# Transportation & Infrastructure Policy Committee

*River’s Edge Convention Center – Saint Cloud, Minnesota*

*December 7th, 2015*

## DRAFT MINUTES

### MEMBERS PRESENT:
- Brad Anderson, Goodhue County
- Bruce Anderson, Sherburne County
- John Anderson, Kittson County
- Lon Aune, Marshall County
- Jake Bauerly, Benton County
- Barb Becker, Todd County
- James Brady, Steele County
- DeRon Brehmer, Lac qui Parle County
- Craig Buness, Polk County
- Kevin Campbell, Clay County
- Bruce Cochran, Mille Lacs County
- Dave Enblom, Cass County
- Roger Falk, Roseau County
- Rosemary Franzen, Crow Wing County
- David Geray, Mahnomen County
- Steven Gray, Dodge County
- Mary Liz Holberg, Dakota County
- Steve Jacob, Winona County
- Donald Jensen, Pennington County
- Wayne Johnson, Otter Tail County
- Jack Kolars, Nicollet County
- Bruce Kooiman, Pipestone County
- Bob Kopitzke, Stevens County
- Dan Kuhns, Waseca County
- Matt Look, Anoka County
- Jeffrey Lopez, Chippewa County
- Matt Ludwig, Pine County
- Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin County
- Jeff Mergen, Stearns County
- Bob Moline, Murray County
- John Okeson, Becker County
- Rafael Ortega, Ramsey County
- Dennis Potter, Brown County
- Michael Potter, Wright County
- Douglas Reese, Kandiyohi County
- Mike Robinson, Chisago County
- Eric Rudningen, Swift County
- Jim Salfer, Redwood County
- Charles Sanow, Lyon County
- Scott Schulte, Anoka County
- Christopher Shoff, Freeborn County
- Edward Smith, Hubbard County
- Bill Stearns, Wadena County
- Vance Stuehrenberg, Blue Earth County
- Keith Swanson, Grant County
- Don Wachal, Jackson County
- Gordy Wagner, Pope County
- Lance Wetzel, Le Sueur County
- Matthew Widboom, Nobles County
- Mike Wilson, Morrison County
- Paul Wilson, Olmsted County
- Mike Wobbe, Wabasha County
- Tom Workman, Carver County
- Susan Zmyslony, Carlton County

### GUESTS:
- Ryan Odden, Wadena County
- Nick Riley, Ramsey County
- Ginny Storlie, Cook County
- Jodie Teich, Stearns County
- Janice Fransen, Jackson County
- Mike Slavik, Dakota County
- David Olsonawski, Hubbard County
I. Call to Order
Commissioner John Okeson called the meeting to order at 8:02am. The group took turns giving introductions. The Pledge of Allegiance was taken. Commissioner Bob Moline motioned to approve the September Transportation & Infrastructure Policy Committee minutes, seconded by Commissioner Vance Stuehrenberg. Motion prevailed.

II. Truck Weight Panel
Rich Sanders introduced the two panelists: Fred Corrigan from Aggregate Ready Mix Association, and Melissa Wolf from the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks.

Fred Corrigan spoke first. Corrigan said that the Aggregate Ready Mix Association has been working with state and county engineers to figure out better ways to haul goods more efficiently. He then gave an overview of the Better Trucks Initiative, which would, if passed as law, increase accepted truck weights from 80,000 pounds on five axles to 90,000 on six axles or 97,000 pounds on seven axles. The primary benefit of this new law, which the Senate had passed a version of back in 2013, is that there would be fewer trucks on the road. The state would monitor the trucks, and it would be enforced by the Minnesota State Patrol. Counties have three levels of control over aggregate producers hauling materials: the county determines the location of aggregate facilities, sets truck routes, and determines the permitting of trucks. Corrigan believes that legislation approving these changes would mean less road project costs and reductions in transportation projects.

