looked at, primary residence taxation could be the same across the board.
- Primary residence tax credit is a benefit, but wish you didn't have to apply. Need to look at all exemptions and get a valuation assessed on this property and have that amount paid by the state.
- To help auditors, not have changes every legislative session; leave the mechanism the same. Making sure we are proactive in educating our citizens, need to be more creative in sending our message on property taxes.
- Keep focus on citizens for property tax relief
- Need to look at the exemptions and tap into that side of it
- Should avoid shifting burden from one class to another, needs to be true relief for all.
- Focus on blanket exemptions for the state to reimburse, not discretionary exemptions.

The President next asked for consideration of the Consent Agenda. Flaherty moved to approve the Consent Agenda, including the amended NDACo minutes from the August 29 and October 21, 2024 meetings, the Delegate Council minutes from October 22, 2024, NDACo General Fund checks #38438 through #38497 and DJS Account checks #7941 through #7958 and ACH payments made from August to October 2024. The motion was seconded and passed on a voice vote.

The President called on Aaron and the legislative team to give the legislative update. Donnell spoke about the changes in legislative leadership and ways to engage with legislators. Aaron provided highlights from Governor Burgum's executive budget and shared a list of anticipated major legislative issues to be addressed during the Session.

The President then directed the Board's attention to the 2025 Budget, and Finance Committee Chair Kaiser asked Aaron and Genny to explain the proposed budget. Aaron explained the process used to develop and review the budget, highlighted various categories and items, responding to questions. Grindberg moved approval of the 2025 NDACo Budget as presented by the Finance Committee. After receiving a second to the motion and further discussion, it passed on a unanimous voice vote. One additional item for discussion was to have the Board formerly approve that the NDACo Executive Director has authority to sign contracts on behalf of the organization. Tenneson moved to approve the Executive Director having the authority to sign contracts on behalf of the organization, the motion was seconded and unanimously passed on a voice vote.

The President directed the Board members to the Governance Report, inviting Aaron to begin with a review of the New Board Member Orientation Process. Genny followed with a review of all Board Policies. Board members were asked to review, sign and return the 2024 Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement before leaving today's meeting. Ruland announced her appointments to the Finance Committee and Governance Committee. Moser followed with a summary of the Board Member Self-Evaluation results and an explanation of this year's Board Governance Appraisal, which Board members who've served for more than a year will be asked to complete before leaving today's meeting. Board members who have served less than a year will be asked to complete the New Board Member Appraisal before leaving today's meeting.

Aaron continued with plans to conduct Strategic Visioning in 2025. He noted the Association conducts strategic planning every three years. The Board discussed reviewing the timeframe of the Strategic Plan and extending it to every five to six years and completing a review session every two to three years. Dates for the 2025 session will be determined at the end of the meeting when the 2025 Board meeting dates are determined.

Jeff was invited to present the 2024 Conference Report. Attendance and registrations were highlighted, and the financial results were shared. A summary of conference feedback was noted. After further discussion and answering questions from board members, a slide show of conference photos was shown.

Aaron went on to explain the Local Government Capitol Connection that will be held in February 2025 and how it is a partnership with other political subdivisions. It was explained that this meeting will replace what was formerly the County Officials Academy and the County Day at the Capitol. He encouraged all Board members to attend.

Under Member Outreach, Aaron went on to explain the personal phone calls he made to the newly elected commissioners for whom we had phone numbers and that a welcome email is being sent as a follow-up. Trudy directed attention to the written report on County Tours, which shows the counties that were visited in 2024 and those that will be visited in 2025 and 2026.

Under County Financial Partnerships, Peter provided an update on the activities of the Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor Program that he oversees. Ryan followed with a recap of the work being accomplished through the Vision Zero Outreach Program.

Michael Casey was next asked to give the County Employer Group (CEG) report, providing an overview of the CEG program and explaining the CEG staff's work which results in savings for the counties.

Aaron next presented the Nationwide Retirement Solutions Report, highlighting the number of participants and plan value assets.

Ruland began the National Participation Report by announcing that our state's second representative to the NACo Board of Directors, McIntosh County Commissioner Perry Turner, was defeated in the November election; and that at yesterday's meeting of the NDCCA Board, President Hollekim's appointment of Cavalier County Commissioner Stanley Dick to this position was ratified. Ruland asked Wilson and Ouradnik to continue the National Participation Report. Wilson spoke about the NACo Fall Board Meeting held last week and gave an overview of the importance of the partnership of NACo and Nationwide and their work in providing retirement opportunities to counties. Scott followed with an update on the Western Interstate Region's (WIR) work in promoting NACo's Center for Public Lands Counties. He encouraged counties who received PILT payments to consider contributing up to 1% of their PILT payment to help support the Center.

The President and Aaron then reviewed the proposed 2025 Board meeting dates and dates for conducting a Strategic Visioning review. It was moved by Ouradnik to approve the following Board meeting dates for 2025: May 29, August 28, October 27 & 28 and December 11 and requesting to have the strategic visioning review take place the morning of August 28th and conduct the Board meeting in the afternoon. The motion was seconded and passed on a voice vote.

Having reached the end of the approved agenda, the President reminded everyone of the board meeting evaluation and declared the meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM.

Approved by: _____

Date: _____