

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 18th, 2024
Amended 8/15/2024

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), Courtney Johnson (Carver), Jenny Max (Nisswa), Sharon Hanson (Marshall), Phil Kern (Delano), Julie Maas-Kusske (Maple Plain), John Mulder (Hermantown), Scott Neal (Edina), Audrey Nelsen (Willmar), Jorge Prince (Bemidji), Clinton Rogers (Janesville), Evan Vogel (Cambridge), Dan Buchholtz (Spring Lake Park) and Brian Heck (Montgomery)

Members Absent: Wendy Berry (West St. Paul), HwaJeong Kim (St. Paul), Emily Koski (Minneapolis), Larry Odebrecht (Stillwater) and Pat Baustian (Luverne)

Staff Present: Luke Fischer, Pat Beety, Kellie Sundheim, Ed Cadman, Anne Finn, Dan Greensweig, Mel Reeder, Mark Ruff, Lisa Schaefer, Julie Liew, Jen Wolf, Madison Hagenau, Ted Bengtson, Craig Johnson, Beth Johnston, Nathan Jesson, Owen Wagner, Joyce Hottinger, Elise Heifort, Annie Coyle, Amber Eisenschenk, Alida Tieberg, Adriana Temali, Rachel Carlson, Katie Davidson, Debra Sisneros and Kelsey Larson

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance (**Roll Call**)
2. Presentation / General Communications
 - 2.1 New employee introductions: Sean Steen (IT Support Technician), Erin Holznagel (Public Safety Program Coordinator), Elise Heifort (HR Member Consultant), Beth Johnston and Owen Wirth (IGR Representatives) and Kelsey Larson (Learning Designer)

Since the Board last met in May, we have welcomed a number of new employees to the League. The Board was introduced to the following new employees: Sean Steen (IT Support Technician), Erin Holznagel (Public Safety Program Coordinator), Elise Heifort (HR Member Consultant), Beth Johnston and Owen Wirth (IGR Representatives) and Kelsey Larson (Learning Designer). Welcome to the League!
 - 2.2 Board Member Introductions

Please answer the following question during your introduction:
What accomplishment are you most proud of since you started working with your city?

Members of the Board and staff made introductions and welcomed new Board members to their first meeting. The new Board members include:

 - Julie Maas-Kusske, Mayor, Maple Plain
 - John Mulder, City Administrator, Hermantown
 - Jorge Prince, Mayor, Bemidji
 - Pat Baustian, Mayor, Luverne (CGMC)
 - Dan Buchholtz, City Manager, Spring Lake Park (Metro Cities)

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 May 18, 2024 meeting minutes

3.2 Annual Approval of Revisions to LMC's *Records and Data Practices Policy*

Buchholtz made a motion to approve the items on the consent agenda, seconded by Rogers. Motion carried with Prince abstaining.

4. Action Items

4.1 Consider Citizens League proposal to study Supporting and Strengthening Public Service

The employment landscape has been evolving the past number of years and most cities are facing challenges in hiring and retaining staff.

Fischer noted that at a recent meeting of the Big Four - an association made up of the League, Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC), Minnesota School Board Association (MSBA), and the Minnesota Association of Townships (MAT) – this topic was discussed, and common challenges and themes were identified. Following that conversation, AMC and LMC connected with the Citizens League to potentially establish a partnership to conduct a study that would help to build an understanding around the unique challenges and barriers to public service facing different communities across the state.

Citizens League Executive Director Jake Loesch provided a bit of background on his organization and shared a proposal with the Board for the “Supporting and Strengthening Public Service Project” that would be led by the Citizens League in close coordination with LMC and AMC.

The data for the survey will be collected from a diversity of voices using different models such as online surveys, going out into the community and collaborating with other organizations. Vogel agreed that the timing and focus of the proposal is in sync with the challenges facing MN cities. It is hard to get people interested in working in local government. He also mentioned that going out into high schools and colleges is important so they can learn about job opportunities in cities before choosing a career path.

Hanson likes the partnership between the cities and counties. They both have similar needs and often compete in filling similar positions.

Vogel made a motion to accept staff's recommendation to consider a potential partnership to complete a study with AMC and the Citizens League, seconded by Buchholtz. Motion carried.

4.2 2024 Legislators of Distinction

Every year the Board approves a list of legislators for recognition, compiled by IGR staff at the conclusion of the legislative session. IGR staff use a list of criteria to consider and determine deserving candidates of this recognition. Finn and Bengtson highlighted some of the criteria which includes being accessible to League staff, supporting policies important to cities, and seeking input from the League on issues impacting cities. Legislators have been known to proudly display this recognition in their offices and we contact their local media outlets to let their home districts know that they have been honored. This year the Board was asked to approve the list of 25 legislators for recognition as LMC Legislators of Distinction. The list of legislators to receive that recognition was included in the board packet.

Neal made a motion to approve the list of legislators for recognition as League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) Legislators of Distinction as submitted, seconded by Mulder. Motion carried.

5. General Updates

5.1 2024 Safety & Loss Control Workshop Summary

R. Carlson gave a brief update on the 2024 Loss Control Workshops. There were originally 9 locations planned, but two had to be cancelled due to weather. Over 600 attendees joined us for the workshops, representing 210 cities.

She shared that attendee feedback was generally positive. There was a strong partnership this year with MnDOT and OSHA which lead to the success of the workshops. The topics that received particularly high remarks included: Timely Tech Topics for Busy People, In Pursuit: Public Safety Wellness, City Workplace Safety, and Time for an ADA Checkup.

5.2 LMC's Local Government Salary Survey

The League has been offering a salary survey for many years that allows cities and counties to compare salaries and benefits of their staff to those of other city and county organizations throughout Minnesota. Joyce Hottinger gave an update on the salary and benefits survey and how it has changed in recent years. We started working with Gallagher on the current iteration of the survey after needing to find a new survey vendor and finding no good off-the-shelf options. Gallagher created the current survey, which launched in July of 2023 and features a robust benefits section and over 200 benchmark jobs. The costs for the survey are shared between LMC and the Association of Minnesota Counties, so we can offer access for free to our participating member cities.

6. Affiliate Organizations Update

6.1 Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities
No update provided

6.2 Minnesota Association of Small Cities
Heck noted that the association has also recommended awarding legislators of distinction to Senators Rasmussen and Seeburger and Representatives

Robbins and Horenstein. They also welcomed two new board members in June, Mary Kennedy from Blue Earth and Jeff Pilon from Nowthen.

6.3 Metro Cities

Buchholtz noted that Metro Cities is starting their policy development process this month too.

7. President's Message

7.1 2024 – 2025 Committee Appointments

Miller talked about the 2024-2025 committee appointments. Prince has been appointed to the Finance committee, Hanson has been appointed to the Building Company Board and Neal and Vogel have been appointed to serve on the Municipal Amicus Program (MAP) board.

8. Executive Director Update and Adjournment

Fischer said that Pat Baustian (CGMC) wanted to be here, but his city had a goal setting session today. He noted that the CGMC's summer conference is later this month in St. Joseph and Waite Park.

He mentioned that the board retreat is September 18th through the 20th and that the executive director and president from the Kentucky League of Cities will be joining us and doing a presentation. President Miller suggested doing a strengths exercise before the retreat so Jennifer Ford with StrengthsFinder will be sending out a survey beforehand and we will cover the findings during the retreat.