

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Thursday, January 16, 2025

This meeting was conducted in-person and by electronic means. The League used Zoom to conduct the virtual option for this meeting.

Members Present: Justin Miller (Lakeville), Wendy Berry (West St. Paul), Courtney Johnson (Carver), Jenny Max (Nisswa), Phil Kern (Delano), Julie Maas-Kusske (Maple Plain), Scott Neal (Edina), Audrey Nelsen (Willmar), Larry Odebrecht (Stillwater), Jorge Prince (Bemidji), Clinton Rogers (Janesville), Evan Vogel (Cambridge), and Pat Baustian (CGMC)

Members Present Remotely: John Mulder (Hermantown), Dan Buchholtz (Metro Cities) and Brian Heck (MAOSC)

Members Absent: Sharon Hanson (Marshall), HwaJeong Kim (St. Paul) and Emily Koski (Minneapolis)

Staff Present: Luke Fischer, Pat Beety, Ed Cadman, Anne Finn, Dan Greensweig, Mark Ruff, Julie Liew, Madison Hagenau, Ted Bengtson, Craig Johnson, Daniel Lightfoot, Beth Johnston, Owen Wirth, Tori Kee, Annie Coyle, Donyelle Mikacevich, Lisa Sova, Jenn Poppen, Amber Eisenschenk, Kara Coustry, Rachel Carlson, Laura Honeck, Ashley Edwardson, Ari Bloom, Rachel Walker, Adriana Temali, Katie Davidson, Libby Brandl, Rebecca Schwemmer, Greg Van Wormer and Jammie Franklin

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance (**Roll Call**)
2. Presentation / General Communications
 - 2.1 Milestone: 20 years Paul Merwin Litigation Attorney
The Board recognized Paul Merwin's 20 years of service. Dan Greensweig, LMCIT Administrator, thanked Paul for his dedicated service as a land use litigator and highly valued environmental lawyer and noted his more recent work overseeing the League's Municipal Amicus Program.
 - 2.2 Introduction of new employees: SaraJo Metros HR and Learning Department Coordinator; Rebecca Schwemmer Finance and GC Department Coordinator; Mitchell Walther Litigation Law Clerk; Sarah Sauer GC Law Clerk
The Board received introductions and welcomed the new hires as follows:
 - Co-worker Craig Johnson, on behalf of supervisor Anne Finn, introduced Senior Intergovernmental Relations Pierre Willette

- Supervisor Donyelle Mikacevich introduced HR and Learning Department Coordinator SaraJo Metros
- Supervisor Debra Sisneros introduced Finance and GC Department Coordinator Rebecca Schwemmer
- Amber Eisenschenk, on behalf of supervisor Pat Beety, introduced GC Law Clerk Sarah Sauer
- Supervisor Julia Kelly introduced Litigation Law Clerk Mitchell Walther

2.3 Update on Leading with Intention in DEI Workshop

The League's DEI Coordinator Ari Lee shared an update with the Board on the success of the "Leading with Intention in DEI" virtual workshop held in December. This free, 2.5-hour workshop had 26 participants, with Minneapolis being the largest and Rothsay being the smallest city represented. Ari shared feedback that there was a desire expressed for a deeper dive on more specific topics to continue building on the foundational first workshop.

2.4 Update on PATROL

Loss Control Program Coordinator Ashley Edwardson shared an update with the Board on recent improvements to PATROL - Peace Officer Accredited Training Online. PATROL serves 378 law enforcement agencies and 8,067 officers. Edwardson described the transition to a new online training platform hosted by Benchmark Analytics and thanked her support team. System improvements resulted in an ADA focused platform with improved user interactions, reduced administrative burden, a simplified billing process, and an overall modernized system that better serves officers.

3. Approval of Consent Items

(All items listed under Consent, unless removed from Agenda in item 3, shall be approved by one motion)

3.1 November Minutes

3.2 Executive Director Performance Review Agreement

3.3 Revisions to the LMC Board Handbook and Policy Committee policy

Vogel made a motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Maas-Kusske. The motion carried.

4. Action Items

4.1 Approve LMCIT Board Appointments

Fischer explained the timing of this was expedited such that the appointee could participate and contribute at the February Trust Board retreat. He reported that the Executive Committee followed an appointment process prescribed in the Board Handbook. They considered nine applicants from across the state and selected Delano City Administrator Phil Kern from a strong pool of candidates. Fischer explained that if Kern was appointed to the Trust Board, he would need to resign from this Board by March leaving his seat vacant a couple of months early.

Nelson made a motion to appoint Phil Kern to the Insurance Trust Board, seconded by Odebrecht. Kern abstained. The motion carried.

4.2 Adopt Revised Capital Asset Policy

Ruff with Ferris explained to the Board that the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) issued guidance to address capitalization requirements for capital assets that are significant in the aggregate. The League's current policy only addressed a threshold for individual capital asset purchases but not group purchases. Ruff explained that our auditors recommended we revise our capital asset policy to include group purchases and to set the capital threshold for group purchases at \$50,000.

