2017 AMC Executive Committee. From left to right: Past President Jack Swanson (Roseau), First Vice President Susan Morris (Isanti), President Gary Hendrickx (Swift), Second Vice President Scott Schulte (Anoka), and Secretary/Treasurer Mary Jo McGuire (Ramsey).

AMC Annual Conference Photo Review

Our thanks to everyone for making this year’s annual conference a success!

Sixteen AMC Past Presidents attended this year’s conference. From left to right: John Derus (Hennepin), Gene Short (Redwood), Jim Ever (Clay), Nancy Schouweiler (Dakota), Harlan Madsen (Ramsey), Tony Bennett (Ramsey), Duane Bakke (Fillmore), Colleen Landkamer (Blue Earth), Christopher Shoff (Freeborn), Don Salverda (Ramsey), Joe Vene (Beltrami), Bob Femwele (Cook), Jim McDonough (Ramsey), Toni Carter (Ramsey), Dennis Fink (St. Louis), and Kevin Kelleher (Houston).

County Conservation Award

This award recognizes leadership, innovation and excellence by counties in protecting or improving their natural resources. Winners shown with BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke.

Lake Superior North Watershed Management Plan
Cook and Lake Counties

Outstanding Economic Development Effort Award

Presented by the Minnesota Association of Professional County Economic Developers (MAPCED).

America’s Best Communities
Chisago County

Agricultural Plastic Recycling
McLeod County

Classroom to Community
Crawford County

Arrowhead Region’s Telehealth Initiative
Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake & St. Louis Counties; Bois Forte, Fond du Lac & Grand Portage Bands of the Lake Superior Chippewa

Gage East Project
Olmsted County

Outstanding Service Award Winners

The following individuals were recognized for their exemplary service in county government. Winners shown with AMC President Gary Hendrickx (Swift).

RENO WELLS - Cass County
Health, Human and Veterans Services Director
37 Years of Service

TOM NOVAK - Dakota County
Public Services and Revenue Division Director
37 Years of Service

LARRY KROHN - Otter Tail County
Administrator
39 Years of Service

County Achievement Award Winners

The following programs were honored for exhibiting excellence and innovation in their communities. Winners shown with AMC President Gary Hendrickx (Swift).

Winners shown with AMC President Gary Hendrickx (Swift).

Classroom to Community
Crawford County

Agricultural Plastic Recycling
McLeod County

PREVIEWS
AMC Training and Education in 2017

Welcome to the 77 new county commissioners that were elected in Minnesota this year! With a total of 447 commissioners in our state, this new group of elected officials will comprise just over 17% of the commissioners statewide.

One of AMC’s core functions is to provide education and training to county elected officials and staff. A key focus of our education program this year is providing resources and training for our newly elected county commissioners. We plan to provide a variety of opportunities for this new class of commissioners to connect at all AMC conferences and events, with the aim of providing opportunities for new commissioners to build relationships across the state while learning skills and information that assist them in their new roles.

We always look forward to meeting new commissioners and other elected officials at the County Government 101 conference in late January. For those who are planning ahead, we also have special breakout sessions for new commissioners at the AMC Legislative Conference on February 16-17.

Beyond new commissioners, AMC provides education and training for counties in a variety of ways and places. We are expanding our education and training program through partnerships with a wide array of consultants and experts. We are also developing new relationships with higher education institutions to build programs that meet our workforce needs. This year we plan to roll out a robust regional training plan with resources for county elected officials, managers, supervisors, and line staff. Stay tuned for more information about this new approach to locally-based training!

If you are interested in helping to shape AMC’s education and training activities, I encourage you to contact Education Director Heather Bandeen (651-789-4341 or hbandeen@mncounties.org) with your ideas.

Finally, you can find a calendar of all upcoming trainings, conferences and AMC meetings on our website. It’s easy to find from the home page, and the direct link is http://www.mncounties.org/calendar.php.
Association of Minnesota Counties
Associate Membership

AMCAM 2017

Thanks to all of our AMCAM members for their support of Minnesota Counties!
For a complete listing of company information, please visit www.mncounties.org/AMCAM.

PLATINUM
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of MN and Blue Plus
Coast2Coast Rx Card
Ehlers
Eide Bailly LLP
Galillard Capital Management
MAGIC Fund - PFM Asset Management, LLC
MCIT - Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust
Nationwide Retirement Solutions Inc./NRS
Public Financial Management, Inc. (PFM)
Ratwik, Roszak & Maloney, P.A.
S E H (Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc.)
US Communities

SILVER
Bolton & Menk, Inc.
ISG
Sicora Consulting - LeaderShip at the Helm
Springsted Incorporated
Wenck
Wold Architects and Engineers
WSB

BRONZE
Amramp
Arvig
Baker Tilly, LLP
CliftonLarsonAllen LLP
Concrete Paving Association of Minnesota
David Drown Associates
GLT Architects
ITC Midwest
Klein McCarthy Architects
Kraus-Anderson Construction Company
Minnesota Counties Computer Cooperative (MnCCC)
Minnesota Healthcare Consortium
MTM/MNET Minnesota Non-Emergency Transportation
National Insurance Services
Novel Energy Solutions
Public Employees Pension Service Association
Rtvision, Inc.
Sand Creek Group, Ltd.
Stoel Rives LLP

GOLD
Contegritiy Group, Inc.

GOLD
Contegritiy Group, Inc.

Successful plans take partnership.

Let’s talk retirement today: Thomas Jones Jr, 612-597-7631

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

February
2-3 FUTURES Task Force
6-10 MACO Annual Conference, Bloomington
10 MCIT Board of Directors
15 LPHA Legislative Committee
15 LPHA Executive Committee
16 MRC Board of Directors
16 AMC Board of Directors
16-17 AMC Legislative Conference, St. Paul
20 PRESIDENTS DAY (AMC Office Closed)
22 MACSSA Committees
23 MACCAC Committees
23 MACSSA General Membership
23 MWCA Operations Committee
24 MACCAC Board of Directors
25 - March 1 NACo Legislative Conference, Washington, D.C.

