



North Dakota Ethics Commission Special Meeting

Minutes of August 12th, 2026

600 E Boulevard Ave, ND Ethics Commission Conference Room, Bismarck, ND and MS Teams

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Pamela Sharp at 10:00 a.m. The following members of the Ethics Commission were also present: Vice Chair Jared Huibregtse, Commissioners Mark Western and Lisa Edison-Smith, as well as Executive Director Rebecca Binstock, General Counsel Logan Carpenter, and Interns Faith Scheuer, Ashley Wohl, and Conner Martin. The following member of the Ethics Commission was absent: Commissioner Kelly Leben. This meeting meets the Commission's quorum requirements.
2. **Discussion of Advisory Opinion Request 26-08:** Legal Intern Faith Scheuer explained advisory opinion 26-08: NDASCD hosts an annual multi-day event, inviting North Dakota producers and keynote speakers to present to convention attendees and educate them on topics significant to the state's agricultural community. This event will take place December 1–3, 2026, at the same time legislators are in Bismarck for the organizational session prior to the start of legislative session. Registrants pay a registration fee that covers their attendance for both days, including the social and awards banquet. Additional tickets for the banquet are available for family members upon request.

The evening of the last day of the convention, NDASCD hosts both a social with appetizers and a cash bar as well as an annual awards banquet where the fifty-four soil conservation districts recognize their recipients of the "County Achievement" award, as well as recognize the North Dakota Leopold Award recipients. Attendees of the evening social and banquet are given narrative materials that describe the work of the County Achievement recipients, and they are also shown a video presenting information about the Leopold Award. In addition to the award activities, the NDASCD has presentations where children present on their summer service projects. Approximately 485 people attend the evening awards program. The question presented in the request relates to legislators attending the evening social and awards banquet at no charge.

Legal Intern Faith Scheuer then discussed the conclusion of the advisory opinion: That the NDASCD may provide legislators with food and beverages for immediate consumption at its annual convention's social and awards banquet because of the educational component.

Vice Chair Huibregtse questioned whether the draft for the advisory opinion should include the words "no cost". ED Binstock responded by saying that she took it out of the first draft because she thought it to be unnecessary. Vice Chair Huibregtse stated that if the wording was a matter of preference, then to keep the language as written.

Motion: Commissioner Western moved to issue the drafted advisory opinion 26-08 as set forth in the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Edison-Smith. Chair Sharp called for a roll call vote. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

3. **Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:08 a.m.

Approved on 8/26/2026



Rebecca Binstock, Executive Director, North Dakota Ethics Commission