I. Call to Order
Committee Chair and Renville County Commissioner Randy Kramer called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM. Chair Kramer welcomed members and guests and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Commissioner Doug Krueger made a motion to approve the minutes from December 4, 2017. Commissioner Luke Johnson seconded the motion and it was approved.
II. **Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee Presentation**
Karen Zumach, President of the Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee, presented information on the impacts of emerald ash borer in Minnesota and strategies and program ideas to help slow the spread.

III. **State Funded Land Acquisitions Process Overview**
Mark Johnson, Executive Director of the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC), explained the application process for grants and programs the LSOHC administers and gave an overview of projects that have been funded from the Outdoor Heritage Fund. Bob Meier and Susan Damon from the Department of Natural Resources explained how the DNR works with county boards on public lands issues and described the SLAM (Strategic Land Asset Management) process and PILT. All three speakers addressed questions from policy committee members.

IV. **Discussion of Current Legislative Topics – Legislative Update**
Jennifer Berquam, AMC Policy Analyst, gave an update on current legislative topics relating to counties and environment and natural resources. These issues include:

- Support county board notification requirement for state funded land acquisitions prior to application process – language successfully amended to H.F. 2789 in the House Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Finance Committee on Wednesday, Feb. 28.
- Solid Waste – support increase for SCORE grants to counties, support e-waste law technical changes, oppose changes to make it more difficult for counties to access the Capital Assistance Program (CAP) for solid waste facilities, and support for potential legislation to address permitting challenges for demolition debris landfills.
- Support Drainage Work Group recommendations to amend portions of the drainage law to provide options to drainage authorities to help landowners comply with the buffer law.

Ms. Berquam also presented information on the soil loss rulemaking process that the Board of Water and Soil Resources is pursuing and asked for feedback from committee members. The policy committee expressed concerns about changes to the soil loss rules and provided feedback to the AMC representatives on the BWSR board to request BWSR staff and the BWSR board to slow the soil loss rulemaking process.

Ms. Berquam shared proposed legislative language provided by the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) which would give SWCDs the authority to generate revenues through a levy and/or fee mechanism. Multiple commissioners expressed concerns with the proposed language – some stating the language was too broad and complicated and others having overall concern with levy authority for SWCDs. Commissioner Charlie Borrell made a motion to recommend the AMC Board oppose the SWCD language for levy and fee authority. Commissioner Justin Ahlers seconded the motion and it prevailed.

Ms. Berquam asked for a volunteer from the northeast region of the state to serve on the Local Government Water Roundtable.

V. **Adjourn**
Commissioner Paul Drotos made a motion to adjourn and Commissioner Anton Berg seconded the motion. The motion prevailed and the meeting adjourned at 11:43 AM.