March
10 MCIT Board of Directors
10 MACA Legislative Meeting
15 MRC Board of Directors
22-24 MSSA Annual Conference & Training Expo, Minneapolis
22 LPHA Legislative Committee
22 LPHA Executive Committee
22 MACSSA Committees
22 MWCA Committees
23 LPHA Day at the Capitol
23 MACCAC Committees
23 MACSSA General Membership
23 MWCA Operations Committee
24 MACA Executive Committee
24 MACCAC Board of Directors

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President Trump took his oath of office and officially became the President on January 20, marking the beginning for Republicans to hold control of the House, Senate, and the White House. In the first week, Congressional leaders from both parties headed to the White House for the first leadership-level meeting with President Donald Trump.

President Trump Issues Executive Order on Obamacare
President Donald Trump issued an executive order Friday evening granting federal agencies the ability to use broad authority to implement and oversee the 2010 health care law. The order grants the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services and the leaders of other relevant agencies the power to “waive, defer, grant exemptions from, or delay” implementation of any provisions within the healthcare law that would fiscally burden states. It would also expand to any regulations imposed on hospitals, insurers, patients and drug and device manufacturers. The order would allow the federal government significant leeway in authorizing how states implement provisions in the law. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, for example, currently approves or denies waivers that grant states greater flexibility to craft their own systems to comply with federal regulations on Medicaid. The order lacks further details. While signing the legislation, President Trump, stated that his administration will seek a prompt repeal of the 2010 health law, and that this executive order was meant to give relief to those who are burdened by the law until it is repealed. Congressional GOP leaders, who are in the midst of working on legislation to repeal the law, praised the announcement.

President Trump’s HUD Cancels Cut in FHA Mortgage Insurance Premiums
Amid President Trump’s first hours in office, the Housing and Urban Development Department announced that it plans to cancel the mortgage insurance premium rate reduction scheduled to take effect later this month. The agency indicated that more analysis and research are required in order to assess the best future adjustments. Outgoing HUD Secretary Julian Castro of the Obama Administration said on January 9th that the federal government would cut rates by a quarter percentage point for most borrowers, beginning Jan. 27. Secretary Designee Ben Carson, Trump's nominee to lead HUD, had hinted during his Senate confirmation hearing this past week that a reversal could be coming when he said the incoming administration would re-examine the reduction. The Senate hasn’t yet acted on Carson’s nomination. FHA’s (Federal Housing Administration) Mutual Mortgage Insurance Fund, which is responsible for insuring private mortgage lenders against the risk that borrowers might default on their mortgages, has gained $44 billion in value since 2012. Despite its improved health, Republican lawmakers argue the fund is still on shaky ground.

Former Georgia Governor Perdue Nominated for Secretary of Agriculture
President-elect Donald Trump chose former Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue as his Agriculture secretary, who was considered an early front-runner in the extensive search. This is the last of President Trump’s Cabinet picks. Secretary-designee Perdue, 70, founder of a global trading company and a grain and fertilizer business, is also the first cousin of Sen. David Perdue (R-GA), an early and enthusiastic supporter of President Trump’s campaign. The former governor served from 2003 to 2011. His six-year stint was among the nation’s top producers of broiler chickens, pecans, rice and spring onions, as well as a major producer of cotton, watermelons, peaches, eggs, blueberries, sweet corn, bell peppers, tomatoes, cantaloupes and cabbage. During his two terms as governor, Perdue focused on cutting government spending while emphasizing economic development through trade. If confirmed, Perdue would become the nation’s 31st Agriculture secretary and the Trump administration’s representative on farm and nutrition policy as Congress writes a new multiyear farm bill. The current farm bill which expires on September 30, 2018, is a wide-ranging law that sets priorities and policies for agriculture, nutrition, land conservation, crop insurance, rural development and other areas. The Agriculture Department, which employees about 100,000 people across the country, is known to the general public as the agency that oversees farmers and ranchers. But the department is also the provider of food aid for the poor through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and is the meat inspector for the nation through the Food Safety and Inspection Service. The department’s Foreign Agricultural Service is responsible for promoting export of U.S. agricultural goods.

First GOP Healthcare Reform Bill Unveiled in the Senate
A healthcare reform proposal, from Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and (R-ME) Senator Susan Collins, is the first Senate replacement plan proposed this year and takes a consumer protections but fewer regulations. Under the new system, insurance coverage would likely be much less comprehensive but likely would be cheaper.

The alternate plan from Cassidy and Collins would offer people who aren’t covered — through their jobs or through Medicare, Medicaid or the Department of Veterans Affairs — a catastrophic insurance plan that would be fully covered by their state. Its coverage would be minimal compared with the current health care law’s requirements, and it would come with high deductibles. To help offset those deductibles, the plan would offer many individuals a pre-funded health savings account to help minimize initial out-of-pocket costs. It wouldn’t cover every dollar up to the deductible, Cassidy conceded, but it would allow low-income families to start accessing health services they might not currently be able to afford, given their high deductibles. The plan would also auto-enroll every eligible American. Cassidy and Collins said that would help cover even more people than under the 2010 health care law, and could lower premiums by as much as 20 percent. The proposal wouldn’t fully repeal the law and would send many of the decisions about coverage to the states. The plan would also keep in place, at least initially, many of the health care law’s revenue streams, like the unpopular Cadillac tax and the health insurance tax to pay for its changes. Collins said states that have not yet expanded Medicaid would still have the option to receive federal funding associated with that expansion.

The plan comes as Republicans in Congress continue to grapple with questions about how much of the 2010 law they can or should repeal through the so-called reconciliation process, which allows them to bypass the Senate’s 60-vote threshold. Major questions about exactly how to replace the law still loom. Senator Cassidy also suggested that keeping the health care law as an option could help Senate leadership find the 60 votes it would need to pass a replacement bill through regular order. But the bill could be a hard sell for staunch conservatives because it wouldn’t fully repeal the controversial 2010 law. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) has yet to weigh into specific proposals of the healthcare reform bill.

