

**MRC Board of Directors**  
**Monday, February 7, 2022**  
**10 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

**This meeting took place via the Zoom platform**

**Call to Order:**

Vice Chairman Rapp called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

Dan Larson took the role and reported a quorum present:

Attendees: Jerry Rapp, MRC Vice-Chair, Sharon Bring, MRC Secretary-Treasurer, Marshall Co; Douglas Co; Don Niemi, Aitkin Co; Barry Nelson, Becker Co; Wade Athey, Big Stone; Frank Gross, Clay Co; Larry Anderson, Cottonwood Co; Tim Kalina, Heather Larson, Charlie Meyer, Keith Englund, Douglas Co; Troy Johnson, Grant Co; Char Christenson, Dave DeLaHunt and Ted Van Kempen, Hubbard Co; Wayne Skoe, Koochiching Co; David Geray, Mahnomen Co; Doug Krueger and Daryl Luthens, McLeod Co; Jeff Baldus, Mower Co; Gene Metz, Nobles Co; Steve Bommersbach, Norman Co; Neil Peterson, Pennington Co; Paul Gerde, Pope Co; Chuck Flage, Red Lake Co; Russ Walker, Roseau Co; Neil Weise, Stevens Co; Dave Kircher, Todd Co; Dave Salberg, Traverse Co; Bill Stearns, Wadena Co; Jim Branstad and Bill Miller, Watonwan Co; Dennis Larson, Wilkin Co; Mike Kaczmarek, Wright Co; Scott Peters, Marshall Co. Administrator; Dan Larson, MRC Executive Director.

Vice Chairman Rapp called for a motion to combine action on the agenda and minutes. The motion was approved by consensus.

**1) Approve Agenda:**

1) Approve Agenda; 2) Approve Minutes (Jan. 10, 2022); 3) Treasurers Report and Reimbursements; 4) Speaker – Rep. Rob Ecklund; 5) Speaker – Nathan Zacharias, Rural Broadband Coalition; 6) Speaker – Steve Gottwalt, MN Assn. of County Healthplans; 7) Speaker – Margaret Donahoe, MN Transportation Alliance; 8) Discuss Session Priorities; 9) Other Business; 10) Adjourn

**2) Approve January 10, 2022 Minutes:**

Vice Chairman Rapp called for a motion to approve the agenda and minutes. Dave Salberg made a motion to approve the agenda and minutes. Second by Dennis Larson. Motion adopted.

**3) Treasurer's Report:**

Sharon Bring gave the financial report.

Paul Gerde made a motion to approve the treasurer's report and invoice payment. Second by Frank Gross. Motion adopted.

**4) Speaker – Rep. Rob Ecklund, DFL – Int'l Falls:**

Rep. Ecklund addressed MRC as a former MRCC board member. He discussed issues relating to local road wetland replacement, 404 assumption, PILT, mining, chronic wasting disease and drainage.

**5) Speaker – Nathan Zacharias, Rural Broadband Coalition:**

Nathan thanked MRC for key leadership in Rural Broadband Coalition efforts and discussed coalition strategies for 2022. Said MRC current broadband policy adequate for 2022.

**6) Speaker – Steve Gottwalt, MN Assn. of County Health Plans:**

Expressed disappointment that DHS ignored 18 months of discourse with counties and county health plans, that DHS ended up taking an aggressive approach by requiring at least two health plans in each county, ignoring sole-source statutes governing County Based Purchasing. Warned counties to stay tuned to DHS for response to request to mediate in place of a lawsuit.

**7) Speaker – Margaret Donahoe, MN Transportation Alliance:**

Margaret discussed the impact of the federal infrastructure bill, the IIJA, is great but impact may be more limited than hoped. Counties need to continue to advocate for additional funding to bridge needs gap, and should consider urging 100% of sales tax on auto part revenues to HUTDF.

**8) Discuss Session Priorities:**

Scott Peters raised concerns about rural nursing home staff and funding problems. Charlie Meyer said Douglas Co., used ARPA funds to support training programs at Alexandria Tech.

Ted Van Kampen made the following motion to add nursing home staffing and revenue concerns to the MRC legislative priorities list:

***MRC supports rural nursing home staffing and revenue concerns.***

Second by Dennis Larson. Motion adopted.

Sharon Bring raised concerns about buffer reimbursement. Jerry Rapp expressed concerns about retaining private land ownership not wanting landowners to lose property for utility corridors.

Scott Peters raised concerns about Dept. of Corrections cost mandates. Changes in rules for jails with zero funding.

Mike Kaczmarek raised Wright Co., concerns about driver license service and testing center closures. Wondered if Wright's concern was widespread. Members indicated the problem had been real but was largely back to normal.

Doug Kruger mentioned Waters of the U.S. rule backsliding to broader reach.

Clay County is spearheading full funding to SCORE. State pulls (30 to 40%) off the top. Counties collect 60 cents for every dollar.

**9) Other Business:**

Next meeting is Tuesday, March 1<sup>st</sup> at 5 p.m. in St. Paul.

**10) Adjourn:**

Doug Kruger made a motion to adjourn. Second by Dave Salberg. Motion adopted.

Minutes Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Sec / Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_

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