

MN Rural Counties Board of Directors – APPROVED Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 7, 2024

10:00 am

County Board Room, Alexandria MN

Attendance

Position	County	First Name	Last Name
Delegate	Aitkin County	Laurie	Westerlund
Alternate	Beltrami County	John	Carlson
Delegate	Brown County	Jeffrey	Veerkamp
Delegate	Cottonwood County	Larry	Anderson
Delegate	Douglas County	Jerry	Rapp
Alternate	Douglas County	Keith	Englund
Alternate	Douglas County	Charlie	Meyer
Delegate	Grant County	Troy	Johnson
Delegate	Hubbard County	Charlene	Christenson
Delegate	Jackson County	Don	Wachal
Delegate	Kittson County	Leon	Olson
Delegate	Lincoln County	Dean	Nielsen
Delegate	Lyon County	Thomas	Andries
Alternate	Mahnomen County	David	Geray
Delegate	Marshall County	Sharon	Bring
Delegate	McLeod County	Doug	Krueger
Delegate	Meeker County	Steve	Schmitt
Delegate	Pennington County	Neil	Peterson
Delegate	Pipestone County	Luke	Johnson
Delegate	Pope County	Paul	Gerde
Alternate	Pope County	Larry	Lindor
Delegate	Renville County	John	Robinson
Delegate	Roseau County	Kermit	Jensen
Delegate	Sibley County	Peter	Koch
Delegate	Stearns County	Steve	Notch
Delegate	Stevens County	Bob	Kopitzke
Alternate	Stevens County	Patricia	Lesmeister-Nelson
Delegate	Wadena County	Bill	Stearns
Alternate	Wadena County	Murlyn	Kreklau
Alternate	Wadena County	Ron	Noon
Delegate	Wilkin County	Dennis	Larson
Alternate	Wright County	Tina	Diedrick

Staff: Anne Kilzer, Britta Torkelson, Rob Vanasek, Sam Walseth

Guests: Kersten Keppmeyer, Heather Schlangen

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

2. Roll Call

Chairman Johnson called the roll. A quorum was confirmed.

3. Approve Agenda

Commissioner Krueger moved approval of the agenda, Commissioner Gerde seconded. Motion approved.

4. Approve Minutes

Commissioner Kopitzke moved approval of the September 11, 2024 minutes, Commissioner Jensen seconded. Motion approved.

5. Financial Report

Secretary/Treasurer Bring reviewed the Treasurer's Report and the Financial Statement. She also reviewed the proposed Minnesota Rural Counties budget for 2025. Commissioner Jensen moved approval of the Treasurer's Report, Financial Statement and Proposed Budget, Commissioner Nielsen seconded. Motion approved.

6. Annual Business Meeting

- a. Change of Procedure. Anne Kilzer noted that there have been suggestions to change the MRC Rules of Procedure document to include the Past Chairman on the Executive Committee. Because any changes need at least 10 days' notice, this will be brought to the December meeting. It was also suggested that Executive Committee Terms be changed to two years, rather than one. Anne will provide background information about the proposed changes in the December meeting materials and will distribute at least 10 days prior to the meeting.
- b. Election of Officers.
 - i. Chair. Anne Kilzer called for nominations. Commissioner Johnson nominated Commissioner Peterson to serve as Chair of MRC, Commissioner Schmitt seconded. Motion approved.
 - ii. Vice Chair. Chairman Peterson called for nominations. Commissioner Johnson nominated Commissioner Schmitt to serve as Vice Chair of MRC, Commissioner Westrom seconded. Motion approved.
 - iii. Secretary/Treasurer. Chairman Neil Peterson called for nominations. Commissioner Johnson nominated Commissioner Bring to serve as Secretary/Treasurer of MRC, Commissioner Westerlund seconded. Motion approved.
- c. Naming of MRC Delegates and Alternates. Anne Kilzer noted that because most Counties make appointments in January, counties can send the name of their Delegate and Alternate(s) as soon as possible. She will send reminders via email.
- d. 2025 Contract with the Association of Minnesota Counties. Anne Kilzer reviewed the contract language with AMC to provide website, administrative and fiscal support to MRC. Commissioner Johnson moved approval of the contract, Commissioner Westerlund seconded. Motion approved.
- e. 2025 Contract with Capitol Hill Associates. Anne Kilzer reminded the Board that the payment amount for services for 2025 and 2026 was approved at the September Board meeting. She walked through the contract language. Commissioner Johnson moved approval of the contract, Commissioner Veerkamp seconded. Motion approved.
- f. 2025 Meeting Dates. CHA staff walked through options for 2025 meeting dates. After discussion, the following calendar was suggested: February 3, February 25, March 16, April 7, May 5, May 19, September 10, October 6, December 7. Commissioner Christenson moved approval of the 2025 Meeting Dates, Commissioner Bertram seconded. Motion approved.

7. 2025 Platform and Priorities Discussion

Britta Torkelson led discussion regarding topics that required follow up from the September meeting.

Commissioner Geray made a motion that the 2025 Legislative Platform include the following plank: MRC opposes any land transfer exchange or sale to any tribal or foreign government. Commissioner Krueger seconded. Discussion ensued. Motion fails.

Commissioner Carlson made a motion that the 2025 Legislative Platform include the following plank: MRC supports a full public vetting of all land transfers and no transfer should occur without local county board approval. Commissioner Geray seconded. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Carlson suggested the following amendment: MRC supports a full public vetting of all public land transfers, exchanges or sales

and no transfer should occur without local county board approval. Commissioner Geray accepted the proposed amendment. Motion carries.

It was agreed that we eliminate the Heading of “Tribal Affairs” in the document and include the following language under the broader heading of General Government and Taxes.

Britta Torkelson walked through the process principals and the 2025 Legislative context as we know it today. Members discussed the following potential priorities.

1. MRC supports funding and policy for comprehensive and innovative solid waste management systems, including SCORE, C&D management, E-waste/Batteries, Solid Waste Capital Assistance Program, Waste-to-Energy and emerging technologies
2. Broadband
3. Out of County Placements/Mental Health
4. Local Bridge Replacement \$200, Local Road Improvement Program (Infrastructure)
5. Tribal Relations Issues
6. Child Care – availability and regulatory
7. DOC – Jail/Justice Center Facility Construction and Renovations
8. Regional Ambulance Services
9. Oppose Disbanding of the Drainage Work Group

Members cast ballots to determine the top priorities. While staff counted the votes, members reported on budget increases and local levies.

After counting ballots, the following totals were reported:

- MRC supports funding and policy for comprehensive and innovative solid waste management systems including SCORE, C&D management, E-waste/Batteries, Solid Waste Capital Assistance Program, Waste-to-Energy and emerging technologies. 22
- Local Bridge Replacement \$200;Local Road Improvement Program (Infrastructure) 16
- Mental Health 14
- Drainage 7
- Regional Ambulance Services 6
- Childcare 6
- Broadband 3
- Tribal Relations 2
- DOC construction/renovations 2

Britta Torkelson will craft a 2025 Legislative Priorities document for review at the December meeting.

8. Membership Updates

Anne Kilzer reported that Sherburne County has agreed to join MRC. Anne and Britta Torkelson will be visiting Rice County in early November.

9. Announcements/Other

None

10. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 pm.