President Trump Initiates Freeze on Federal Regulations Pending Review
President Donald Trump asked the heads of federal departments and agencies Friday to stop adding regulations until his own appointees are able to review them. The memo was issued by White House Chief of Staff Reince Priebus and is typical when a new party takes the White House. The memo is in many ways identical to one that then-White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel sent on January 20, 2009. But the President’s repeated campaign pledges to roll back regulations could make this order and subsequent ones unique. The memo affects multiple departments with new regulations in the pipeline including: the Department of Energy’s Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy; the Department of Education, and the Department of Labor. The memo made exceptions for emergency situations or other urgent health, safety, financial or national security matters allowed by the Office of Management and Budget. It also makes exceptions for regulations implemented to meet a statutory or judicial deadline. At the EPA, the rules put on temporary hold included a federal plan for oil and gas facilities on Native American land in Utah, which has what is considered a significant economic impact. It affects two Department of Energy rules with a significant economic impact, one concerning energy conservation standards for manufactured housing. An Education Department rule to forgive student loans of borrowers if they were defrauded by their college could be delayed. The rule was finalized in October but would not go into effect until July. The department has also not finalized a proposed rule meant to increase state officials’ oversight of online college programs within their state. The department estimated the rule would affect 5.5 million students. And finally, the Labor Department’s contentious fiduciary rule has been finalized but will not go into effect until April. It could be blocked by the memo. The rule would require retirement investment advisers to put the best interests of their clients before their own interests.

Department of Transpiration Releases Report on Highway, Transit Conditions
The outgoing U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced that the new report on the state of America’s transportation infrastructure “2015 Status of the Nation’s highway, Bridges and Transit: Conditions and Performance” confirms much investment is needed to maintain the nation’s highway and transit system. This Congressionally mandated report confirms that there are significant challenges facing America’s transportation infrastructure of over the next 30 years, especially with the nation’s growing in population and increasing freight traffic. The new report also identifies an $836 billion backlog of unmet capital investment needs for highways and bridges and addressing that backlog will require $142.5 billion in combined transportation spending from state, federal and local government. In the year 2012, federal state and local governments spent $102.5 billion on transportation, which is 35.5 percent less than what was needed to improve conditions on highways and bridges. The new report also indicates that $26.4 billion is needed per year to improve the conditions of transit rail and bus systems. In 2012, only $17 billion was spent to preserve and expand transit systems. If transit investment is sustained at these levels, the nation’s overall transit system conditions are expected to decline over the next 20 years. This will increase transit system preservation backlog from $89.8 billion to $122.2 billion.

January - February 2017

Minnesota Counties
It’s official: the ballots have been counted, the results certified, and I’m happy to report that Minnesota is once again number one in voter turnout in the nation. For nine elections in a row, Minnesota was number one in the country in voter turnout. In 2014, we fell to number six. Being number one in America is saying something, and that should make us proud. It should especially make all of you, who worked tirelessly at the county and local levels, so proud for the work you’ve done to make our election system a role model for the nation. Thank you.

In my last column, I provided a snapshot of where Minnesota stood shortly before Election Day. Well, I have more good news to report. Minnesota’s turnout rate of 74.72 percent—based on Minnesota’s estimated eligible voter count of 3,972,330—is just one of several ways Minnesota voters made history this past year. Others include:

- In 2016, more Minnesotans than ever before—2,968,281 voters—cast a general election ballot.
- In 2016, more Minnesotans than ever before—3,270,734—registered to vote before Election Day.

As we begin to prepare for these challenges, additional legislative and process changes will need to be considered to effectively administer a seamless process that meets the needs of the voters without creating administrative burdens that are cost prohibitive.

Minnesota Presidential Primary in 2020
As many of you know, last year the state legislature passed bipartisan legislation moving Minnesota to a presidential primary system beginning in 2020. This was an important step toward making it easier for eligible Minnesotans to make their voices heard in the presidential nomination process, including those serving in the military, the elderly, and the disabled.

Additionally, I advocated for language in the bill that would require counties, cities and towns to be reimbursed for their costs of administering this new election, and I am happy to report that the state reimbursement requirement was included in the final bill.

My office has received a lot of questions about how the 2020 presidential primary will be administered—rightfully so, since the legislature left a lot of open questions about how this new system will work, which will be answered through the rulemaking process.

The presidential primary bill gave my office rulemaking authority to develop processes for things like absentee balloting, mail balloting, and general procedures. We are allowed to begin that rulemaking process in July, and we intend to work with all stakeholders—including counties, cities, and towns—when developing the new rules.

If you have any immediate questions or concerns about this process, please contact my Director of Government Relations, Julie Strother, at julie.strother@state.mn.us. I will continue to keep everyone updated in this column on the administration of the 2020 presidential primary as details are finalized.

I hope everyone had a Happy New Year and I look forward to seeing you on the road throughout this next year.

We Did It: Minnesota #1 in Voter Turnout Nationwide
By Steve Simon, Minnesota Secretary of State

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Minnesota led the nation in voter turnout in 2016 with 81 percent of registered voters going to the polls this past election. Minnesota also set a state record in total votes cast at 2,968,281.

While the election produced historic turnout here, not all of the traffic was at the polling places on Election Day. Nearly 23 percent of voters statewide cast ballots early - before election day either through mail voting, or in-person at county election offices throughout the state. The percentage of early voting was even higher in some of the larger, Twin Cities area counties.

A 2014 law change allowed voters to cast absentee ballots with no excuse needed and throughout the state we saw voters choosing to avoid lines at the polling places and cast a ballot early. An additional law change in 2016 allowed in-person absentee voters to directly place their ballots into the ballot tabulators during the seven days immediately preceding the election. The process was optional for counties to administer if their logistics and equipment allowed, and feedback from the counties that did offer this process was largely positive.

Voters appreciated the opportunity to ensure that their ballot was cast correctly, and it relieved a large portion of the administrative effort in processing absentee ballots by reducing unnecessary envelopes and forms. While this process was an improvement over the traditional envelope method, many counties reported that hundreds (or in the case of the larger counties, thousands) of voters voted in person in the few days before the election, causing lines at the county offices as well.

Additionally, in-person absentee voting did cause many counties administrative challenges with the large turnout of voters, particularly in counties that do not have staff solely dedicated to elections. Absentee voting takes place during the same time as second-half tax collections as well as other statutory duties of the auditor-treasurer, and some counties did experience challenges with the large voter turnout especially during the seven days before the election.

With the lines of voters fairly constant during the last few days, counties were stretched to complete other election tasks and responsibilities in a timely manner and still staff the absentee voting needs. Washington County reported that 4,000 voters voted at their counter on the last day of early voting. Across the state, counties scrambled to hire additional temporary staff to keep up with the election administration needs including absentee voting, equipment testing, supply procurement and packing and material preparation.

