

Range Association of Municipalities & Schools
Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 26, 2024 – 6:10 P.M.
Natural Resources Research Institute

President Pat Medure called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

Roll Call of Board:

Present: **Pat Medure (ISD 318-Grand Rapids); Barb Kalmi (ISD 319-Nashwauk/Keewatin); Glenn Anderson (City of Babbitt); Bob Berrini (Morse Township); Ryan Davies (Harris Township); Cathy Erickson (City of Two Harbors); Gary Friedlieb (City of Virginia); Shane Hoff (City of Silver Bay); Paul Kess (City of Ely); Pamela LaFrenier (ISD 2711 Mesabi East); Phil Medure (Great Scott Township); Cheyenne Mikkola-Raja (City of Chisholm); Ron Pittman (Cherry Township); Cal Saari (City of Nashwauk); Warren Stolp (Nashwauk Township);** Dr Rae Villebrun (ISD 319 Nashwauk/Keewatin Supt Assn); Catherine Niemi (City of Biwabik)

Absent: City of Grand Rapids; McDavitt Township; City of Aurora; ISD 318 Grand Rapids; ISD 2412 St Louis County Schools; French Township

Also Present: **Paul Peltier, Executive Director; Kristen Kranz, RAMS Admin Assistant; Jen King; Jamie Alexander; Mayor Pete Hyduke; Justin Fosso; Pat Schoff; Several NRRI employees**

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

Call to Order:

President Medure called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

Review and Approve Agenda:

The agenda was reviewed. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Kalmi and supported by Friedlieb. Motion carried.

Approve Consent Agenda:

A motion to approve the regular meeting minutes from June 27, 2024, and the RAMS letter regarding School Trust, St Louis County, and TCF Land Purchase #66600 was made by Berrini and supported by Saari. Motion carried.

Finance Committee Report:

Kalmi reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held on July 31, 2024.

1. Expenditures for June 24 – July 30, 2024, totaling \$20,547.79.
2. Profit and Loss Budget vs Actual is 64%.
3. Balance Sheet as of July 30, 2024, is \$ 419,317.40.

A motion to accept the financial reports was made by Stolp and supported by Berrini. Motion carried.

Kalmi reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held on August 21, 2024.

1. Expenditures for July 31 – August 20, 2024, totaling \$13,691.39.
2. Profit and Loss Budget vs Actual is 70.8%.
3. Balance Sheet as of August 20, 2024, is \$408,251.39

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

Kalmi reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held on September 25, 2024.

1. Expenditures for August 21 – September 24, 2024, totaling \$15,667.39.
2. Profit and Loss Budget vs Actual is 78.9%.
3. Balance Sheet as of September 24, 2024, is \$524,837.20.

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

Appearance:

The Board was joined by Pat Schoff from the Natural Resources Research Institute. NRRI has core values of Safety, Quality, Integrity, Innovation, Partnership, and Collaboration. It is an applied research institute, meaning it moves from the lab into the real world. The NRRI was created by the Legislature, for the Legislature, to make informed decisions. There are 140-150 employees, with about 2/3 of them working at the Duluth location. The mission of NRRI is to deliver integrated research solutions and the vision is to discover the economy of the future.

Also speaking for NRRI and NREL were Jen King and Jamie Alexander. They discussed the Midwest Industrial Transformation Initiative: catalyze, demonstrate, and drive replicable, scalable, industrial decarbonization solutions in MN and the world. The challenge with the initiative is that industry (steel, fertilizer, cement, etc.) is difficult to decarbonize. The opportunity provides investment in the next generation, reduce emissions, global competitiveness, increased skilled workforce, and supporting national security.

Director's Report:

Executive Director Peltier gave an update on his activities in July, August, and September. Peltier discussed his appointment to the Permanent School Fund Fiduciary Task Force and gave a shout out to the Legislators that recommended him. He also attended many Member meetings, is working on a Legislative Priorities survey that will be sent to cities, towns, and schools, and working on redeveloping the RAMS website.

Old Business:

- The Constitution and Bylaws Committee (Fisher, Weikum, Friedlieb) met over the summer to discuss some updates to the Constitution and Bylaws. A motion to approve the changes made by the Committee was made by Friedlieb and supported by Kess. Motion carried.

New Business:

- RAMS had two people interested in the open Board seat: Justin Fosso (City of Hibbing) and Lisa Kvas (ISD 712 Mt Iron/Buhl). Both candidates gave short bios and the reasons they would be a good fit for the Board. A motion to nominate Fosso was made by Pittman and supported by LaFrenier. A motion to nominate Kvas was made by Phil Medure and supported by Mikkola-Raja. A vote was taken and Kvas won. A motion to appoint Kvas was made by Kess and supported by Anderson. Motion carried.
- The NESC office lease was discussed. A motion to approve the lease was made by Kess and supported by Anderson. Motion carried.
- The broadband speed test that has been on the RAMS website was discussed. The license has expired and will not be renewed. RAMS will pursue another vendor should one become available.
- Peltier discussed the possible sale, not swap, of School Trust Lands.
- Peltier was invited to apply for a grant from the Blandin Foundation and was awarded it. The \$15,000 grant is for Executive Director Development and Board Development Training. Peltier has committed \$3,600 for Executive Director Coaching which leaves a balance of \$11,400. A motion to approve and accept the grant was made by Anderson and supported by Pittman. Motion carried.

Board Member Updates:

Other:

Member Floor Privileges:

Next Meeting:

A motion to change the date for the October meeting to Wednesday, October 23, was made by Saari and supported by Pittman. Motion carried.

The next RAMS Board Meeting will be held on October 23, 2024, at 6:00pm, at the Northeast Service Cooperative Building.

Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00PM.