

Aitkin County Board of Commissioners
Request for County Board Action/Agenda Item Cover Sheet



To: Chairperson, Aitkin County Board of Commissioners Date: 2-4-14

Via: Patrick Wussow, County Administrator

From: Patrick Wussow, County Administrator

Title of Item:

MRCC Priorities

Requested Meeting Date: 2-11-14 Estimated Presentation Time: _____

Presenter: Roxy Traxler, Interim County Administrator

Type of Action Requested (check all that apply)

- For info only, no action requested
- For discussion with possible action
- Let/Award Bid or Quote (attach copy of basic bid/quote specs or summary of complex specs, each bid/quote received & bid/quote comparison)
- Approve/adopt proposal by motion
- Authorize filling vacant staff position
- Request to schedule public hearing or sale
- Request by member of the public to be heard
- Item should be addressed in closed session under MN Statute _____
- Approve under Consent Agenda
- Adopt Ordinance Revision
- Approve/adopt proposal by resolution (attach draft resolution)
- Other (please list) _____

Fiscal Impact (check all that apply)

- Is this item in the current approved budget? Yes _____ No _____ (attach explanation)
- What type of expenditure is this? Operating Capital Other (attach explanation)
- Revenue line account # that funds this item is: _____
- Expenditure line account # for this item is: _____

Staffing Impact (Any yes answer requires a review by Human Resources Manager before going to the board)

- Duties of a department employee(s) may be materially affected. Yes No
- Applicable job description(s) may require revision. Yes No
- Item may impact a bargaining unit agreement or county work policy. Yes No
- Item may change the department's authorized staffing level. Yes No



Supporting Attachment(s)

- Memorandum Summary of Item
- Copy of applicable county policy and/or ordinance (excerpts acceptable)
- Copy of applicable state/federal statute/regulation (excerpts acceptable)
- Copy of applicable contract and/or agreement
- Original bid spec or quote request (excluding complex construction projects)
- Bids/quotes received (excluding complex construction projects, provide comparison worksheet)
- Bid/quote comparison worksheet
- Draft County Board resolution
- Plat approval check-list and supporting documents
- Copy of previous minutes related to this issue
- Other supporting document(s) (please list) _____

Provide (1) copy of supporting documentation NO LATER THAN Wednesday at Noon to make the Board's agenda for the following Tuesday. (If your packet contains colored copies, please provide (4) paper copies of supporting documentation as we do not have a color printer or copier.) Items WILL NOT be placed on the Board agenda unless complete documentation is provided for the Board packets.

From: Dan Larson <dan27@frontiernet.net>
Date: February 3, 2014 7:11:35 PM CST
Subject: MRCC Priorities

MRCC Members:

We are in the process of prioritizing issues the MRCC will address in the 2014 Legislative Session. We ask you to go over the attached list with your board, **and prioritize the top seven most critical issues to your county beginning with the most important.** *The list is the outcome of the discussion at the MRCC board meeting on Thursday. The MN Assn. of County Land Commissioners legislative goals for the session were offered in total, and I have added that list as a second attachment.*

After discussion, please e-mail your approved list to me – **subject line MRCC Priorities.** We are on a tight timeline and responses need to be compiled - *so please do this soon.*

We will finalize the MRCC priority list at the next MRCC board meeting on Feb. 25th, in St. Paul.

Thanks for your attention to this!

Dan Larson
MRCC Administrator
612-210-2493

Sue Bingham

From: Patrick Wussow [patrick.wussow@co.aitkin.mn.us]
Sent: Tuesday, February 04, 2014 9:21 AM
To: Sue Bingham
Subject: Fwd: MRCC Priorities - ADDENDUM
Attachments: Legislative Issues 1-28-14.docx; ATT00049.htm

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Dan Larson <dan27@frontiernet.net>
Date: February 4, 2014 8:57:27 AM CST
Subject: Re: MRCC Priorities - ADDENDUM

MRCC Members:

I regret to admit I neglected to include the attached document in the message I sent yesterday. This is a list of issues submitted by McLeod County department heads. Please add this to any discussion your board has on priorities. Some of the issues coincide with those on the MRCC list - but there are some new ones we hope you will consider.

Other issues that have been forwarded include:

- Simplifying complex human service eligibility process
- Reform probation services funding
- Support MAGIC Act
- Strengthen / Streamline Local Public Health Act

Apologies for this oversight.

MRCC Members:

We are in the process of prioritizing issues the MRCC will address in the 2014 Legislative Session. We ask you to go over the list and attachment with your board, **and prioritize the top seven most critical issues to your county beginning with the most important.**

After discussion, please e-mail your approved list to me – **subject line MRCC Priorities.** We are on a tight timeline and responses need to be compiled - so please do this soon.

We will finalize the MRCC priority list at the next MRCC board meeting on Feb. 25th.

