



Thursday, February 23, 2017

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB)

4261 US 53

Eveleth, MN 55734

## SUMMARY

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

RTAC Meeting was called to order by Mike Tardy, Chair at 10:05am. Introductions followed.

John McDonald	MnDOT- District 1
John Minor	District 1 State Aid
Robert Ege	D1 Project Support
Bryan Anderson	MnDOT
John Welle	Aitkin County
Brian Boder	St. Louis County
Cindy Voigt	City of Duluth
Bill Bennett	Chamber of Commerce
Bob Manzoline	St. Louis and Lake Co. Rail Authority
Robert Ege	MnDOT
Gary Johnson	Blackberry Township
Kieth Nelson	St. Louis County Commissioner
Michelle Pierson	ARDC
Charlie Moore	ARDC
Russell Habermann	ARDC
Andy Hubley	ARDC
*Others may have been present but did not sign in	

### 2. Committee Business

- Meeting Agenda
- Approval of October 13, 2016 RTAC - Call for approval of meeting summary. Motion to approve by Bill Bennett/ John McDonald, carries unanimously
- RTAC Membership Updates – Several members of the RTAC have changed positions. Seeking guidance for nominations for vacant positions.

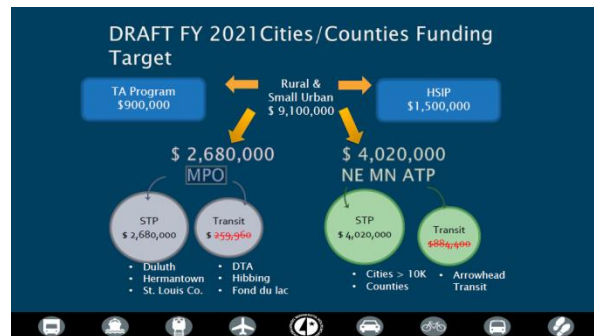
- Matt Wegwerth has replaced Julie Kennedy as City Engineer in Grand Rapids and is willing to serve on the RTAC. A motion was made by John McDonald/John Welle to approve Matt Wegwerth as an RTAC member. Carries unanimously
- Other vacancies exist: Aitkin, Itasca & Koochiching Counties Community Health Board Representative, the Bicycle/Pedestrian/Trails Representative and the Metropolitan Interstate Council Representative. Some discussion on Bike/Ped Rep. Chair advises Committee to think of candidates and send any nominations to ARDC prior to May 30, 2017. Nominees will be presented at the June RTAC meeting and votes held for member roles at that time.
- RTAC Bylaws date to 2003. MnDOT is currently revising and updating ATP guidelines and Bylaws. ARDC's Habermann consulted with the RTAC membership to see if there is a desire to update the RTAC Bylaws so the RTAC and ATP documents will correspond. It was noted that ARDC could review the documents and add discussion of updates to the Bylaws to the June RTAC meeting.

### 3. MnDOT Program Updates

- Area Transportation Partnership (ATP) Updates – Bryan Anderson, MnDOT, led discussion about Draft FY 2021 Cities/Counties Funding Targets.

For FY2021, Central Office will once again cover transit components of the funding. Breakdowns begin with budget of \$9.1 M. Of this, \$900,000 will again be dedicated to the Transportation Alternatives Program, and \$1,500,000 to HSIP.

The remaining \$6.7M will show a distribution of \$2,680,000 going to the MPO area and \$4,020,000 going to the NE MN ATP. Note that Transit is slashed out for 2021, but will be coming back into the ATP in 2022.



- **2017 Program Status**
  - i. State Program – Robert Ege went over a list of State projects. Question about the Eagles Nest project. Bid came in at \$17M, were expecting \$24M. Several projects showed bids that came in below anticipated figures.
  - ii. Other projects include tower lighting in Duluth, Hwy 33 overlay, Hwy 23 in Duluth, Hwy 61 Bridge in Beaver Bay, Hwy73/210 pavement rehab job. Question on how a Cohassett restriping project came to be by Gary Johnson. Mentioned that this was a project that resulted from a lot of public input. Robert Ege mentioned he would speak with Gary Johnson following the meeting and mentioned he would send on some crash data. Discussion about some decisions being proactive vs reactive. Several roundabouts are in the works for summer 2017 construction season. Two projects (Virginia and Hwy 11 in I'Falls) in a delayed letting list until MN legislature authorizes the

transportation budget—federal dollars. Question about a project on 169 E. of Bovey. Project will start this spring. Question by Bill Bennett about MnDOT state office attempting to capture efficiencies. Is District 1 keyed into this process? Ege said he'd try to find out more.

iii. 2017 Local Projects – John McDonald distributed a matrix of projects and went down the list of projects. Questions fielded included traffic impacts during Beaver Bay Bridge construction, which will not see detours but will be done under traffic, question about the State Rail Crossing Safety Plan and its impact on District 1. Bryan Anderson, MnDOT, said he would find the information Bob Manzoline seeks.

- **Federal Aid Candidate Projects FY 2021** – Bryan Anderson, MnDOT, discussed the Federal Aid projects for FY 2021. These projects are dispersed under a geographic equity formula throughout District 1. \$4M in Federal Aid for FY2021. Identified projects include one in Carlton County on CSAH7 and Cty4 near Big Lake which will involve 17.5 miles, a project in Itasca County, and a project in St. Louis County that will require removing pavement, resetting a cement base to stabilize.

