



**Transportation Policy Committee
MN Counties Insurance Trust
Saint Paul, MN
July 29, 2010**

****MEETING MINUTES****

Members present:

See attendance sheet

Chair A. Johnston called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. on July 29. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

There was a **motion** by Commissioner Strand to approve the policy committee meeting minutes from March 2009. The motion was **seconded** by Commissioner Tinklenberg and **passed** via voice vote.

Elections were held for the Policy Committee Chair and Vice Chair position. In general, policy committee chairs serve one-year terms with two-year term limits. Vice Chairs also serve one-year terms but are not subject to term limits. The Committee must annually elect a Chair and Vice Chair. Commissioner Alan Johnston was the current Chair but had served two years, so members had to elect a new Chair. **Commissioner Jane Remiger was unanimously elected as the new Chair of the Policy Committee. Commissioner Alan Johnston was elected as the Vice Chair of the committee**, a role in which he will serve until the end of his term as county commissioner in January.

Under the guidance Chair Remiger, members discussed and reviewed the platform to ensure that updates from the 2010 legislative session are reflected in the platform. Members also had the opportunity to discuss statements to add or subtract from the 2011 platform; final votes to modify the platform will now occur at the September TPC meeting in Alexandria. The following suggested platform modifications have been slated for attention during the September meeting. **Suggested changes are in RED:**

- **Suggestion to add clarification:** “AMC supports county approval of **[municipal and township]** plats adjacent to county highways”
- **Suggestion to either delete statement completely or add clarification:** “AMC supports current rules and statute as it impacts the state design standards **[that ensure optimal safety and mobility on roads throughout Minnesota] delivery of transportation projects**”
- **Suggestion to integrate two statements into one:** “AMC supports policies that are consistent in interpretation but recognize the diversity among counties” and “AMC supports policies and programs that move to streamline processes and mitigate increased costs” **New integrated statement: “AMC supports policies and programs that streamline process, control cost escalation and recognize the diversity among counties”**
- **Suggestion to modify:** “AMC supports electronic and photo monitoring data for data collection, traffic planning, driver education **and enforcement** as a means of reducing road wear, accidents and injuries”

- **Request for the definition of freight:** “AMC supports the completion of freight movement studies in each MnDOT district to enable each district to prioritize the investment for ten-ton roads and meet the needs of the state’s economy” **Freight definition in the MnDOT Statewide Rail Plan: “For the purposes of this Plan, freight is defined as the transportation of commodities/cargo, raw or finished. This is a long-range plan for statewide freight transportation by trucks on the roadways, by trains on the railways, by ships and barges on the waterways and by airplanes in the skies. Additionally, significant attention has been paid to intermodal movements of freight, where goods move from one mode to another.”**
- **Suggestion to completely remove:** “AMC supports the prohibition of any weight limit exemptions except during harvest”
- **Suggestion to completely remove:** “AMC supports the statewide enforcement, education and prosecution of Minnesota’s weight laws”
- **Suggestion to completely remove:** “AMC supports extending seasonal load limits on gravel roads by two weeks”
- **Request for AMC’s statement on medical transport:** There is currently no statement on emergency medical transport in the AMC platform.
- **Suggestion to add:** “AMC supports a statewide approach to Complete Streets that allows local communities the option of developing policies at their own pace, does not significantly alter the statewide variance process that prioritizes safety and engineering best-practices, and does not affect statewide formulaic funding for County State Aid Highways.”

Rick Kjonaas from the MnDOT Office of State Aid briefed Committee members on the following topics of relevance:

- Revisions to the MN Management and Budget grant agreements for state bond proceeds;
- Flex funds to be added to the turnback program account. Commissioner Robinson **motioned** to support MnDOT’s recommendation that flex funds be allocated to the turnback program; Commissioner Madsen **seconded** and the motion passed via voice.
- The development of MnDOT training for best value contracting; and
- The future of Complete Streets on state roads

Additional MnDOT State Aid updates will occur at the policy committee meeting in September.

As part of the Transportation Policy Committee’s yearlong effort to investigate financing techniques, funding sources and planning strategies that could be utilized to construct and maintain Minnesota’s future transportation infrastructure, AMC’s transportation policy committee and agriculture and rural development advisory committee jointly heard from speakers about the need for a true statewide freight network of roads and the strategies currently being discussed to spur that needed development as soon as possible. Al Goodman, Chair of the MN County Engineers Association’s 10-ton Committee, Margaret Donahoe, Executive Director of the MN Transportation Alliance, and Adam Chelseth, Lobbyist for the MN Trucking Association, all participated in the discussion by sharing the unique views of their respective membership.

There being no further business, the Committee adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Ryan O’Connor – AMC Policy Analyst