MEMBERS PRESENT:
Kevin Adee, Koochiching County
Richard Brenner, Carlton County
Spencer Buerkle, Benton County
Jim Butterfield, Kandiyohi County
Charlene Christenson, Hubbard County
Hiedi Doo-Kirk, Cook County
Thomas Egan, Dakota County
Doug Erickson, Renville County
Sara Folsted, Rice County
Paul Graupmann, Lyon County
Rick Greene, Chisago County
Frank Gross, Clay County
Jim Hofer, Wadena County
Bill LaValley, Grant County
Larry Lindor, Pope County
Tom Mahoney, Martin County

DeWayne Mareck, Stearns County
Jim McDonough, Ramsey County
Gene Metz, Nobles County
Owen Miler, Douglas County
Don Niemi, Aitkin County
Reed Olson, Beltrami County
Pat Oman, Mille Lacs County
Glenda Phillipe, Roseau County
Felix Schmiesing, Sherburne County
Dave Thiner, Murray County
Darryl Tveitbak, Pennington County
Darek Vetsch, Wright County
Marcia Ward, Winona County
Tom Warmka, Faribault County
Gary Willhite, Polk County
Randy Winscher, Morrison County

GUESTS PRESENT:
Peg Heglund, Yellow Medicine County
Lee Kelly, Wright County
Carolyn McDonald, Lyon County
Rebecca Young, Stevens County
Betty Younggren, Kittson County
Deb Gruber, Morrison County
Kay Mack, Beltrami County
Brett Skyles, Itasca County

Neal Illies, Clearwater County
Mary Beth Davidson, Hennepin County
Mark Peterson, MAAO/Cass County
Troy Olsen, Ewald Consulting
Cindy Geis, MACO/Scott County
Stephen Baker, MAAO/Ramsey County
David Minke, Pine County
Bruce Messelt, Chisago County
Jerry Soma, Anoka County
I. CALL TO ORDER
Chair Commissioner Darryl Tveitbakk, Pennington County, called the meeting of the General Government Policy Committee meeting to order at 1:33 PM. Members said the Pledge of Allegiance and introduced themselves.

II. Approval of minutes
Commissioner Heidi Doo-Kirk motioned to approve the minutes from the last General Government Policy Committee meeting at the AMC Legislative Conference. Commission Bill LaValley seconded the motion; the motion passed.

III. Speaker, Jenny Starr and John Klockziem, Department of Revenue
Matt Hilgart introduced Department of Revenue staff Jenny Starr and John Klockziem. Ms. Starr and Mr. Klockziem provided a presentation on utility assessment in Minnesota. Members participated in a question and answer session after the presentation specifically targeting issues surrounding the Enbridge utility appeal in Northern Minnesota.

IV. Speaker Affiliate Updates
Chair Tveitbakk introduced members from three affiliate groups to provide updates to committee members:

Stephen Baker, Minnesota Association of Assessing Officers
Mr. Baker provided an update on “dark store” assessing practices that seem to be expanding nationwide. Mr. Baker specifically cited cases where this has happened and outlined responses the assessing and county community should have if/when this theory becomes tested in Minnesota.

Cindy Gies, Minnesota Association of County Officers
Ms. Gies reviewed past session successes on election reform and equipment grant money as well as provided members updates on MNLARS complications

Carolyn McDonald, Minnesota Counties Human Resources Management Association
MCHRMA President Carolyn McDonald reviewed HR priorities on AMC’s platform and where they stand at the capitol. Ms. McDonald then presented HR statistics and trends to committee members.

V. Adjourn
Chair Darryl Tveitbakk adjourned the meeting at 4:30 PM.

*Presentation materials available upon request*
VI. CALL TO ORDER
Chair Commissioner Darryl Tveitbakk, Pennington County, called the meeting of the General Government Policy Committee meeting to order at 8:30 AM. Members said the Pledge of Allegiance and provided short introductions.

VII. Legislative and platform review
AMC staff Matt Hilgart provided a short session summary and an overview of last year’s top legislative priorities as set in the General Government platform.

VIII. General Government legislative discussion and priority selection
Chair Tveitbakk opened the committee for discussion on new platform items, edits, or research ideas.

Deb Gruber, Morrison county, commented on the complications of MNLARS roll out and urged members to see that now was the time to address the fee structure inadequacies and potentially lobby for a fee increase. Commissioner Glenda Phillippe stated there was citizen frustration in Roseau county and that any solution should look to supporting the private businesses that are choosing to run these services. Marcia Ward agreed, stating that counties who still administer these services might start thinking about getting out of the licensing business because of increased costs and complications.

Commissioner Owen Miller emphasized the need to continue talking about “dark store” assessing theory and potentially look at increasing the requirements on the appeal process. Commissioner Miller also asked that the committee look at the current limitations on donations of surplus equipment (MS 471.349), stating that the definition was so narrow, that Douglas county was unable to donate desks or file cabinets.

Bruce Messelt, Chisago County, talked about the 30 day resident requirement for election applicants and the insufficient amount of time allocated to challenge residency. Mr. Messelt also mentioned that a group may be trying to require RFP processes for all contracts, even less than $100K, so that AMC staff could respond with concerns.

Commissioner Bill LaValley provided committee members a history of the state mortgage and deed tax collections and the limited percentage (3%) counties receive. Mr. LaValley contended that counties should be receiving a larger percentage of those collections since counties did most of the work. Members agree with the sentiment but also shared concerns about potentially asking too much of the legislature after just receiving an influx of new CPA, buffer aid, and transportation dollars. Rebecca Young, Stevens County, pointed out that perhaps any solution might be to tie increase revenue collection to technology costs such as MNLARS.

John Ongaro, St. Louis County, informed members about several counties receiving a dramatic reduction of Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funding due to a recent reassessment. Mr. Ongaro explained to members that for counties that heavily rely on PILT to help fund government services and already have limited tax base, these cuts are extremely painful. Mr. Ongaro proposed that a short term strategy should focus on trying to get a hold-harmless clause inserted or look for a way to assist the counties hardest hit by valuation drops. For the long term, Mr. Ongaro said that counties should be asking why
acres need to be reassessed every 6 years and not something more frequently. The AMC Lands Work Group is also planning to work on this issue.

Commissioner Gene Metz talked to members about scenarios whereby the Department of Natural Resources was not taking care of their properties, specifically around weed control duties. Commissioner Metz presented committee members with photos, as well. Bruce Messelt suggested that staff forward this issue to the Environment committee and Lands Working Group, as well. Mr. Ongaro reminds committee members that the townships are required by statute to control weed inspection and that we could ask specific townships to send to the DNR that they are out of compliance.

Peg Heglund, Yellow Medicine, discussed the current process for management of tax forfeited buildings and the lack of DEED money available to clean up asbestos. Ms. Heglund relayed to committee members that the costs of cleaning up these buildings are extremely expensive and perhaps we need to be looking to a statewide assistance program.

Commissioner Larry Lindor motions to direct staff to review platform to look for redundancies, deletions, or clean up language and to create an amendment for the December meeting. Commissioner Owen Miller seconded the motion; motion carried.

Commissioner Owen Miller moved that the committee adopt the following five positions as priorities to be placed on AMC district ballots: data practices, appointment of row officers, HR omnibus bill, sustainable PILT funding mechanisms that include solutions to PILT reassessment issue, and promoting legislation that preserves tax base. Commissioner Heidi Doo-Kirk seconded. The motion passed.

IX. Adjourn
Chair Tveitbakk adjourned the meeting at 11:35 AM.