Melissa Wolf then spoke. She emphasized that there are some serious concerns with increased weight changes: higher crash rates, increased equipment wear and tear, higher out-of-service violation rates, increased brake violations, increased damages to bridges, and increased damages to roads. The Coalition Against Bigger Trucks also claims that most police agencies do not support increasing truck weights because of the increased severity of vehicle crashes that results from larger trucks being involved in the accidents. The U.S. Department of Transportation also does not recommend increasing truck weight limits. According to their bridge stress studies, allowing 97,000 pound, six-axle trucks onto the road would damage roughly 6,200 bridges, resulting in $2.2 billion in damages to bridges.

During the Q & A portion of the panel, several questions were asked about a few of the figures each had presented. One commissioner asked why other states allow 90,000 pounds but Minnesota does not. Wolf responded that while other states around us have higher weight limits, those same states also have higher fatality rates, and also more damage to their roads and bridges. One commissioner noted that he worries that if the weight increase goes through that truck drivers will not stay on the appropriate roads at all times, leading to further damages.

III. Truck Weight Enforcement Activity
Ted Schoenecker, the MNDOT State Aid Deputy Engineer, spoke about Truck Weight Education, which started in 2001 with a focus on compliance. The program is funded by MnDOT and State Aid, with classes held throughout the state. The current contract for the program expires December 6, 2016. The Commercial Vehicle Interagency Committee –
made up of MnDOT, DPS, FHWA, and FMCSA – feels that the Truck Weight Education program should continue to be funded but will need some clarification language.

Chair John Okeson gave a brief update from the Truck Weight Advisory Committee, and spoke about how important it is for truck drivers to receive truck weight education.

IV. 2016 State Legislative Platform Discussion and Approval
The group went through the proposed platform changes, which are listed below.

**Proposed Amendment #1:**
AMC supports permanent funding for the Office of Broadband Development within DEED, and continued funding for the Border to Border Broadband Development Fund.

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Otter Tail County Commissioner Wayne Johnson motioned to approve the amendment changes, seconded by Wright County Commissioner Mike Potter. Motion approved.

**Proposed Amendment #2:**
AMC supports adjusting the relevant evidence law as relates to receipt of overweight goods so that local law enforcement has authority to inspect and assess penalties for overweight loads during the 14 day look-back statute. MN Stat 169.872

Nicollet County Commissioner Jack Kolars motioned to include the proposed change in the final platform, seconded by Pope County Commissioner Gordy Wagner. Motion approved.

**Proposed Amendment #3:**
AMC supports the ability for local law enforcement to conduct weight training courses so that county law enforcement can educate members of the public on truck weight regulations.

Blue Earth County Commissioner Vance Stuehrenberg motioned to include the proposed change in the final platform, seconded by Murray County Commissioner Bob Moline. Motion approved.

**Proposed Amendment #4:**
AMC supports the sales tax revenue from auto parts going to the HUTDF and that the void it creates in the General Fund be filled with surplus money.

Pennington County Commissioner Don Jensen motioned to approve the amendment addition to the platform, seconded by Benton County Commissioner Jake Bauerly. Motion approved.

**Proposed Amendment #5:**
With only one gas tax increase in over 25 years and large increases in materials costs, counties’ ability to maintain their road systems has been greatly eroded, with an annual
funding gap of around $450 million. Both legislative bodies, as well as the governor’s office, have indicated a strong desire to address the statewide funding deficit for roads, transit and bike/ped, but the approaches differ greatly. AMC must be active in educating legislators and advocating for long-term funding; the solution should be comprehensive (multi-modal), balanced (regionally and between modes), sustainable (on-going funding), and dedicated (constitutionally for roads and statutorily for transit).

Wadena County Commissioner Bill Stearns motioned to table the amendment, seconded by Scott County Commissioner Mike Beard. Motion to table the amendment failed, 21 to 23.

