

Range Association of Municipalities & Schools
Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 28, 2023 – 6:00 P.M.
Northeast Service Cooperative Building

President Pat Medure called the meeting to order at 6:15 P.M.

Roll Call of Board:

Present: **Pat Medure (ISD 318-Grand Rapids); Glenn Anderson (City of Babbitt); Barb Kalmi (ISD 319-Nashwauk/Keewatin); Dale Adams (City of Grand Rapids);** Richard Aldrich (ISD 701-Hibbing, Supt Assn); **Terry Soderberg (Morse Township); Jim Fisher (McDavitt Township); Gary Friedlieb (City of Virginia); Shane Hoff (City of Silver Bay);** Jennifer Hoffman-Saccoman (City of Hibbing); Norma Jean Jofs (City of Aurora); **Paul Kess (City of Ely); Philip Medure (Great Scott Township); Ron Pittman (Cherry Township); Cal Saari (City of Nashwauk); Warren Stolp (Nashwauk Township);** 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: ISD 2711-Mesabi East; French Township; City of Calumet; City of Chisholm

Also Present: Paul Peltier, Executive Director; Kristen Kranz, RAMS Admin Assistant; Harold Johnston (Mayor of Cook)

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

Review and Approve Agenda:

The agenda was reviewed and amended to add 9.a. Cumulative Impacts Discussion. A motion to approve the amended agenda was made by Kalmi and supported by Adams. Motion carried.

Approve Meeting Minutes:

A motion to approve the regular meeting minutes from June 29, 2023, was made by Fisher and supported by Pittman. Motion carried.

Finance Committee Report:

Kalmi reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held July 27, 2023:

1. Expenditures for the period of June 29-July 26, 2023, in the total amount of \$27,489.19.
2. Profit and Loss Budget vs Actual is on track.

3. Balance Sheet as of July 29, 2023, is \$387,123.56.

Kalmi reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held August 24, 2023:

1. Expenditures for the period of July 27-August 23, 2023, in the total amount of \$18,772.62.
2. Profit and Loss Budget vs Actual is on track.
3. Balance Sheet as of August 23, 2023, is \$368,293.75.

Kalmi reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held on September 28, 2023.

1. Expenditures for the period of August 24-September 27, 2023, in the total amount of \$12,443.10.
2. Profit and Loss Budget vs Actual is on track.
3. Balance Sheet as of September 27, 2023, is \$ 420,481.66

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

Appearances:

No appearance at the September meeting.

Director's Report:

Executive Director Peltier discussed his activities for the months of July, August, and September.

1. Peltier's family is all moved in and adjusting.
2. Peltier traveled 1,800 miles (about half the width of the United States) this summer around Itasca, Lake, Cook, Crow Wing, Aitkin, and St Louis counties doing Board Member site visits.
3. Many people have reached out to welcome Peltier including Steve Giorgi, Commissioner Rukavina, Jeff Anderson and Gary Cerkvenik from Costin Group, Tom Bakk, Ron Dicklich, Bob Wagstrom, and the staff at NESC.
4. Peltier has secured 3 new township memberships (Harris, Spang, Blackberry) and one corporate membership (Mesabi Metallica).
5. Peltier has engaged with the RAMS community by newsletter, email, phone, by attending many meetings, and by attending bonding tours.
6. Peltier has met with Mesabi Metallica, Cliffs, Twin Metals, NewRange Copper Nickel, and Talon mines.
7. RAMS hosted Bree Maki from the MN Office of Broadband for a discussion with RAMS Members and other city officials.

Old Business:

1. Executive Director Peltier gave a brief history of RAMS dues and mentioned that the previous two Executive Directors had both addressed this topic. Some possible reasons for not increasing

dues in 22 years include the closing of LTV, housing bubble, recession, and Covid-19. There is an inflation gap (60%) of \$45,000 in that period. Peltier and the Finance Committee recommended using the current dues as a starting point and raising the dues to meet financial commitments and to remain financially stable. The *average* increase to RAMS members would be \$75 for townships, \$150 for cities, \$262 for schools, and \$450 for corporate. A motion to approve the increases proposed by Peltier was made by Saari and supported by Pittman. Motion carried.

2. Peltier's amended contract was discussed. A motion to approve the amended contract was made by Friedlieb and supported by Warwas. Motion carried.
3. The Annual Dinner will be held on December 14, 2023, at the Iron Trail Motors Event Center in Virginia, MN. Jeff Anderson is helping with the planning.

New Business:

1. Executive Director Peltier explained to the Board the meaning of Cumulative Impacts, which was included in the Environmental Omnibus Bill this past session. Cumulative impacts are the combined effects of past, present, and future pollution on the environment and community involving air permits. The environmental justice zones in MN include the seven-county metro area, Rochester, and Duluth. Our local legislators (Rep Lislegard, Sen Hauschild) have kept the Iron Range exempt, for now. Peltier is working with Apex, MN Power, and the Duluth Chamber on drafting a letter for the first public comment on the rulemaking process. Letters are due by October 6, 2023. A draft will be sent to the Board Members for approval and a special meeting will be called if necessary.

Board Member Updates:

Due to time, updates from around the table will take place at the October meeting.

Other:

Member Floor Privileges:

Next Meeting:

The next RAMS Board Meeting will be held on October 26, 2023, at 6pm, and the NESC Building.

Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.