As counties look forward into the 2018 election and beyond, expectations are that early voting is a trend that will continue to grow and counties should prepare to adapt to the changing needs of the voting public. Projections would estimate that 30-35 percent of total votes cast in 2018 will be done early, and by the next presidential election in 2020 that figure could reach 40 percent of voters casting early ballots.

As we begin to prepare for these challenges, additional legislative and process changes will need to be considered to effectively administer a seamless process that meets the needs of the voters without creating administrative burdens that are cost prohibitive.

Early Voting Stretched County Resources in 2016 Elections
By Deborah Erickson, Crow Wing County Administrative Services Director

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Anoka County Video Recognized as 2017 Harvard Ash Center Bright Idea in Government

The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, has recognized Anoka County’s “Pie, With a Side of Property Taxes” video as part of the 2017 Bright Ideas in Government initiative. Programs from all levels of government that improve services, solve problems, and work on behalf of citizens were recognized.

Property taxes provide the bulk of funding for county government, yet few people understand how their property tax bill is determined. Anoka County’s “Pie, With a Side of Property Taxes” video makes a complicated and sometimes dry topic easy to understand. The video uses a simple pumpkin pie to demonstrate how someone’s “slice” of the overall property tax levy can change in size based on the number of slices being extracted from the pie, along with the value attributed to each slice.

The video is posted on the county’s website and also has been made available to area schools and other local government entities for use as an educational tool for citizens. (Find it at www.anokacounty.us/videos.)

The idea for the video came from an article written by Commissioner Rhonda Sivarajah, chair, Anoka County Board, in which she likened the state’s property tax system to a pie, with the size of each slice of pie dependent on multiple factors.

Public Information Specialist Erik Thorson and former Public Information Manager Martha Weaver took that “piece of the pie” concept and created a video that is both entertaining and educational,” Sivarajah said. “It’s an honor to receive this prestigious national recognition for our efforts to shed light on how our complex property tax system works. It’s another tool we use in our efforts to be transparent about how we receive and spend taxpayer dollars.”

For consideration as a Bright Idea, programs must currently be in operation or in the process of launching, have sufficient operational resources, and be administered by one or more governmental entities.

The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, education, international programs, and government innovations awards, the Center fosters creative and effective government problem solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world’s citizens. For more information, visit www.ash.harvard.edu.
MINNESOTA COUNTIES
INTERGOVERNMENTAL TRUST

2016 MCIT Award Winners

MCIT Board Chair Scott Sanders presented the 2016 MCIT Awards at the Awards Ceremony of the Association of Minnesota Counties Conference in Minneapolis on December 5.

As preventing and mitigating losses is key to the overall success and stability of MCIT, the Trust annually recognizes three counties that excel at risk management and loss control.

On behalf of the entire board, Sanders congratulated the winners.

County of the Year:
Kandiyohi County

MCIT honors the county that has set the standard of excellence in risk management and loss control. For 2016, Kandiyohi County earned this distinction. Its leaders proved to be aggressive in their efforts to educate and inform staff on techniques to mitigate exposures and provided superior assistance when claims arose.

Outstanding Performance in the Workers’ Compensation Division:
Steele County

Steele County continually improved its experience modification factor and reduced its claims in the areas of workplace injury and illness, was committed to reducing employee injuries and had an overall focus on loss control and risk management.

Criteria used to identify recipients include performance in risk management and loss control efforts, responsiveness to program initiatives, and property/casualty claims and workers’ compensation claims administration.

Member Re-elect Incumbents to Board

2016 MCIT Board election results in incumbents returning to serve for another four years.

Pursuant to the MCIT bylaws, the election of board members was conducted during the Annual Membership Meeting held Dec. 5 in Minneapolis.

Board Chair Scott Sanders, Watonwan County Commissioner, announced that three seats were up for election. Dick Downham, Cass County Commissioner; Dan Kuhns, Waseca County Commissioner; and Kevin Corbid, Washington County Deputy Administrator, were seeking re-election.

Nominating Committee member Don Diedrich, Polk County Commissioner, reported that notices advising of the election were sent to eligible individuals in October. He commented that the committee received no responses. Diedrich on behalf of the committee nominated incumbents Downham, Kuhns and Corbid.

Having no other nominations from the floor, the members in attendance unanimously voted to re-elect Downham, Kuhns and Corbid to the MCIT Board for terms that expire Dec. 31, 2020.

Graylen Carlson’s Service Recognized

During the 2016 MCIT Annual Meeting, Lac qui Parle County Commissioner Graylen Carlson was recognized for his service on the board. Carlson served on the MCIT Board of Directors for seven years after first being appointed to complete an unexpired term of a departing board member.

He was formally elected to the board in 2009 and served as the secretary/treasurer from 2013 through 2016. During his tenure, Carlson served on the Claims Committee (three years), Personnel Committee (three years), Audit Committee (one year) and Governance Committee (two years).

When thanking him for his years of service, MCIT Board Chair Scott Sanders commented on the important role Carlson played in the development and progress of the organization, specifically Carlson’s experience as a sheriff, which helped inform the board about issues related to law enforcement. Carlson commented that he is proud to have served on the MCIT Board.

Carlson’s departure creates a vacancy that will be filled pursuant to the MCIT Bylaws. The position is open to any county commissioner, auditor or auditor-treasurer of an MCIT member county.

Outstanding Performance in Property/Casualty Division:
McLeod County

McLeod County consistently improved its loss ratio through its commitment to implementing better loss control and risk management methods and its dedication to protecting county property and citizens.

Trust-building Sessions Are Like Training for Boards:
Open Meeting Law Does Not Apply

Sessions designed to build trust, communication, collaboration and the like among members of a governing board are like training for boards, according to a recent advisory opinion from the commissioner of the Department of Administration, when considering whether the sessions are subject to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law.

Pursuant to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law, all meetings of a public body must be open to the public. “Meeting” is not defined in the statute, so public entities must rely on case law and opinions from the Department of Administration to interpret the meaning of the statute.

The Minnesota Supreme Court has held that “Meetings” subject to the requirements of the Open Meeting Law are those gatherings of a quorum of more members of the governing body; or a quorum of a committee, subcommittee, board, department or commission thereof at which members discuss, decide or receive information as a group on issues relating to the official business of that governing body.1

The commissioner of the Department of Administration can interpret the Open Meeting Law and does so in advisory opinions when asked specific questions. The commissioner issued a recent opinion regarding a quorum of the governing body meeting in private with a facilitator. The sessions were designed to improve trust, relationships, communication and collaborative problem solving among members of the governing body.