Stevens County Commissioner Bob Kopitzke motioned, seconded by Pope County Commissioner Gordy Wagner, to amend the proposed statement to read as follows:

With only one gas tax increase in over 25 years and large increases in materials costs, and insufficient state funding, counties’ ability to maintain their road systems transportation infrastructure has been greatly eroded, with an annual funding gap of around $450 million. Both legislative bodies, as well as the governor’s office, have indicated a strong desire to address the statewide funding deficit for roads, transit and bike/ped, but the approaches differ greatly. AMC must be active in educating legislators and advocating for long-term funding; the solution should be comprehensive (multi-modal), balanced (regionally and between modes), sustainable (on-going funding), and dedicated (constitutionally for roads and statutorily for transit).

Motion carried.

Blue Earth County Commissioner Vance Stuehrenberg motioned to add the platform amendment, as amended, to the platform, seconded by Nicollet County Commissioner Jack Kolars. Motion failed, 24 to 28.

**Proposed Amendment #6:**
AMC supports dedicated transit funding that is both adequate and predictable and provides the necessary revenue to meet the needs of the state and local commuters, to support transportation options (including buses, bus rapid transit, light rail transit and passenger and commuter rail) for transit-dependent and riders who choose to ride transit.

Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin motioned to include change in the platform, seconded by Olmsted County Commissioner Paul Wilson. Motion approved.

**Proposed Amendment #7:**
AMC supports a fair and equitable distribution of revenue for the Greater Minnesota Transit Program and for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area transit system and the CTIB’s Program for Projects.

Ramsey County Commissioner Jim McDonough motioned to include the change in the platform, seconded by Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin. Motion approved, 26 to 14.
Proposed Amendment #8:
AMC recommends that if there is significant new transportation revenue, all transportation revenue directed to the County State Aid Highway Fund regardless of source (excluding the leased motor vehicle sales tax), be split with 68% distributed according to the apportionment sum formula and conjunction with significant new transportation revenue.

AMC supports dedicating all revenue from the leased motor vehicle sales tax on purchased and leased vehicles to transportation purposes.

AMC supports full funding for the Board of Water and Soil administered Local Road Wetland Replacement Program.

Blue Earth County Commissioner Vance Stuehrenberg motioned to approve the amendments to the platform, seconded by Wright County Commissioner Mike Potter. Motion approved.

Proposed Amendment #9:
AMC supports bonding funding for the development of a complete statewide ten-ton county state aid highway system that will meet the safety, congestion mitigation, connectivity, agricultural, industrial and economic needs of the state.

Stevens County Commissioner Bob Kopitzke motioned to approve the amendment, seconded by Wright County Commissioner Mike Potter. Motion approved.

Proposed Amendment #10:
AMC supports partnerships and cooperation with state agencies, associations and other local units of government that advance the transportation interests of citizens and the state. AMC further supports public-private partnerships as a means to supplement traditional funding programs, encourage innovation and efficiencies, and promote economic development.

Wright County Commissioner Mike Potter motioned to approve the amendments to the platform, seconded by Polk County Commissioner Craig Buness. Motion approved.

There were no other motions to approve any other proposed platform amendments.

Amended 2016 Platform:
Pennington County Commissioner Donald Jensen motioned to approve the amended platform in its entirety, seconded by Wright County Commissioner Mike Potter. Motion to approve the 2016 AMC Transportation and Infrastructure Policy Platform passed.
V. **NACo/Federal Report**
Commissioner Peter McLaughlin gave a brief report on federal legislation and NACo.

VI. **Committee Leadership Elections**
Motion by Blue Earth County Commissioner Vance Stuehrenberg, seconded by Polk County Commissioner Craig Buness to re-elect Becker County Commissioner John Okeson as 2016 Transportation and Infrastructure Policy Committee Chairman. Motion carried. Motion by Nicollet County Commissioner Jack Kolars, seconded by Blue Earth County Commissioner Vance Stuehrenberg to re-elect Wright County Commissioner Mike Potter as the 2016 Transportation and Infrastructure Policy Committee vice chair. Motion carried.

VII. **Adjourn.**
The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.
Motion by Commissioner Michael Potter to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Douglas Reese. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 10:13am.