Federal Aid Candidate Projects (Rural)	Federal Aid Candidate Projects (MPO)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Carlton County CSAH 7 bituminous resurfacing \$1,340,000</li> <li>▶ Itasca County CSAH 45 new bituminous surfacing \$1,340,000</li> <li>▶ St. Louis County CSAH 29 culvert replacement/ full depth reclamation \$1,340,000</li> <li>▶ Arrowhead Transit (funded through CO)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ City of Duluth MSAS 118/119 (Railroad Street) resurfacing \$1,340,000</li> <li>▶ St. Louis County CSAH 43 (Lismore Road) resurfacing \$1,340,000</li> <li>▶ DTA (funded through CO)</li> </ul>

#### 4. Transportation Alternatives (TA) Task Force Updates

- FFY 2021 TA Recommendations – 13 full applications were submitted. With \$900,000 and \$4.4M in project solicitations, it was a competitive process. The TA Task Force convened on February 9<sup>th</sup>. Task Force Members reviewed each application prior to the meeting. At the meeting, each project was looked at as a group, and a discussion about its merits and challenges took place. Task Force Members applied scores to a 9 question scoring rubric. This year, SRTS projects were awarded 5 bonus points added to the top of the averaged scores. The two projects that scored the highest were the Deer River Trail and Gitchi-Gami State Trail segment in Lutsen. The Deer River Trail project had good community support, will link students to the school's athletic fields, and as this is a phased project, it will eventually link to other schools and community assets. The second project was a MnDNR project to extend the current segment of Gitchi-Gami State Trail from Ski Hill Road to navigate into Lutsen Town center. This project scored high due to many factors including a great showing of community support, issues in connecting low wage summer workforce members to places of

work in other nearby communities, resorts, and more. This project had been submitted two years ago and was not selected for funds at that time. Applicant was notified that the project had merit and that they should reapply.

- Following the presentation of the two recommended projects, discussion ensued on whether or not geographic equity should be considered. RTAC members advised evaluating the scoring rubric to determine if there are ways to consider geographic dispersion. It was noted that this process was not designed as an equity program, but rather as a competitive program. It was also mentioned that one of the scoring tools on the rubric asked task force members to gauge an entity's ability to deliver the project. After much discussion, it was mentioned that the RTAC, as the steering committee of the ATP, would like to review the scoring rubric for the TA program at the June RTAC meeting and offer suggestions at that time. ARDC will prepare materials that summarize the process of project selection to distribute to members ahead of the June meeting.
- A motion to approve the TA Task Force's recommendations to award funds to the Deer River Trail and Gitchi-Gami State Trail Lutsen Segment was made by Cindy Voigt/Bob Manzoline. Mark LeBrun voted Nay, while remainder of RTAC membership voted Aye. Motion carries.

5. **RTAC Planning Projects** – Russell Habermann and Michelle Pierson from ARDC presented updates on the following planning projects:
  - Safe Routes to School
  - Superior National Forest Scenic Byway Planning
  - North Shore Scenic Drive Council Planning
  - Lake Vermilion Trail Technical Assistance
  - Scanlon Community Corridor
  - Pedestrian and Bicycle Counting
  - Gitchi-Gami State Trail Technical Assistance
6. **Northeast Minnesota Rural Walking Tool Kit** – Russell Habermann passed around a print prototype of the NE MN Rural Walking Tool Kit. He reminded RTAC members that there is a request that they review the document and offer comments by March 3<sup>rd</sup>.
7. **County Board Meetings Schedule** – Andy Hubley noted that he, and at times other ARDC staff, would be joining MnDOT staff to present transportation planning efforts and transportation construction projects, and future projects, to each of the county boards in March. ARDC asks county engineers to look for materials ahead of your county board's meeting. It was noted that these presentations will be held:
  - March 7<sup>th</sup> – Lake County & Cook Carlton County
  - March 14<sup>th</sup> – Aitkin County & Itasca County
  - March 21<sup>st</sup> – Pine County & Koochiching County

- March 28<sup>th</sup> – Cook County  
\*Have not heard back from St. Louis County

#### 8. Other Business

- April ATP Meeting – To be held April 5, 2017 at 10:00am at the Hermantown Training Center
- Next RTAC Meeting will take place in June 2017
  - Agenda items may include:
    - TA Task Force Rubric/Summary
    - Transportation Funding – local funds are distributed by equity by county due to a policy developed in Walt's time. Funding mechanisms have changed in the past years to include local option sales taxes and wheelage taxes. Counties with regional centers have the capacity to raise funds in tax dollars, and counties without the opportunity to capture these funds are having a difficult time. It was asked of this group to consider brainstorming ideas/actions that can be done to develop a balance in funding distribution so that there are not winner/loser counties. One idea floated regarded a potential change to the federal funds equity formula to account for counties' capacities to raise funds. ARDC commits to research this matter at the statewide level and identify the inequity and come back to the group with more information.
- Announcement: Mike Tardy, Carlton County Engineer announced that he is retiring as of the end of March. Thanks and congratulations were directed to Mr. Tardy.
  - Bill Bennett currently serves as Vice Chair, so in light of this retirement, Mr. Bennett will ascend to the post as RTAC Chair.
  - Call for nominations for a new Vice Chair. As Mr. Ege is not a voting member of the RTAC, he is not eligible to serve in this post. MnDOT staff noted that having a local official at the helm is recommended. David Betts was nominated by Mark LeBrun/Bob Manzoline. Bob Manzoline was nominated by Bryan Anderson/John McDonald. Chairperson Tardy called for a vote on Mr. Manzoline's nomination first. Ayes carried the vote, with one nay by Mr. Manzoline. Congratulations were offered to Bob Manzoline.

#### 9. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 12:05pm