Training for Boards, Not Decision Making Is Goal

The facilitated sessions included discussions intended to clarify for the members of the governing body individual expectations of the roles and responsibilities of administrators and members of the governing body. The goal was not to exchange views on substantive decisions that may come before the governing body.

The commissioner of the Department of Administration determined that a governing body can meet in private with a facilitator in sessions designed to develop trust in relationships, communication and problem solving within the governing body without violating the Open Meeting Law. The commissioner likened the facilitated sessions to training sessions designed to develop skills and knowledge to fulfill the role of the governing body.2

The members of the governing body must avoid discussing any issues specific to its official business during the session. It is conceivable that examples or general conversations about official business could arise, but to discuss or deliberate on a matter within official duties of the governing body would constitute a meeting subject to the Open Meeting Law.

The commissioner also indicated that it did not make a difference if the members of the governing body were meeting with union groups or members of the public rather than administrators. The makeup of persons participating in this type of gathering with a quorum of the governing body did not alter the analysis.

Meet MACA
By Chuck Whiting, Polk County Administrator, MACA President

Like many county acronyms we see, not all are well understood beyond their immediate users. MACA, the Minnesota Association of County Administrators, may be such a group to you. So a few introductions may be in order.

First, I'm Chuck Whiting, County Administrator for Polk County in northwest Minnesota and I've just begun my term as MACA President. When I started with Polk County in August 2012, I was introduced to my administrator and coordinator peers from counties around the state through MACA. It is a good group, over 50 of the state's 87 counties have an administrator, coordinator, manager and assistants working for their boards and leading each county's administration. Like the diversity of Minnesota's counties, the backgrounds and experiences of these administrators is wide and deep. Some are long tenured, some are new, some come from other states or cities, while many have grown up through the ranks into their position. What we all have in common though is working on the issues that face our residents, boards and staffs.

I'd like to thank county commissioners from all parts of the state for allowing your administrative staff to contribute their time, knowledge and experience to MACA, and particularly for those serving on the MACA Executive Board and various MACA committees. The MACA Board develops relevant structure and organization for county members. In turn, we assure that this time, and cost, is of value to you and your board as well as your staff. The collective energy of MACA membership helps us understand issues facing our counties, develop our skills and abilities to better serve our boards and even at times to provide support and counsel when things get difficult. Like your own administrator or coordinator, consider MACA a resource for you and your staff. I look forward to working with you over these next couple of years.

Congratulations to Bruce Messelt, Chisago County Administrator (left), for receiving this year’s “Joe Ries Excellence in County Management Award” in December. Also shown: MACA past president Roxy Traaler, Sibley County Administrator, and MACA President Chuck Whiting, Polk County Administrator.

Self-funded health insurance can mean significant savings for a county. But many often overlook a self-funded option because they:

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Larry Krohn  
Otter Tail County  
Administrator

Otter Tail County administrator, Larry Krohn, has been in county governance one month shy of 40 years! Aside from being a recognizable leader at MACA and AMC events, Larry has dedicated a great deal of his time towards inspiring a new generation of county employees through innovative ideas like the “Otter Tail County Job Exchange” program. AMC caught up with Larry at the AMC Annual Conference, where he was enjoying his last MACA meeting before retiring after the New Year.

**How did you get into county governance?**

In my college days, I worked as a night manager of the Memorial Union and vice president of the North Dakota Student Association. My experiences gave me a real taste for management and working in organizations. In my first real job, I received an invaluable business education at an information technology firm in the Twin Cities. The Senior Management took me under their “wing” and provided many training opportunities, often under fire! When I returned to home country to be with my fiancée, I started with the county and quickly saw the opportunity to implement many practices that I learned. This was in the early days of county administration and, in fact, the title was very infrequently used. At my first association meeting in 1982, there were only twelve of us present.

**How would you describe Otter Tail County?**

I like to look at the county as a community. All too often, public employees focus on the governmental and geographical aspects of the county and pass over the diversity of the residents. Otter Tail is a very diverse County. The county has the largest number of lakes in the state at 1,049. Both Maplewood and Glendalough State Parks are in the county as well as Inspiration Peak a State Wayside Park, the largest number of lakes in any county in the state, 1,049. Coupled with the lakes are 16,000 seasonal properties and 4,618 miles of shoreline. Water flows in three directions: west to the Red River; south to the Minnesota River; and east to the Mississippi. Interstate 94 and State Highways 10 and 210 provide the transportation backbone that supports the industries located in Perham, Pelican Rapids and Fergus Falls.

**Building a legacy – your legacy.**

Is there a particular hardship you’ve faced which molded your leadership role?

In the early 1980’s the county acquired and converted its tax system to a little known computer system and software from an out of state firm. That year the tax statements went out 2+ months late and the county revenues suffered. The recovery involved having staff trained in programming and writing our own software. The takeaway was that finger pointing accomplished nothing and that working together solved the problems and created greater professional depth for all the employees.

**What is the most important trait that makes a successful county employee?**

A recognition and desire to serve and make the “community” better. A positive can-do attitude is what we all want and expect but that may not come naturally to all employees. Achieving these behaviors requires managers and supervisors to participate, coach, dedicate time to guide. Success is really reflective of the management team.

**Any projects you’re really excited about?**

We are initiating a pilot project in January of our “Job Exchange.” A job exchange is a voluntary and temporary assignment and exchange of two employees from different departments to “swap” duties for a fixed period of time. This program will lessen the impact of short-staff situations, provide an opportunity for employees to gain experience, add depth to the work force and provide for skill and network development. Of course not all staff can qualify, but the county has laid out a clear process and timeline for the exchange to take place and staff are really excited. The program will not only be good for rapport, but build real skills and expand our county’s depth of knowledge.

**What do you see as current challenges and potential opportunities for counties today and into the future?**

County government for the most part is invisible. Yes, we do have visible public services such as law enforcement and snowplowing but a great deal of our services are provided directly to individuals. These services are normally delivered in a private setting with individuals identity protected. It is these services and their cost that the public often criticizes. We need to do a better job about “telling our story.” Counties should be proud of what they deliver and assist the community with. It’s ok to share our pride.

