

Range Association of Municipalities & Schools

Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 26, 2022 – 6:00 P.M.

Northeast Service Cooperative Building

President Pat Medure called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Roll Call of Board:

Present: **Pat Medure (ISD 318-Grand Rapids); Barb Kalmi (ISD 319-Nashwauk/Keewatin);** Richard Aldrich (ISD 701-Hibbing, Supt Assn); **Glenn Anderson (City of Babbitt); Charlie Baribeau (City of Virginia); Bob Berrini (Morse Township);** Jennifer Hoffman-Saccoman (City of Hibbing); Norma Jean Jofs (City of Aurora); **Paul Kess (City of Ely); Stuart Lehman (City of Buhl); Julie Lucas (French Township); Philip Medure (Great Scott Township); Kim McLaughlin (ISD 701-Hibbing); Ron Pittman (Cherry Township); Cal Saari (City of Nashwauk); Stacey Scholz (ISD 2909 Rock Ridge);** David Zins (City of Hoyt Lakes)

Absent: City of Grand Rapids; McDavitt Township; City of Silver Bay; ISD 2909 Rock Ridge (Supt Assn); Nashwauk Township; City of Chisholm; ISD 2711-Mesabi East

Also Present: **Ida Rukavina, Executive Director; Kristen Kranz, RAMS Admin Assistant; State Rep Dave Lislegard; State Rep Julie Sandstede; State Rep Rob Ecklund; Jeff Anderson; Mike Raich; Jeff Schanche (Town of French)**

(Persons highlighted were present in person; others were via Zoom.)

Review and Approve Agenda:

The agenda was reviewed, and some new business was added:

- f. Letter to legislators regarding a special session
- g. Support for Hibbing housing
- h. Resignation of RAMS President
- i. Nomination of Vice President

A motion to amend the agenda was made by Kalmi and supported by Anderson. Motion carried.

Approve Meeting Minutes:

Moved by Lehman and supported by Lucas to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting held April 28, 2022. Motion carried.

Appearances:

The Board was joined by State Reps Lislegard, Sandstede, and Ecklund. They gave a brief update of the legislative session.

Mike Raich, President of Minnesota North College, gave a presentation on the newly formed college. The college includes the campuses of Hibbing, Ely, Virginia/Eveleth, International Falls, and Itasca (one accredited college with 6 campuses). The merger became official on May 23, 2022. This has made a seamless experience for students to attend any of the programs at any of the campuses. Employees can be more focused with "less hats to wear." Each campus will keep their names, athletics, and niche programming. The tagline will be #HeadNorth. The college works with high schools through the Applied Learning Institute, Pathways, and concurrent enrollment. MN North Customized Training serves thousands of people through MSHA, EMT training, leadership training, etc.

Director's Report:

Director Rukavina highlighted her activities for the month of May 2022.

1. Rukavina testified at the Polymet hearing and will send a letter of support.

2. Working with the local Chambers of Commerce to talk about hosting a housing summit in Northern St Louis County.
3. Wrote a lot of letters on broadband.
4. EMS Ambulance: Put in a grant for Blandin, haven't heard back yet
5. Letter of support for Rock Ridge for a federal grant
6. Solar for Schools: Superintendents sent letter
7. Range Mayors submitted a Polymet letter similar to the RAMS one.

Old Business:

A motion to hold the 2022 Annual Dinner at ITMEC was made by Anderson and supported by Lehman. Motion carried.

A motion to hold the 2022 Annual Dinner on Thursday, December 8, 2022, was made by Lehman and supported by Scholz. Motion carried.

The election will be held in person at the Annual Dinner and an election committee will be formed in September or October.

New Business:

1. Jeff Anderson: RAMS legislative priorities went pretty well.
 - a. No hearings on opposition to mineral exploration
 - b. Bonding Bill: didn't happen, but Bakk is pushing for a special session to get it passed
 - c. Hwy 169 project (transportation bill) was stalled and failed
 - d. State income tax on Social Security, LGA, PILT (tax bill) failed
 - e. Border to Border Broadband pilot program passed
 - f. ATV/Bike trails, Canisteo Pit, (environmental bill) failed
 - g. LCCMR (Mesabi Trail) passed
 - h. Greater MN Cooperative School districts failed
 - i. Mental Health funding passed
 - j. Governor's plan for 6k pre-k seats was not included in the education bill that failed
 - k. UI trust/frontline workers bill passed
 - l. Tax bill, Education bill, Environment bill, Bonding bill, and Jobs bill failed this session
 - m. RAMS can email/phone leaders to push for a special session get Tax, Education, and Bonding bills done
2. A motion to approve the RAMS Polymet letter was made by Kalmi and supported by Scholz. Motion carried.
3. A motion to not have the Board meet in July and August (2022) was made by Scholz and supported by Berrini. Motion carried. Finance Committee will still meet.
4. A motion to have the Finance Committee look over the Dues process was made by Anderson and supported by McLaughlin. Motion carried.
5. A motion to accept a Resolution in opposition to H.R. 2794, the Boundary Waters Wilderness Protection and Pollution Prevention Act was made by Kalmi and supported by Lehman. Motion carried.
6. A motion to send a letter to the Governor and Leadership to call for a special session to pass the bonding bill, tax bill, education funding, and thanking them for the agriculture bill and broadband bill was made by Baribeau and supported by Lehman. Motion carried.
7. A motion to send a letter of support to the Hibbing HRA for state funding for the Androy Hotel rehab was made by Baribeau and supported by McLaughlin. Motion carried.
8. A motion to accept the resignation of President Worshek was made by Kalmi and supported by Scholz. Motion carried.
9. A motion to nominate Scholz to Vice President was made by Kalmi and supported by Berrini. Motion carried. We now have an open board seat and will seek nominations or a letter of intent by June 22.

Board Member Updates:

Board Member Richard Aldrich gave an update on the Hibbing School District:

1. Schools are upset about the Legislative session, hoping for a special session
2. Construction is about complete on a new \$9.5M Early Childhood Center that is attached to Washington Elementary School that will service students from birth – age 5. It will serve approx. 240 students per year with 46 staff members.
3. The new turf field will be completed in August (\$4M project).
4. We struggle with mental health and student safety. The number one priority is the safety of our students and staff. It is expensive to be safe. No more hiding in the classroom...if possible, leave the school. Hibbing School District will be asking the city for another School Resource Officer, mainly for the elementary schools.

Finance Committee Report:

Kalmi reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held May 26, 2022:

1. Expenditures for the period of April 28-May 25, in the total amount of \$10,810.82.
2. Profit and Loss Budget vs Actual is on track (39.2%).
3. Balance Sheet as of May 25, is \$398,723.51.

A motion to accept the financial reports was made by Lehman and supported by McLaughlin. Motion carried.

Other:

Member Floor Privileges:

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the RAMS Board will be held at 6:00 P.M. on June 23, 2022, at the Iron Trail Motors Event Center.

Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55.