

DRAFT Meeting Minutes MN Rural Counties Board of Directors
October 6, 2025
Alexandria, Minnesota

Attendance:

Aitkin County	Laurie	Westerlund
Becker County	Barry	Nelson
Brown County	Jeffrey	Veerkamp
Clay County	Jenny	Mongeau
Cottonwood County	Larry	Anderson
Douglas County	Tim	Kalina
Douglas County	Charlie	Meyer
Douglas County	Jerry	Rapp
Douglas County	Jeff	Way
Grant County	Troy	Johnson
Hubbard County	Steve	Keranen
Kittson County	Theresia	Gillie
Lincoln County	Dean	Nielsen
Lyon County	Thomas	Andries
Marshall County	Sharon	Bring
McLeod County	Doug	Krueger
Meeker County	Paul	Johnson
Pennington County	Neil	Peterson
Pipestone County	Luke	Johnson
Pope County	Paul	Gerde
Pope County	Larry	Lindor
Redwood County	Bob	Van Hee
Renville County	John	Robinson
Roseau County	Kermit	Jensen
Stearns County	Jeff	Bertram
Stearns County	Steve	Notch
Stevens County	Bob	Kopitzke
Todd County	Barb	Becker
Todd County	Randy	Neumann
Wadena County	Ron	Noon
Wadena County	Bryan	Winkels
Watonwan County	Jim	Branstad
Wilkin County	Dennis	Larson

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

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 10:00 am, The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Roll Call

Chair Peterson took the roll; a quorum was confirmed.

3. Approve Agenda

Commissioner Lindor moved approval of the agenda. Second by Commissioner Veerkamp. Motion adopted.

4. Approve Minutes

Commissioner L. Johnson moved approval of the September 10, 2025 meeting minutes as corrected. Second by Commissioner Mongeau. Motion adopted.

5. Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement

Secretary/Treasurer Bring provided a report on the current MRC financials. She noted that Counties inactive up until this point in the year will be removed from the dues/receivables. Revenues are exceeding projection; expenses are on track. Commissioner Kopitzke made a motion to file the Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement. Second by Commissioner Larson. Motion adopted.

6. Annual Business Meeting.

- a. Naming of MRC Delegates and Alternates. Anne Kilzer acknowledged that most Counties update their appointments in January. She will send out an email at that time reminding members to make any updates as needed.
- b. 2026 Budget. Anne Kilzer reviewed the 2026 budget as presented in the meeting materials. It is recommended that dues remain the same for 2026 at the same level they have been for several years. Capitol Hill Associates costs reflect actual; Association of Minnesota Counties is estimated. There was a minor increase in membership for the Transportation Alliance (Torkelson represents MRC). Question as to whether we should hold \$3,000 for Miscellaneous; after discussion it was decided to keep this as a placeholder in the budget. Commissioner Gillie moved adoption of the 2026 budget. Commissioner Branstad seconded. Motion adopted.
- c. 2026 Meeting Dates. Anne Kilzer reviewed the proposed 2026 meeting dates and locations. Douglas County is willing to host the annual meeting again next year. Commissioner Veerkamp moved approval of the 2026 meeting dates. Commissioner P. Johnson seconded. Motion adopted.
- d. 2025/26 Contract with Association of Minnesota Counties. The contract was included as information only; no action needed as MRC is in the second year of the contract signed in 2025.
- e. 2025/26 Contract with Capitol Hill Associates. The contract was included as information only; no action needed as MRC is in the second year of the contract signed in 2025.

7. Platform Priorities Discussion. Britta Torkelson provided an overview of the Legislative landscape, both current and looking forward to the 2026 Legislative session.

Torkelson led a discussion to identify 2026 Legislative priorities. She reiterated the principles previously agreed to by MRC members (priorities should focus on things that are actionable, impact the majority of MRC Counties, and/or have a sizable impact on Counties) and reviewed the 2025 priorities. She also reviewed the issues raised at the Round Robin discussion held at the September MRC meeting. Rob Vanasek and Sam Walseth also provided perspective.

Discussion ensued and ideas were generated. The group voted on priorities; the results were as follow:

1. Technology updates/SSIS - 27

2. Solid Waste - 18
3. Mental Health Services - 21
4. Cannabis licensure - 4
5. Drainage - 6
6. Probation funding formula shifts - 2
7. African American Preservation Act - 3
8. Transportation - 5
9. Permitting issues - 0
10. Fraud - 3
11. Fire/EMS - 1
12. National Banking - 1
13. Renewable Energy Policy - 1

Based on these results, Torkelson will create a Priorities document for the December MRC meeting focusing on Technology Updates, Mental Health Services and Solid Waste.

8. Membership Updates

None.

9. Announcements/Other

Chair Peterson thanked Douglas County for hosting the annual business meeting. The next MRC meeting will be held on Sunday, December 7, 6:00 pm at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bloomington.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:14 pm.