MEMBERS PRESENT:

Greg Anderson  Isanti County
Duane Bakke  Fillmore County
Chris Balfany  Yellow Medicine County
James Berg  Brown County
Drew Campbell  Blue Earth County
David Erickson  Dodge County
Garry Gamble  Cook County
Paul Gerde  Pope County
Chris Gerlach  Dakota County
Marion Greene  Hennepin County
Peter Hoff  Grant County
Roger Imdieke  Kandiyohi County
Luke Johnson  Pipestone County
Gary Kiesow  Marshall County
Randy Kramer  Renville County
Kevin Maurer  Morrison County
Scott McCollum  Mahnomen County
Michele McPherson  Mille Lacs County
Todd Miller  Roseau County
Barry Nelson  Becker County
Steve Notch  Stearns County
Wade Pavleck  Koochiching County
Gary Peterson  Carlton County
Neil Peterson  Pennington County
Edward Popp  Benton County
Victoria Reinhardt  Ramsey County
John Riebel  Sherburne County
Pat Sawatzke  Wright County
Ron Staples  Stevens County
James Stratton  Douglas County
Rich Sve  Lake County
Jim Swanson  Sibley County
Paul Thiede  Crow Wing County
Joe Vene  Beltrami County

I. CALL TO ORDER
Chair Rich Sve called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM. Members recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Corrections were made to the December 2014 minutes. A motion was made by Commissioner Roger Imdieke and seconded by Commissioner Todd Miller to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was approved. Commissioner Sve welcomed policy committee members and guests and meeting attendees introduced themselves.

II. MPCA Rulemaking Update: Amendments to water quality standards regarding antidegradation and tiered aquatic life use (TALU)
Shannon Lotthammer, Director of the MPCA Environmental Analysis and Outcomes Division, presented an update on the current rulemaking process MPCA is going through to address water quality standards regarding antidegradation and tiered aquatic life use (TALU) and answered questions from committee members.

III. DNR Update: Buffer zones and other policy issues
Bob Meier, Assistant Commissioner, provided a general legislative update on behalf of DNR. Sarah Strommen, also an Assistant Commissioner, provided an update on the governor’s buffer initiative and answered questions from committee members.
IV. Wetland Conservation Act: Discussion on proposed language
Brian Napstad, Aitkin County Commissioner, provided a history of the WCA issue as it pertains to counties and gave an overview of the bill proposing changes to the Wetland Conservation Act and discussed the stakeholder process for developing the bill language. BWSR staff, David Weirens, walked through the legislation section by section and explained the changes the bill proposes in further detail.

V. Other legislative items
- Jennifer Berquam, AMC Policy Analyst, presented a request from the Minnesota Association of County Agricultural Inspectors asking for AMC support of their legislative proposal requesting $1 M in the next biennium to implement the noxious weed grant program under MS 18.90. Committee members discussed the request. Commissioner Barry Nelson made a motion to request the AMC Board of Directors review and consider the proposal brought forth by the County Ag Inspectors. Commissioner Neil Peterson seconded the motion. Members voted by a hand count and the motion passed 18-13.
- Ms. Berquam explained S.F. 708 to committee members. The bill requires a county board to levy an annual tax to pay for the budget submitted by a SWCD. Discussion took place and Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt made a motion to recommend the AMC board take a position in opposition of S.F. 708. Commissioner Luke Johnson seconded the motion and it passed on a voice vote.
- Ms. Berquam provided the committee with an overview of another bill pertaining to funding of SWCDs, S.F. 1158. The committee discussed the bill. Commissioner Joe Vene made a motion to oppose the bill and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Kevin Maurer. Further discussion took place. Commissioner Paul Theide moved to amend the motion to consider the bill in two parts – sections 1-3 as one part and section 4 as the second part. The motion was seconded. The committee discussed the first part of the motion to oppose sections 1-3 of the bill. Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt moved to table the motion to oppose sections 1-3 of the bill. Commissioner Brian Napstad seconded the motion. The committee voted by a hand count and the motion to table passed by a vote of 16-12. Commissioner Luke Johnson made a motion to support section 4 of the bill. Commissioner Drew Campbell seconded the motion and it was approved by a voice vote.

VI. ADJOURN
Commissioner Joe Vene moved to adjourn and the motion was seconded. The motion was approved and the committee adjourned at 11:55 AM.