

# MN Rural Counties Board of Directors – APPROVED Minutes

March 4, 2024

10:00 am

Zoom

Attendees:

<b>Position</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
Delegate	Becker County	Barry	Nelson
Delegate	Beltrami County	Joe	Gould
Delegate	Big Stone County	Wade	Athey
Delegate	Brown County	Jeffrey	Veerkamp
Delegate	Clay County	Frank	Gross
Alternate	Clay County	Jenny	Mongeau
Delegate	Cottonwood County	Larry	Anderson
Delegate	Douglas County	Jerry	Rapp
Alternate	Douglas County	Keith	Englund
Alternate	Douglas County	Tim	Kalina
Alternate	Douglas County	Charlie	Meyer
Delegate	Hubbard County	Charlene	Christenson
Alternate	Hubbard County	David	De La Hunt
Delegate	Jackson County	Don	Wachal
Delegate	Lincoln County	Dean	Nielsen
Delegate	Lyon County	Thomas	Andries
Alternate	Lyon County	Rick	Anderson
Alternate	Lyon County	Gary	Crowley
Delegate	Marshall County	Sharon	Bring
Alternate	McLeod County	Nathan	Schmalz
Delegate	Meeker County	Steve	Schmitt
Alternate	Meeker County	Paul	Johnson
Delegate	Norman County	Steve	Bommersbach
Delegate	Olmsted County	Brian	Mueller
Delegate	Pennington County	Neil	Peterson
Alternate	Pennington County	Bruce	Lawrence
Delegate	Pipestone County	Luke	Johnson
Delegate	Polk County	Gary	Willhite
Delegate	Pope County	Paul	Gerde
Alternate	Pope County	Larry	Lindor
Delegate	Red Lake County	Chuck	Flage
Alternate	Redwood County	Bob	Van Hee
Delegate	Renville County	John	Robinson
Alternate	Renville County	Randy	Kramer
Delegate	Roseau County	Kermit	Jensen
Alternate	Roseau County	Glenda	Phillipe
Delegate	Saint Louis County	Paul	McDonald
Delegate	Sibley County	Peter	Koch

Delegate	Stearns County	Steve	Notch
Delegate	Stevens County	Bob	Kopitzke
Alternate	Stevens County	Patricia	Lesmeister-Nelson
Delegate	Todd County	Tim	Denny
Delegate	Traverse County	Chad	Metz
Alternate	Traverse County	Kayla	Schmidt
Delegate	Wadena County	Bill	Stearns
Delegate	Waseca County	Doug	Christopherson
Delegate	Watonwan County	Jim	Branstad
Alternate	Watonwan County	Bill	Miller
Delegate	Wilkin County	Dennis	Larson
Delegate	Wright County	Mike	Kaczmarek
Alternate	Wright County	Tina	Diedrick

Guests: Senator John Hoffman, Senator Paul Utke, Representative Peter Fischer,

MRC Staff: Anne Kilzer, Rob Vanasek, Sam Walseth

**Call to Order.** Chair Luke Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

**Roll Call.** Chair Luke Johnson called the roll. A quorum was confirmed.

**Legislative Speakers.** Sam Walseth introduced Senator Paul Utke. Senator Utke provided an overview of current Senate activity. Highlights included discussion of a “mandates repair” bill, timing of the budget forecast and ramifications, modifying vaccine requirements for childcare providers, CARMA, White Earth State forest legislation, county-specific aspects of the bonding bill, and Capital Assistance Program. He encouraged Commissioners to remain engaged with Senators, including passing resolutions on issues of importance.

Chair Johnson welcomed Senator Hoffman and Representative Fischer to the meeting. Senator Hoffman gave further insights on CARMA, which has bipartisan support. Representative Fischer and Senator Hoffman also discussed House/Senate positions on the 48 hour rule, drainage, SCORE funding, and ewaste/packaging.

**Legislative Update.** Sam Walseth and Rob Vanasek provided an update on the status of MRC Legislative priorities. The next three weeks will be key as we approach simultaneous first and second policy deadlines. Rob described strategy around SCORE; Sam followed up with updates regarding the work of the Drainage Work Group and subsequent legislative action. Rob and Sam discussed potential issues of interest/impact on counties in the bonding bill and supplemental budget. Finally, they gave an update on bills scheduled in committee in the upcoming week.

**Discussion/Sharing/Best Practices.** Question and answer on other legislative interest and issues of importance to MRC members.

**Other.** There was discussion on MRC’s ability to respond quickly if bills of concern move forward at the Legislature, which led to a discussion on Open Meeting Law requirements. Anne Kilzer noted that MRC is not a public entity and described requirements for MRC in regard to virtual meetings. She will confirm and provide additional information at the April meeting. Chair Johnson, Sam and Rob feel that MRC is able to weigh in on issues of concern in a timely manner if need be.

**Adjourn.** Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 11:56 am.