**Do you have any motivational quotes that mean something for you and the work you do?**

A couple:

- Don’t forget or overlook the law of unforeseen consequences.
- Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence.

**Why is AMC valuable to your county?**

AMC provides for networking and camaraderie. Learning what experiences our counterparts have and other organizations have had and being able to reach out to them for ideas.

**When Larry isn’t working laboriously in the Otter Tail County Government Center, you’ll find him…**

Seasonally, I could be foraging for mushrooms, brushing trails, doing a little home brewing, snowmobiling, playing keyboard in a garage band, flying a drone or enjoying the lake.

**Care to impart some advice to staff or commissioners who have just begun their public service?**

Be completely open and honest even when it can be painful or difficult. Being less than transparent will ultimately be apparent to all. Be tolerant and respect each other’s ideas and opinions. Hire the best employees you can find, embrace them and turn them loose to have an opportunity to fail. That is the real life learning experience.

**Interesting Fact:**

Otter Tail County, located in west-central Minnesota, has the largest number of lakes of any county in the state, 1,049. Coupled with the lakes are 16,000 seasonal properties and 4,618 miles of shoreline. Water flows in three directions: west to the Red River; south to the Minnesota River; and east to the Mississippi. Interstate 94 and State Highways 10 and 210 provide the transportation backbone that supports the industries located in Perham, Pelican Rapids and Fergus Falls.

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Counties need leadership that is changing fast. Counties are facing challenges today that are
an urgent and daunting as they’ve ever been. Increasing service demands and declining
revenues have created new definitions for “more with less.” The changing dynamics (and
numbers) in the workforce have created human resources challenges that everyone in positions
of authority must understand and embrace. As a commissioner or key staff member, your
leadership example is a critical element to creating a culture that attracts, retains, and motivates
a workforce that can meet today’s needs.

Facilitated by international speaker David Rabiner, this two-day Summit will be a deep dive
into local government leadership today. You’ll address the critical leadership qualities and
practices your county needs from you today. You’ll also learn the obstacles that keep competent
executive leaders and key staff from demonstrating those leadership qualities. You’ll leave with
the foundation for your own leadership plan that you can take back to your county and the
incentive to implement it.

The Summit is also an opportunity for you to meet and interact with your fellow county leaders
who share your position to lead at a higher level. You’ll develop long-term relationships
and networks that will be as beneficial to you as they will be to your employees and
colleagues.

At the Summit, you’ll learn about:

Leadership Presence
How do you present yourself as a leader? What qualities would people use to describe you? What qualities would you like people to say about you? For the most part, these qualities are not gifts, they are disciplines that can be developed. This module will discuss the qualities great leaders demonstrate to maximize their effectiveness with others and how to improve them in yourself.

Leadership Communication & Personal Skills
Great leaders are great communicators. However, there are many aspects of communication to master. While communication content and quality (transparency) are important, the quality of your communication is critical to ensure the content is received properly. This module will cover how to communicate effectively, including mastery of the ability to listen.

Leadership Assessment
Many people fail leadership not because they don’t know what the essential leadership qualities are. Indeed, they fail because of their inability to properly assess their own abilities as they apply to those qualities. What we see in the mirror is not necessarily what others see. This module covers the challenges of leadership assessment and how to address it. This module includes a powerful assessment tool that you will take in the class and take with you when you leave.

Translating Qualities into Behaviors
While we may know what leaders do, it’s harder to determine what leaders say. One of the most important processes in leadership development is to translate leadership qualities into leading behaviors and practices. This module answers the question, “What are you going to start doing, stop doing, do more of, do less of, or do differently?”

Optimizing Board Relationships
One of the biggest challenges in serving on an elected board is balancing the need to represent your primary constituency and its values against the need to work effectively as a team with other board members who may have different values that conflict with yours. This module will cover the value of balancing multiple allegiances in an optimum way. In addition, this module will help you maximize your influence on your board. ...)

Creating a Positive Work Culture
Organizations today are recognizing the growing need to create a culture that attracts and retains the highest quality workforce. That culture starts from top. This module covers how to develop that culture and create an environment that garners commitment from your employees, not just compliance.

Leadership Vision
Leaders have a vision for the future. While managers can implement the future, great leaders create a vision that inspires others and motivates them to follow. This module will cover the important quality of leadership vision and includes a powerful and memorable vision exercise.

Transparency
Leaders fail without trust. How do you build trust? This module will break trust into measurable components participants can use to diagnose trust issues and develop priorities to address them.

About the Speaker:
David Rabiner (www.rbaber.com) has been speaking and training on leadership, influence, peak performance, and organizational development for almost 25 years. His programs are fast, powerful, and fun, but more important, his presentations are substantive and practical. His common-sense approach and real-world examples are easy to listen to, and they compel change, which is the hallmark of speaking excellence.

Save the Date!
Leadership Summit
April 6 - 7, 2017 at Grand View Lodge, Nisswa

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for executive leaders
• On-campus cohort begins September 2017.
• Start your electives with a certificate program in January.

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Details & Registration Coming Soon to www.mncounties.org!
LPHA’s Outlook for 2017

By Louise Anderson, 2017 LPHA Chair, Community Health Services Administrator, Carlton-Cook-Lake-St. Louis Community Health Board

“Public health is what we, as a society, do collectively to assure the conditions in which (all) people can be healthy.”

The Future of Public Health Institute of Medicine, 1988

As the 2017 Chairperson for the Local Public Health Association of Minnesota (LPHA), I want to take this opportunity to provide a quick look at some of our priorities and activities planned for the coming year in order to support a more robust local public health system for the benefit of Minnesotans’ health.

As an affiliate of AMC, LPHA works on behalf of the public health organizations of Minnesota’s city, county and tribal governments to achieve a strong public health system that is capable of responding to the unique needs of our local communities — whether that be mental health, obesity, substance abuse, safe drinking water or more. To that end, many of our 2017 efforts will focus on initiatives that will bolster the local public health workforce and funding for core public health responsibilities.

Public Health Leadership and Workforce: As many “baby boomers” move towards retirement, we must assess the strengths and needs of our current public health leaders and look ahead to grow new leaders. LPHA will continue to pursue leadership and development opportunities for all members in order to strengthen the current and future capacity of local public health agencies.

