

Range Association of Municipalities & Schools

Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 25, 2024 – 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); Glenn Anderson (City of Babbitt); Dale Adams (City of Grand Rapids); Bob Berrini (Morse Township); Ryan Davies (Harris Township); Jim Fisher (McDavitt Township); Gary Friedlieb (City of Virginia); Dan Goette (City of Aurora); Matt Grose (ISD 318 Grand Rapids); Paul Kess (City of Ely); Chris Koivisto (ISD 2142 St Louis County Schools); Julie Lucas (French Township); Ron Pittman (Cherry Township); Cal Saari (City of Nashwauk); Warren Stolp (Nashwauk Township); John Tourila (City of Calumet); Dr Rae Villebrun (ISD 319-Nashwauk/Keewatin Supt Assn); Cal Warwas (Clinton Township); Jim Weikum (City of Biwabik); David Zins (City of Hoyt Lakes)**

Absent: City of Silver Bay; ISD 2711-Mesabi East; Great Scott Township

Also Present: **Paul Peltier, Executive Director; Kristen Kranz, RAMS Admin Assistant; Larry Sutherland, Ben Denucci (Mesabi Metallics); County Commissioner Venema**

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

Nominations and Election of Officers:

A motion to nominate Pat Medure for RAMS President was made by Adams and supported by Stolp. Motion carried. With no other nominations, Medure is declared President by acclamation.

A motion to nominate Glenn Anderson for RAMS Vice-President was made by Kalmi and supported by Fisher. Motion carried. With no other nominations, Anderson is declared Vice-President by acclamation.

A motion to nominate Barb Kalmi for RAMS Treasurer was made by Stolp and supported by Warwas. Motion carried. With no other nominations, Kalmi is declared Treasurer by acclamation.

Review and Approve Agenda:

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Fisher and supported by Berrini. Motion carried.

Approve Meeting Minutes:

A motion to approve the regular meeting minutes from November 30, 2023, and the Annual Meeting minutes from December 14, 2023, was made by Kalmi and supported by Pittman. Motion carried.

Finance Committee Report:

Kalmi reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held on December 20, 2023.

1. Expenditures for November 30, 2023 – December 19, 2023, totaling \$10,973.14.
2. Profit and Loss Budget vs Actual is on track.
3. Balance Sheet as of December 19, 2023, is \$ 390,080.78.

Kalmi reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held on January 25, 2024.

1. Expenditures for December 20, 2023 – January 24, 2024, totaling \$21,940.45
2. Profit and Loss Budget vs Actual was discussed.
3. Balance sheet as of January 24, 2024, is \$425,368.07.

A motion to accept the financial reports was made by Saari and supported by Pittman. Motion carried.

Appearances:

The Board was joined by Larry Sutherland and Ben Denucci from Mesabi Metalics. Sutherland gave an update on the progress being made on site regarding construction. Mesabi Metalics has spent \$1.6B to date on this project (including \$575M worth of steel and equipment) with about \$800M left to finish the plant. He also said they hope to have blasting and drilling begin in the spring of 2025, with pellets being produced by spring 2026.

Old Business:

1. Executive Director Peltier gave an update on the Annual Meeting held on December 14, 2023. Sponsorship opportunities were well received and have been paid for in full with the exception of one (it is on the way!). Comments made by the Board included that the meeting may have gone on a little long and that Executive Director Peltier did an excellent job at his first Annual Meeting, having only been in the job for 6 months. Peltier will be sending out a survey asking for feedback from Members regarding the Annual Meeting.

New Business:

1. A group was formed to review the current RAMS policies and bylaws. The group will include Jim Fisher, Gary Friedlieb, and Jim Weikum.
2. The engagement letter from accountants Fort and Company was discussed. A motion to authorize the signature of the engagement letter was made by Warwas and supported by Kalmi. Motion carried.
3. The Executive Committee discussed the recent evaluation/performance review of Executive Director Peltier. A motion to accept the evaluation/performance review was made by Friedlieb and supported by Fisher. Motion carried.

4. Peltier proposed a list of RAMS meeting dates for the remainder of 2024. Discussion was held on the proposed February and April dates. There was also discussion about holding some meetings at a different location. A motion to approve the list, with flexibility, was made by Anderson and supported by Fisher. Motion carried.
5. Executive Director Peltier requested the Board's approval for a donation request from the MN Discovery Center of \$1000 for their annual Science and Engineering Festival. A motion to approve the donation was made by Kalmi and supported by Pittman. Motion carried.

Director's Report

Executive Director Peltier discussed his activities for January.

1. Peltier discussed the EMS Taskforce field hearing held at the RAMS office with over 100 attendees.
2. The RAMS hosted Legislative Dinner will be held on March 13 at the Saint Paul Hotel and Board Members are encouraged to attend. Hotel rooms and breakfast for Board Members will be reimbursed by RAMS. March 14 is Lobby Days at the Capitol. An email will be sent to Board Members to RSVP for this event.
3. Peltier welcomed the new Board Members.

Board Member Updates:

1. Berrini: Joint Powers Legislative meeting in December discussed wolf management, EMS, and LGA
2. Adams: Public Utilities finished the water/sewer in the loop around the old Ainsworth plant which will allow for expansion; the city is planning on building houses on city owned land, the buyer will own the house but not the land (affordable); construction season will be starting soon (L and M, hotels, and HWY 35)
3. Kalmi: New school is moving forward and exploring collaborative business services with ISD 318
4. Saari: EMS formed a taskforce (13 entities) and will next meet on February 15
5. Davies: Working on boat landings with swim areas, and parking
6. Friedlieb: The final easements were acquired for destruction and cleared for the new Public Safety Building
7. Weikum: Awaiting construction season as MnDOT has promised to fix the main street; \$1.3M LCCMR for campground
8. Lucas: Two months out for the election for Township Supervisors
9. Kess: Winterfest starts this weekend; Still struggling with housing and EMS
10. Grose: working on budget reductions; working with Nashwauk/Keewatin school
11. Zins: Bolten & Menk to look at water treatment facilities
12. Warwas: received a match grant from IRRR for parking lot and it will get going this spring; grants came through for broadband (IRRR, County, CTC, DEED) and will hopefully start in 2025
13. Fisher: Paul Bunyan will begin work next year and is expected to be a 2.5-year project
14. Pittman: working on a project for walking trails and getting lights at the ball field
15. Anderson: wastewater plant is up and running (\$12M project); campground made a profit in the first year of operation

16. Medure: Congressman Stauber was in Bigfork, and they discussed special ed funding, EMS, permitting

Other:

Member Floor Privileges:

Next Meeting:

The next RAMS Board Meeting will be held on February 22, 2023, at 6:00pm, at the Northeast Service Cooperative Building.

Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.