I. Call Meeting to Order
Chair Mike Potter called the Transportation and Infrastructure Policy Committee to order at 9:00 AM. The committee recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Otter Tail County Commissioner Wayne Johnson moved to approve the December Transportation & Infrastructure Policy Committee minutes, seconded by Lac qui Parle County Commissioner DeRon Brehmer. Motion carried.
II. Federal Update
Andy Burmeister with Lockridge Grindal Nauen and one of AMC’s federal lobbyists, provided an update on what’s happening with transportation at the federal level. Andy focused on transportation news and the announcement of President Trump’s infrastructure plan to spend $1 trillion over the next ten years.

III. CTIB Update
Ramsey County Commissioner Jim McDonough gave an update on CTIB, including a short history of the board and the recent news of its plan to dissolve. Commissioner McDonough stated that if CTIB were to dissolve, it would require the five individual counties to pass resolutions at their board meetings. The five CTIB counties are working hard to come to a conclusion as to what makes sense for the individual counties, what makes sense for the region, and what does it leave for the state – specifically focusing on a comprehensive transportation funding bill that works for all 87 counties.

IV. State Aid Update
Ted Schoenecker, with the MnDOT State Aid Office, presented to the committee on recent legislative updates, including funding for the local road wetland replacement program and the Senate proposal to remove all funding from the Flexible Highway Account, which is currently used for turnbacks. Removing funding from the turnback account would negatively impact counties, specifically those counties that have already accepted a turnback and are anticipating money from this program. Ted also updated the committee on ADA transition plans, and how the timeline for compliance is quickly approaching.

Finally, Ted put out a request for volunteers from the committee in MnDOT District 8 who would be willing to serve on the State Aid Rules Committee. Those interested can let Ted or Emily know.

V. MCEA Legislative Committee Update
Brian Giese, MCEA Legislative Committee Co-Chair, gave a short presentation to the committee on the current legislative issues the association is working on. Including local road wetland replacement program funding, changes to the ditch mowing statute, small cell wireless legislation, and transportation funding generally.

VI. House Transportation Finance Chair
House Transportation Finance Chair Paul Torkelson (R-Hanska) spoke to the group and discussed what his committee has been working on this session so far and what we could see going forward in terms of a comprehensive transportation funding bill. Chair Torkelson highlighted the early committee deadlines that have been set this session and how he hopes to get a transportation bill to Governor Dayton soon. Torkelson said new revenue in a transportation funding bill would likely be from dedicating the auto parts sales tax and potentially looking at the depreciation schedule for vehicle registration fees. He mentioned that there is not much support for a gas tax from the House Republican Caucus. He also stressed the importance of funding the Local Road Improvement Program and the Local Bridge Replacement Program and the idea of adding these programs into the regular budget process. Finally, he shared his concerns with the Department of Public Safety’s MNLARS system and passing the REAL ID bill this session.
VII. Adjourn
Lac qui Parle County Commissioner DeRon Brehmer moved to adjourn the committee meeting, seconded by Pope County Commissioner Gordy Wagner. The Transportation and Infrastructure Policy Committee adjourned at 11:40 AM.