Specifically, this year LPHA will be collaborating with partners at BlueCross to offer cultural competency training to better equip local public health staff for engaging with diverse populations, as well as with the MN Department of Health (MDH) to offer local public health and community health services administrators training on how public health narratives frame conversations on health and shape our actions. We will continue to support an MDH-sponsored webinar series for new public health directors; seek to sponsor additional management trainings for directors, supervisors and community health services administrators with our state and national partners; and are always striving to customize our meetings to provide more opportunity for peer to peer networking and sharing of best strategies and practices.

Funding for Core Local Public Health Mandates

LPHA’s legislative agenda aims to strengthen and stabilize funding for local public health agencies. Priorities include:

- Increasing Local Public Health Grant Funding. An over-reliance on local tax levies and a series of funding cuts have stressed Minnesota’s local public health system, limiting capacity to carry out state-mandated, core responsibilities and provide effective response to emerging public health issues, such as opioid abuse, mental health services, terrorist attacks and infectious disease threat (e.g., Ebola and Zika viruses, Tuberculosis). The Local Public Health Grant is one of the state’s main investments in our local public health system. LPHA supports a significant, statewide increase in funding for the Local Public Health Grant in order to restore local public health capacity for state-mandated responsibilities.

- Increasing the Medical Assistance (MA) Reimbursement for Family Home Visits. Family home visits are an effective way to prevent child maltreatment, promote health childhood development and foster self-sufficiency among Minnesota’s most vulnerable families, but the current minimum MA rate falls far short of covering the cost of services, leaving counties to rely heavily on local tax levies to fill gaps. LPHA supports increasing the minimum MA reimbursement for family home visits in order to maintain and strengthen programs that improve health and learning outcomes for children of our most at-risk families.

- Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP). SHIP strives to reduce health care costs and chronic disease rates by creating more opportunities for all Minnesotans to eat healthy, be active and live without commercial tobacoo. SHIP funding currently supports grants to local community partners in all 87 counties and 10 tribal nations and has helped to reduce Minnesota’s adult obesity rate to 26.1% - a rate firmly below our neighboring states. LPHA supports maintaining SHIP funding at $35 million per biennium to help all Minnesotans live longer, healthier lives and drive down state health care costs.

LPHA is committed to supporting local public health in its duty to promote safe and healthy communities and advance opportunities for all people to be healthy. We look forward to your partnership in this journey.

USDA Invests over $7 Billion in Minnesota’s Rural Communities since 2009

By Colleen Landkamer, USDA Rural Development State Director

As the Obama Administration came to a close, so too does my time as State Director at USDA Rural Development. Little did I know when taking this position on July 13, 2009, the great challenges our rural communities in Minnesota would face down the road.

During the last eight years we witnessed a recession, post-recession, stimulus program, sequestration and government shut-down. USDA Rural Development helped to stabilize rural communities throughout Minnesota in light of these events and worked to help guide them towards furthering their development by investing more than $7 billion across more than 40 programs.

With the Housing Crisis in 2008, there was great concern that the American dream of homeownership would be difficult to achieve for many Americans. Knowing this, USDA worked harder than ever to improve our home lending programs, and we doubled the number of home loans made annually by USDA to Minnesota families. We housed more Minnesotans with our home loan program than in years past and made even more feel secure in their current home by expanding our home repair program to hundreds of low-income residents.

USDA played a big role in growing Minnesota businesses – we supported building energy efficiency into local businesses through our Rural Energy for America program and provided extra security to lender’s business loans. We supported innovative value-added agricultural projects around the state that expanded opportunities for all the unique products we produce in Minnesota, such as: honey crisp apples, maple syrup, and sunflower oil. We pushed hard to help credit flow when it was needed most by funding non-profit organizations who turned around USDA funds into dozens of low-interest small business loans.

USDA Rural Development always excelled at financing infrastructure and during the last 8 years we continued that important work. We financed more than 330 water and wastewater projects that secured cleaner water service to tens of thousands of Minnesotans, including multiple regional projects like Lincoln Pipestone Rural Water System who received nearly $12 million in loan/grant funding for water/wastewater improvements affecting over 5,000 residents across 10 counties. Many county hospitals, community centers and libraries received grants and loans from USDA. We made historic upgrades to rural energy services and expanded broadband services across the state. As a former county commissioner, I know how important these investments are to the local level.

None of this would have been accomplished by one federal agency alone. We were fortunate to work with terrific partners along the way. I was inspired over the last eight years to see our communities come together to fulfill so many opportunities. USDA did its part, but it was those community members that came up with the ideas, filled out the paperwork and turned the shovels.

USDA is proud of our work that truly makes a difference in the lives of the proud men and women who live, work and raise families in rural America. It has been an absolute pleasure to work in the Obama Administration, at USDA and for rural Minnesotans. I thank you for that opportunity, and I know the good work of USDA Rural Development will continue on well into the future.
Association of Minnesota Counties
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES
December 4, 2016

CALL TO ORDER
President Jack Swanson called the AMC Board of Directors’ meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 4, 2016 in the Regency Room at the Hyatt Regency located in Minneapolis. Introductions.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
MOTION by Bob Moline; seconded by Marcia Ward to approve the December 4, 2016 AMC Board of Directors’ agenda as presented. The motion carried.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT
The executive committee met prior to the board meeting to review the board agenda and conduct the executive director’s performance review. President Swanson reported Julie Ring received an excellent performance review. He thanked everyone who provided feedback on the executive director’s performance via the online survey. The minutes from the October Executive Committee meeting are included in your packet.

SECRETARY/TREASURER REPORT – COMMISSIONER MARY JO MCGUIGE
MOTION by Mary Jo McGuire; seconded by Nina Huntington to approve the October 14, 2016, AMC Board of Directors’ meeting minutes as presented. The motion carried.

