**Range Association of Municipalities & Schools  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, November 29, 2018 – 6:00 P.M.  
Northeast Service Cooperative Building**

**Call to Order:**

Vice President Charlie Baribeau called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**Roll Call of Board:**

Present: Charlie Baribeau (City of Virginia); Pat Medure (ISD 318-Grand Rapis); Glenn Anderson (City of Babbitt); Gregg Allen (Superintendent’s Association;) Dale Christy (City of Grand Rapids); Jim Fisher (McDavitt Township); Pat Garrity (City of Hibbing); Barb Kalmi (ISD 319-Nashwauk/Keewatin); Paul Kess (City of Ely); Stuart Lehman (City of Buhl); Milan Luzaich (Great Scott Township); Kim McLaughlin (ISD 701-Hibbing); David Zins (City of Hoyt Lakes); Jim Varda (City of Chisholm); Cyndi Worshek (ISD 2711-Mesabi East)

Absent: City of Aurora; Morse Township; ISD 696-Ely; One rep-Superintendents Association; City of Silver Bay; City of Hoyt Lakes; Nashwauk Township; ISD 706-Virginia; ISD 695-Chisholm

Also Present: Mayor Larry Cuffe; Mayor Rick Cannata; Mayor Elect Cal Saari; Mayor Harold Johnston: Lorrie Janotopolus; Pahoula Yang Hoffman & Josh Syrjamaki– Governor Elect Walz Transition Team; Steve Giorgi, Executive Director; Gary Cerkvenik, Lobbyist

**Review and Approve Agenda:**

Director Giorgi announced that Dean DeBeltz from Twin Metals will not be present.

**Motion by Allen and support by Medure to approve agenda, as amended. Motion carried.**

**Approve Meeting Minutes:**

**Moved by Medure, support Varda to approve the minutes, as presented, from the October 25, 2018 meeting. Motion carried.**

**Appearance:**

Director Giorgi introduced Pahoula Yang Hoffman, Hiring Director for the Walz Transition Team. Pahoua is spending three days on the Range and taking comments from elected officials and residents of the region to learn what we think about who should be selected to fill vacancies on the Governor’s cabinet. Pahoula thanked RAMS for inviting her to attend the meeting and discussed the very important task of making appointments to fill the multitude of Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner openings in Governor Elect Walz’s new administration. Pahoua is not a government employee, but works for a non-profit group and actually had to take a leave of absence to take on this assignment. Her primary focus is for four departments: DEED, Dept of Labor & Industry (DOLI), Commerce and the IRRR, although she will take comments on any and all positions and bring that back to the transition team. All applicants are to go through one portal and the deadline for all Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner positions is December 7th. The Governor is looking for geographical diversity in his cabinet and has created this outreach effort to assure applicants from all parts of the state will be submitted.

General discussion of leadership was had by a few members and then Director Giorgi reminded the board how critically important the IRRR is to our region and to RAMS. Director Giorgi stated this is the Board’s opportunity to have a say in who fills that position, or if we support the current Commissioner, Mark Phillips, whom he confirmed has applied to retain the position.

**Moved by Medure and supported by Kess that the board go on record in support of Mark Phillips retaining the position as Commissioner of the IRRR. Motion carried.**

Discussion ensued and ultimately resulted in a unanimous vote of support for the motion. Director Giorgi will send a letter to Pahoula and the transition team. Discussion was held on DEED, DOLI, DNR, MPCA, HFA, PFA , PUC Commission, and others. Vice President Baribeau thanked Pahoula for taking the time to be with the board and she was asked to provide Director Giorgi with a list of final applicants when that is allowed, as well as a form to communicate on those applicants.

**Director’s Report:**

Due to the length of the previous discussion, the board agreed to read the written report and allow the Director to touch on a few issues of importance. Director Giorgi called attention to the letter sent to Congressional leadership, in regards to the PolyMet Land exchange legislation that still needs to be passed by the Senate. Efforts continue on this objective with Senators Klobuchar and Smith doing all they can to achieve that goal.

A letter of thanks to the Fond du Lac Leadership Council was included in the packet and a summary of that meeting was provided. The federal water quality standard being proposed by FDL continues to be a concern for our region, but is a very delicate issue and difficult to deal with.

**Motion by Medure and supported by Allen to accept the Director’s Report. Motion carried.**

**Old Business:** Director Giorgi provided a quick overview on the following items:

* Lunch and Learn with MN HFA held on November 15, 2018.
* A quick update on PolyMet – four permits yet to be issued by MPCA and USGS. Party to celebrate the permit to mine being issued will be held on December 12 at the Mesabi East gym from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm.
* A conference call with Mesabi Metallics was held on Friday, November 15th with CEO Gary Heasley, Cathy Polaski from Governor’s office. Not much to report, due diligence by Mercuria is underway and near completion, about 45 people working at the site. More calls will be held in the future. Need to follow through with Governor Walz to keep these calls after the 1st.
* Update on broadband resolution – 13 resolutions submitted to date, keep them coming in. Will try to get on the County agenda in December.

**Motion by Medure and supported by Fisher to send a letter of support for the Mental Health Crisis Center project in Buhl, as part of their grant funding request. Motion carried.**

**New Business:**a. Discussion on legislative priorities. Director Giorgi went through the list with the board and also provided a summary of the St Louis County priorities, which includes a change to the Taconite Tax distribution formula for the counties and support for rural broadband. It was the consensus of the board to bring the items back to the December meeting for formal adoption, along with any that may be submitted by RAMS member units.

b. CD rates. Director Giorgi reviewed the list of rates he had secured and Medure provided the recommendation from the Finance Committee to move $50,000 from the general checking account to the Boundary Waters Bank in Ely to purchase a CD @ 2.15% for 15 months.

**Moved by Anderson and supported by Fisher to purchase a $50,000 CD from the Boundary Waters Bank in Ely, at an interest rate of 2.15% for 15 months. Motion carried.**

**Board Member Updates:**

Due to the length of the meeting, it was the consensus of the board to forego board member updates.

**Finance Committee Report:**A. Treasure Medure reported on the Finance Committee meeting held on November 29, 2018:

1. Expenditures (October 25 – November 21, 2018) - $15,226.27.

**Moved by Varda and supported by Fisher to approve the expenditures, in the amount of $15,226.27. Motion carried.**

2. Moved by Garrity and supported by Varda to approve the Profit & Loss to Actual and the Balance Sheet. Motion carried.

3. Treasurer Medure reported on the recommendation of the Finance Committee to approve the purchase of the 180 coffee mugs for the annual meeting.

**Moved by Anderson and supported by McLaughlin to purchase the coffee mugs. Motion carried**

4. Treasurer Medure reported on the recommendation of the Finance Committee to approve the expenditure of $35 per board member for the purchase of RAMS apparel.

**Moved by Allen and supported by Fisher to approve the expenditures of RAMS apparel at a cost of $35 per board member. Motion carried.**

**Other:**

Discussion was held on the RAMS annual meeting and the need for our board members to be on time and prepared to meeting, prior to the dinner. Discussion led to see if a meeting is actually needed this year, since we do not have a constitutional amendment to deal with. Director Giorgi will examine and report back in December.

**Next Meeting:**

The next meeting is scheduled for December 27th. After discussion and a show of hands, the meeting will stay as scheduled.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 8:48 P.M.