

Range Association of Municipalities & Schools
Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 27, 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); Stacey Scholz (ISD 2909 Rock Ridge); Barb Kalmi (ISD 319-Nashwauk/Keewatin); Dale Adams (City of Grand Rapids); 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); Stuart Lehman (City of Buhl); Julie Lucas (French Township); Philip Medure (Great Scott Township); Kim McLaughlin (ISD 701-Hibbing); Cal Saari (City of Nashwauk); Warren Stolp (Nashwauk Township); Cal Warwas (Clinton Township); David Zins (City of Hoyt Lakes)

Absent: McDavitt Township; City of Silver Bay; City of Ely; Cherry Township; ISD 2909 Rock Ridge Supt Assn; City of Chisholm

Also Present: Ida Rukavina, Executive Director; Kristen Kranz, RAMS Admin Assistant; Jeff Anderson; Rolf Erberg (NRRI)
(Persons highlighted were present in person; others were via Zoom.)

Review and Approve Agenda:

A motion to amend (add 7a. Annual Dinner Update and 8f. Tomassoni Donation) and approve the agenda was made by Lehman and supported by Lucas. Motion carried.

Approve Meeting Minutes:

Moved by Kalmi and supported by Lehman to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting held September 22, 2022. Motion carried.

Appearances:

The Board was joined tonight by Rolf Weberg from the National Resources Research Institute (NRRI). The NRRI is based out of Duluth (U of M) and has a location in Coleraine. The mission of the NRRI is “how can we sustain life as we know it, while creating opportunity and reducing risk. He discussed the NRRI’s three long term strategic initiatives:

1. Future Forest Industries: hybrid poplar, engineered materials from functional biochar materials, regional resources
2. Iron and minerals of the future
3. Ecosystem Resilience: ecosystem monitoring, ecosystem information tools, bird breeding atlas and forest management, ballast water treatment

Weberg explained what the initiatives impact: 1. Carbon, 2. Healthy Environment, 3. Social License, 4. Innovative Industries.

Director’s Report:

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

1. The candidate forum was a success
2. On Saturday, October 29 there is a rally in Hibbing in support of Hibbing Taconite that Rukavina will attend
3. Attended Jobs for Minnesotans meeting about streamlining permitting
4. See also the Director’s Report

Old Business:

Annual Dinner update:

1. RAMS has received 3 more platinum sponsorships
2. W.A. Fisher is finalizing the final invite and will be going out soon via email

New Business:

1. Jeff Anderson:
 - a. November meeting: analysis of election results and legislative priorities
 - b. Rumors persist that the Governor will call a special session after the election in November. If there is no special session, all the bills that were agreed to previously, will have to start over.
2. The Executive Committee recommends that the Board approves the Executive Director's Annual Review. A motion to approve the Annual Review was made by Anderson and supported by Warwas. The motion passed. The Executive Committee and Finance Committee also recommend that the Board approve the Executive Director's offer of employment. A motion to approve the offer of employment was made by Kalmi and supported by Lehman. Motion carried.
3. The Executive Director recommends that the Board approves the Administrative Assistant's Annual Review. A motion to approve the Annual Review was made by Saari and supported by Berrini. Motion carried. The Executive Director, along with the Executive Committee and Finance Committee, also recommends that the Board approve the Administrative Assistant's offer of employment. A motion to approve the offer of employment was made by Warwas and supported by Berrini. Motion carried. Saari would like the record to show that RAMS is appreciative of the work done by both employees.
4. In the draft budget, there are a few changes: donations, taconite revenues, salaries, postage. The Finance Committee recommends approving the 2023 Budget. A motion to approve the 2023 Budget was made by Stolp and supported by Lehman. Motion carried.
5. Election Committee: nomination form will be out first week in November, notice will go out after November election if there will be more open seats, the election committee will meet before the Annual Meeting.
6. A motion to donate \$500 to the Tomassoni Peace Bridge Memorial in Chisholm was made by Anderson and supported by Lucas. Motion carried.

Board Member Updates:

Glenn Anderson, City of Babbitt:

1. North Shore may possibly reopen April 1, 2023-unemployment will be running out soon. Younger people are leaving and going to other mines. In January there were no houses for sale, now there are 15-20.
2. The new campground will open next spring. The project was started pre-covid and expected to cost \$3M; post-covid the cost is \$5.4M. There will be 49 campsites with water, sewage, electricity, and wifi. Reservations will open February 1, 2023.
3. The wastewater plant needs to be updated. Original cost was expected to be around \$4-5M but has since increased to \$17M. The new plant should be up and running completely by fall 2023.

Finance Committee Report:

Kalmi reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held October 27, 2022:

1. Expenditures for the period of September 22-October 26, 2022, in the total amount of \$14,714.48.
 2. Profit and Loss Budget vs Actual is on track (79.7%).
 3. Balance Sheet as of October 26, is \$393,626.94
- A motion to accept the financial reports was made by Lehman and supported by Adams. Motion carried.

Other:

Member Floor Privileges:

Richard Aldrich: Opposing viewpoints from management and union officials regarding the closing of Hibbing Taconite by the end of 2024. Cliff's is supportive of the rally on Saturday.

Pat Medure: Rukavina will call together the Legislative Committee sometime in early November. Hibbing Public Utilities will be celebrating 100 years on November 10, at 3pm, at the PUC Building.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the RAMS Board will be held at 6:00 P.M. on November 17, 2022, at Northeast Service Cooperative Building.

Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.