# Range Association of Municipalities & Schools Board Meeting Minutes Thursday, February 22, 2018 – 6:00 P.M. Northeast Service Cooperative Building

**Call to Order:**

President Dave Lislegard called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**Roll Call of Board:**

Present: Dave Lislegard (City of Aurora); Charlie Baribeau (City of Virginia); Pat Medure (ISD 318-Grand Rapids); Gregg Allen (Supts Assn); Glenn Anderson; (City of Babbitt); Bob Berrini (Morse Township); Dale Christy (City of Grand Rapids); Dennis Zinter (McDavitt Township); Pat Garrity (City of Hibbing); Paul Kess (City of Ely); Stu Lehman (City of Buhl); Milan Luziach (Great Scott Township);); Kim McLaughlin (ISD 701-Hibbing); David Pace (Supts Assn); David Zins (City of Hoyt Lakes); Al Stanaway (City of Mt Iron); Jim Varda (City of Chisholm); Cyndi Worshek (ISD 2711-Mesabi East)

Absent: ISD 319-Nashwauk/Keewatin; ISD 696-Ely; City of Silver Bay; Nashwauk Township; ISD 706-Virginia; ISD 695 Chisholm

Also Present: Steve Giorgi, Executive Director; Lois Roskoski, Administrative Assistant

**Review and Approve Agenda:**

Director Giorgi requested that committee appointments be added to agenda.

**Moved by Tomasetti and supported by Lehman to approve the agenda, as amended. Motion carried.**

**Approve Meeting Minutes:**

**Moved by Medure and supported by Lehman to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting held January 25, 2018. Motion carried.**

**Appearance:**

Director Giorgi stated Rolf Weberg, Executive Director, Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI), was unable to attend the meeting and will hopefully attend the March meeting.

**Director’s Report:**

Director Giorgi gave an update on the February activities:

* Along with Jobs for Minnesotans, Mining Minnesota and PolyMet staff, coordinated two public hearing on the PolyMet NorthMet Project. The hearing on February 7th was held at the Mesabi East High School, where approximately 500 people were in favor of the project, with 20 people in opposition. The hearing on February 8th was held at the DECC in Duluth, where approximately 800 people attended. It appeared there was a 50/50 split regarding the project.
* Comment cards urging the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the MPCA to finalize the permits for the PolyMet NorthMet Project were distributed to the board. Director Giorgi asked the board to share the cards with colleagues and submit by March 6, 2018.
* Attended the Annual Cleveland Cliffs Mining Report in Eveleth. CEO Lourenco Goncalves stated he has reduced the company debt from $3.2 billion to $1.3 billion in four years. Cleveland Cliffs will be making an investment in their Ohio plant for the HBI pellet, as well as an $80 million investment at the North Shore plant in Silver Bay to increase production of the HBI pellet. An investment of $65 million was also made at the Eveleth mine for the Mustang pellet project. Mr. Goncalves also made several references to the former Essar plant, where Cliffs has secured leases. The State has given Chippewa until the end of June to fulfill six criteria before reconsidering the State leases. Chippewa has challenged the lease purchases that Cleveland Cliffs obtained during the bankruptcy proceedings.
* The agenda is being developed for the legislative dinner scheduled for February 26th in St. Paul. The funding stream for IEP will be added to the draft agenda.
* A meeting has been scheduled on February 27th with the CEO of Antofagasta, the parent company of Twin Metals, and RAMS and Jobs for Minnesotans to learn more about the owners and their commitment to work with our communities. Antofagasta will be requested to communicate with the public and explain the process.
* Met with the IRRRB Commissioner and staff to discuss legislative priorities.
* Representative Nolan announced he will retire at the end of his term this year.
* The outcome of the precinct caucus showed Tim Walz was winning State wide, but Rebecca Otto carried the 8th District.
* The District Judge dismissed the lawsuit over Senator Fischbach’s dual role as Lt. Governor and Senator.

**New Business:**

1. Membership with Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition.

Director Giorgi recommended joining the Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition, who has hired a consultant to work at the Capitol to discuss the need for broadband funding. Director Giorgi stated he will be attending their meetings.