MOTION by Mary Jo McGuire; seconded by Darryl Yeibakk to accept the September and October 2016 Financial Statements as presented pending the AMC 2016 annual audit. The motion carried.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT – COMMISSIONER GARY HENDRICK
Proposed bylaws changes - a document outlining proposed changes to the AMC Bylaws was included in the board packet. Proposed changes were presented at the September and October Board meetings; fall district meetings; and shared with the organization’s full membership in the AMC Minnesota Counties September/October newsletter. The complete list of proposed bylaws changes are as follows:
• Changed the composition of the Board
• Changed term limits for District Directors and Policy Committee Chairs
• Added term limits for Alternate Directors and Vice Chairs
• Created processes for Board members to resign or be removed
• Limited terms as a NACo delegate
• Clarified positions Board members can serve concurrently
• Capped individual county representation on the Board
• Clarified creation of special committees and taskforces
• Changed requirement for calling a special meeting of the Board
• Reassigned election rulemaking to new committee
• Simplified Executive Director description
• Increased transparency for changes to AMC bylaws
• Changed the quorum requirement for electing District Directors and Alternate Directors
• Clarified eligibility for certain leadership positions in AMC
• Clarified the process for filling a vacancy in the positions of District Director, Alternate Director, Policy Committee Chair, and Vice Chair
• Defined county membership for District 10
• Updated mission statement

Change to Article 6: Policy Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs; Section 2. Election.
Move Public Safety to odd year

MOTION by Gary Hendrick; seconded by Linda Higgins to adopt the changes to the AMC Bylaws as presented. Motion carried.

Proposed updates to AMC Reimbursement Policy – An updated reimbursement policy document was included in the board packet. At the October AMC Board meeting, the board adopted a major change to this policy which is that AMC will reimburse county commissioners, but not county staff, for participation in AMC events. The remaining changes in this policy were made to improve clarity.

MOTION by Gary Hendrick; seconded by Larry Lindor to adopt the new AMC Reimbursement Policy as presented. Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT – JULIE RING
Association of Minnesota Counties’ Committees application process – An update on the number of applications received for AMC committees was provided. AMC is still seeking volunteers for committees. Members/staff currently serving on AMC Executive Committee were asked to speak on behalf of their committees to recruit membership.

Minnesota Association of Governments Investing for Counties (MAGIC) Fund Board of Directors’ application process – AMC is seeking two county commissioners to serve a two-year term from January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2018, on the MAGIC Fund Board of Trustees. Members interested in serving must complete an application form.

State Fair booth – The idea of AMC hosting a booth at the MN State Fair was discussed at the district meetings and the board was asked for their input. The outcome of the board discussion was the cost of constructing the booth, staffing, how to market it, does AMC want to look at it as an educational piece, pursue a partnership/spo.

Members were encouraged to bring ideas/suggestions to the January meeting for more discussion.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR’S REPORT – LAURIE KLUPAC
2016 AMC Annual Conference update – 551 are registered; 120 vendor booths are sold. Registration is open, Sunday from 4 – 6 PM.
2017 AMC meeting calendar – The 2017 AMC/affiliate meetings calendar is available at conference registration.
2017 AMCAM report – applications were sent out and are being returned. Laurie will give an update at the January Board meeting.
2017 AMC Newly Elected Officials Conference – the conference will be held on January 25-26, 2017 at the MCIT building in St. Paul. Newly elected officials can register online by December 23. More information can be found on the AMC website.

2017 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
AMC policy analysts presented feedback from district meetings, staff recommendations and ask the board to select legislative priorities for 2017. A handout listing eight priorities and their descriptions were included in the packet.

MOTION by Jim McDonough; seconded by Scott Schulte to adopt the 2017 Legislative Priorities as presented. Motion carried.

NACo/District Directors/Affiliate Members Report: NACo, District Directors, Policy Committee Chairs and Affiliate Representatives were given the opportunity to report on key issues affecting their districts/committees/associations.

MCIT – ROBYN SKYES
MCIT Executive director gave an overview of the year-end items of MCIT. Some items she talked about were conversion of their software, dividends, Driver’s Privacy Protection Act (DPPA) claims, worker’s compensation, cyber liability/security, and partnering with AMC to meet with all county boards. MCIT’s board is meeting at the conference and all are welcome to attend.

NACo UPDATE
Commissioners McDonough and Fox talked about changes to the NACo bylaws related to the voting formula. NACo is working with Nationwide on a retiree health program.

RECOGNITION OF DEPARTING DIRECTORS – PRESIDENT JACK SWANSON
The following board members were recognized for their service on the AMC board.

Joe Vene (Beltrami), District 2 director; Bob Moline (Murray), District 8 director; Barbara Marshall (Scott) District 10 director; At-Large board member Randy Maluchnik (Carver), past president 2012; NACo past president (1997) Randy Johnson (Hennepin); Nina Huntington (Steele), Health and Human Services chair; John Okeson (Becker), Transportation chair.

ADJOURN
President Jack Swanson adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.
An Action Year for Pensions?

By Matt Hilgart, AMC General Government Policy Analyst

Pension funds tend to be one of those issues that don’t often claim political spotlight and even more infrequently are subject for dinner discussions. In fact, to conquer the antipathy towards the issue, the legislature has created its own bipartisan and bicameral (senate and house) commission whose sole responsibility is to get into the nitty gritty of pensions. The commission frequently meets during session and its meetings can often go from before dinner to close to midnight. Since pensions are such a technical issue, the legislature has vested a supreme amount of trust in this commission to forge recommendations and draft legislation. If and when the latter occurs, it is often passed unanimously in both chambers.

2017 session could throw a wrinkle in all these calculations as a perfect storm of circumstances brews in the background of the public eye and could cause politicization of typically mundane issues. For starters, all 3 major pension systems (TRA, MSRS, and PERA) are facing a degree underfunding, commonly referred to as deficiency. The main reason for the current deficiencies are a turn in economic investments, and in turn a proposed decrease in the annual assumed rate of return (From 8.0% to 7.5%). In addition, a new life experience assumed rate of return (from 8.0% to 7.5%) would kick in only when the fund reaches a certain amount of funding status (right now, that estimate is as far out as 2045).

Counties can count themselves fortunate that PERA is, in general, in good shape. While a deficiency does exist, the PERA Board of Trustees is more focused on the retirement benefits/calculations, providing aid to steer the fund back to solvency or a proposed decrease in the annual assumed rate of return (From 8.0% to 7.5%). In addition, a new life experience assumed rate of return (from 8.0% to 7.5%) would kick in only when the fund reaches a certain amount of funding status (right now, that estimate is as far out as 2045).

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Mark Your Calendars

AMC Legislative Conference February 15-17, 2017
AMC Leadership Summit on April 6–7, 2017
Spring (June) & Fall (October) District Meetings
Fall Policy Conference September 14 - 15, 2017
Annual Conference - St. Cloud December 4-5, 2017