Maas-Kusske made the motion to adopt a revised Capital Asset Policy, seconded by Prince. The motion carried.

5. General Updates

5.1 Briefing on Elected Leaders Institute

Learning Manager Temali gave an update to the Board on the programs and initial attendance stats for next month's Elected Leaders Institute. Explaining these programs are for mayors and city council members, Temali gave an overview of both tracks - the Foundational Program in Mankato, Plymouth and Alexandria, and the Advanced Program more focused on leadership development in Plymouth and Alexandria. Temali also thanked members of the Executive Committee for their participation on the experience panel.

Prince inquired whether the League's welcome letter (a new endeavor) contributed to an increase in registration to the Foundational Program. Communications and Events Director Liew said she could ask attendees of the event, but it was difficult to know the impact of a variety of marketing efforts at this time. The after-event survey will better inform reasons for attendance.

After receiving clarification that the "Union Negotiation" session breakout included all attendees, Maas-Kusske asked staff to consider teeing up an alternately focused breakout session geared specifically for cities that do not have unions.

Prince asked whether the League compiles attendance statistics to which Temali confirmed and mentioned searching for more meaningful ways of drilling into available data. Fischer added that the Secretary of State has no good data set on newly elected officials for use in determining attendance statistics.

5.2 Legislative Session Preview

Finn provided an update to Board on the status of the Legislative Session. She explained that although there was a \$616 million surplus this past November, the next biennium has an anticipated \$5.1 billion deficit. Finn relayed that the Senate is presently tied, and a power-sharing agreement was

put in place until the seat of a recently deceased democratic Senator could be filled via special election on January 28. Meanwhile, the trial of Woodbury Senator Mitchell (D) begins January 27, which means this seat will be absent during her multi-day trial and the Senate will be tied again. The Senate has introduced over 200 bills already.

Finn reported that the House was evenly split 67/67 after the election, which has led to a dispute over what constitutes a quorum. Even though the Roseville (D) member was not sworn in due to a residency issue, neither side has 68 votes necessary to pass a bill. The republicans have declared a majority and begun acting as if in full session, but the democrats have not shown up, therefor denying a quorum. A special election on January 28 will determine the Roseville seat, but there has also been controversy over Shakopee's election in which the courts decided the democrat won with a 14-vote margin, even though 20 absentee ballots had been lost. Finn explained that the republicans could refuse to seat the Shakopee representative, which would again tie the House, or return the republicans to the majority. House democrats have sued the republicans for convening and "taking over" the House – those arguments expected soon.

Finn shared that the League issued a press release of its legislative priorities, which were adopted by the Board last year. She explained that staff will continue to meet with legislators and attend hearings.

Vogel inquired as to whether fiscal cuts could impact duty disability funding to which Finn responded that IGR already met with the bipartisan group who worked on this bill to clarify cities' position that it would be unacceptable to turn those benefits back to local property taxpayers. Vogel added that if cities were to be on the hook for duty disability again, those bills would be much larger given the six-month treatment period.

Echoing Maas-Kusske, Vogel thanked IGR staff for continuing to advance League member priorities by being present when discussions take place on topics important to cities. Johnson agreed and inquired whether a lawsuit by the republicans over the rapid scheduling of special elections was still active. This matter goes before the Supreme Court next week. Finn added that in one case, candidates only had a 24-hour window to file, complicated by the fact that a member resigned without being seated, when the special election should have been called after beginning the session with a vacant seat.

5.3 LMCIT

Operations Manager Honeck reported that registration for the Spring Workshops is open. Workshops consist of several tracks and are held in eight locations throughout the state, starting in March and going through April with 1200 - 1300 attendees anticipated.

- 5.4 Legal
Cadman informed the Board that the Minnesota Association of City Attorneys Annual Conference occurs on February 6 and 7.
- 6. Affiliate Organizations Update
 - 6.1 Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities
Baustain cited their top three priorities including funding EMS, a public infrastructure bonding bill and a push for LGA with an inflationary index.
 - 6.2 Minnesota Association of Small Cities
Heck mentioned a lunch and learn held last week and offered kudos to the IGR team.
 - 6.3 Metro Cities
Buchholtz reported that Metro Cities has adopted their legislative priorities focused on local control and PFAS. He noted they are watching the state budget process for potential reductions in aid.
- 7. President's Message
Miller recommended Patrick Lencioni's books and shared a handout on creating, over-communicating and reinforcing clarity throughout an organization
- 8. Executive Director Update and Adjournment
Fischer wished Research Manager Amber Eisenschenk, Happy Birthday, noting that her team fields over 5,000 inquires annually. Fischer reiterated that the League is here to serve its members and thanked the IGR team for their continued and unwavering efforts to advocate for member cities even in these challenging times.

Respectfully submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Fischer', written in a cursive style.

Luke Fischer, Executive Director