**Moved by Kess and supported by Christy to approve the membership with the Minnesota Rural Broadband Coalition, at a cost of $500. Motion carried.**

1. Resolution on Shadow Conduit Policy

Director Giorgi reviewed the draft resolution on the “Dig Once Policy”. The community broadband groups applied for DEED grant funding last year, but were unsuccessful in obtaining grants. They feel the adoption of a “Dig Once Policy” would better position communities for DEED grant funds. The “Dig Once Policy” would enable local, county or state governments to control and require the installation of multi-use conduit when an excavation occurs, which would reduce the cost of installing broadband at a later date. If the resolution is adopted by RAMS, it will be forwarded to the RAMS membership to consider. Director Giorgi agreed to answer questions from the membership. Jim Varda stated he is a utility locator and expressed opposition to the proposed resolution, noting a lot of conduit is installed underground, but cannot be located later.

**Moved by Medure and supported by Anderson to adopt Resolution 002-18, calling on all local government units and County government units to consider the development and adoption of a “Dig Once Policy”, that will minimize disruptions in the public right of way, which facilitating more cost effective installation and expansion of broadband in our region.**

**Ayes: 17**

**Nay: 1-Jim Varda**

**Resolution adopted.**

c. Meeting with the CEO of Antofagasta.

Director Giorgi stated RAMs will host the luncheon meeting on February 27th and will be reimbursed by Antofagasta.

1. New website hosting agreement.

Director Giorgi stated the partnership of Cold Snap Technology have split. Cold Snap Technology developed and maintains the RAMS website. Dustin Miller, former partner, submitted a proposal from his new company, TechBytes. Dustin Miller also recommended that the RAMS server be removed from the NESC server and transferred to TechBytes, which would allow better access to staff to provide updates and modifications to the RAMS website.

**Moved by Worshek and supported by Garrity to accept the proposal from TechBytes, at a total cost of $195 per year, to host RAMS website on their server and cover the cost for the domain name. Additional changes to the website would be done at an hourly rate of $80, with a 30 minute minimum. Motion carried.**

1. Splitting of St. Louis County.

Discussion was held on action taken by County Commissioner Tom Rukavina to introduce legislation to allow St. Louis County residents to vote on splitting St. Louis County in half. It was the consensus of the board to not take any formal action at this time on the issue.

1. Purchasing of pens and new banner.

Director Giorgi reviewed a quote from Textiles Plus to purchase two banners for RAMS:

1. 30” x 96” banner with grommets and corporate logos - $175.00, including artwork.
2. 31.5” x 78.5” retractable pull up banner - $249.55 including artwork.

**Moved by Anderson and supported by Baribeau to accept the quote from Textiles Plus to purchase two banners for RAMS, at a total cost of $424.55. Motion carried.**

Director Giorgi reviewed a quote to purchase 500 pens with the RAMS logo, at a cost of $238.86.

**Moved by Allen and supported by Christy to approve the purchase of 500 pens from My Shop Angel Promotional Products, at a total cost of $238.86. Motion carried.**

1. Appointment of Committees:

**Moved by Kess and supported by Zins to appoint the executive officers (Dave Lislegard, Charlie Baribeau, Pat Medure), plus Pat Garrity and Dale Christy to the Legislative Policy Committee. Motion carried.**

**Finance Committee Report:**

Pat Medure reviewed the finance reports, as follows:

1. Expenditures

**Moved by Medure and supported by Anderson to approve expenditures for the period January 25-**

**February 21, 2018, in the total amount of $16,994.85. Motion carried.**

1. Profit & Loss Budget vs Actual as of February 21, 2018.

c. Balance Sheet as of February 21, 2018.

**Other:**

Director Giorgi reviewed the letter to the US Forest Service requesting the rescission of the proposed mineral and land withdrawal in the Superior National Forest in Northern Minnesota, and that permits be reissued where appropriate and the legal regulatory process followed, as outlined in NEPA.

**Next Meeting:**

The next RAMS Board Meeting will be held at 6:30 P.M. on March 22, 2018.

**Adjournment**

**Moved by Christy and supported by Lehman to adjourn at 7:30 P.M. Motion carried.**