- 1) **One to one mitigation on road projects** in wetland areas. Advocate for a higher bonding level than the Governor's recommendation of \$10 million for Local Road Improvement Program. Mn/DOT recommended \$100 million. We're working on a justifiable number to recommend.
- 2) **Protect Greater MN Parks and Trails Legacy funding** from metro effort to change the funding formula.
- 3) **More bonding for Local Road Improvement Program** than the Governor's bonding recommendation of \$10 million. Mn/DOT recommended \$100 million. We're working to build the case for a higher recommendation.
- 4) **Comprehensive transportation funding** passage.
- 5) **Renewable Energy** – wind credits, other.
- 6) **Wetland mitigation relief outside the watershed** service area.
- 7) **Exempt assessors from continuing education** requirement imposed in 2013, for counties with populations below (70,000?).
- 8) **Workforce Housing Assistance** - Contractors can't build affordable housing cheaply enough to make a profit.
- 9) **Clean Water Act** – The EPA has undertaken a process to revise the "waters of the U.S." definition within the Clean Water Act. The proposed regulation is currently undergoing interagency review at the Office of Management & Budget.
- 10) **Relax property tax late fees.**
- 11) **Continue MA payments for inmates** in county jails (we are clarifying if this issue has already been addressed).
- 12) **DHS must provide multiple provider options** to counties for client needs.
- 13) **Northern Counties Land Use Board priorities:** Invasive Species, Shoreland ordinance, SSPI, Conservation Easement, One Plan, One Watershed District.
- 14) **Land Commissioner Priorities:** *See attachment

Mark Jacobs
Aitkin County
Land Commissioner



To: County Board
CC: County Administrator
Date: 1/24/2014
Re: MACLC Legislative Goals

2014 Legislative Goals

Below are the initiatives that the MN Land Commissioners intend to pursue this legislative session. If approved, these items will increase efficiency, revenue potential, and clear up gray areas in statute.

If you have questions or concerns, please relate them to me.

1. **Allowing all counties the authority to convey conservation easements on tax-forfeit lands.** *(Currently only St.Louis County has the authority)*
2. **Amending MS 94.3495 by removing the trust fund land from exemption, changing who does the appraisals to the local governing body, and removing the 40-year reversionary stipulation.** *(Land exchanges involving trust fund land require costly appraisals when compared to other State lands and currently the County can't sell land acquired from the State for a period of 40-years!)*
3. **Amending MS 282.018 to allow riparian lands that are a lot of record in a platted subdivision at the time of forfeiture to be sold same as lots 150 feet or less.** *(if a riparian lot in a plat with >150' of frontage forfeits, it requires legislative approval to sell)*
4. **Amending MS 282.04 by changing the informal timber permit maximum limit from \$3,000 to 500 cords, removing the \$200.00 threshold for scaling products from an informal permit** *(DNR already has a 500-cord volume limit; a dollar limit is subject to fluctuation and therefore is less stable)*
5. **Removing the public auction requirement of gravel leases valued over \$12,000.** *(This is an old law that has limited the use of our gravel pits on large road projects)*

Thank you.

2014 Legislative issues submitted by Department Heads

Administration

1. Incorporating or expanding the local government sale tax exemption to include joint powers boards where the majority of members on an individual basis are already tax exempt. There should be an incentive to participate in collaborative efforts not a punishment in the form of having to pay sales tax. MN Statute 297A.
2. Workers' Compensation has been expanded to include post-traumatic stress disorder. This is the first time that workers' compensation has been expanded to include mental only injuries and increase Workers' Compensation costs for Counties. In an effort to better manage these costs it would be more appropriate to have claims grouped together based on a per incident basis rather than a number of claims based on a per employees basis. MN Statute 176.
3. Currently the County needs to seek special legislation, publish a resolution, conduct a public comment period, adopt the resolution by 80% and then within 30 days a petition signed by 10% would require a regular or special election if the County wishes to change the ROWE Officers (Auditor, Attorney, Sheriff and Recorder) from elected to appointed. This process is cumbersome, time consuming and may be costly. MN Statute 375A.
4. Seeking relief from the mandate that the County publish meeting minutes and other official County business in a local newspaper. Fewer and fewer people are relying on the printed newspaper for their news and information source with that in mind the County would like to be able to use their current website for posting of official County business or have the State designate a centralized website for posting of information relative to County business. Mn Statute 331A. (Request has been made to identify costs the County incurs for this).
5. Seek relief from the Drivers Privacy and Protection Act (DPPA) Federal law which has resulted in numerous individuals filing lawsuits against McLeod County for unauthorized look up of driver license data by County staff. These individuals are seeking compensation in the amount of \$2,500 for each unauthorized look up and Counties are incurring considerable cost to defend.

Assessors Office

1. No issues to submit

Highway Department

1. Increased Transportation Funding:
 - MCHD supports increases in long term, sustainable, transportation user fees that are dedicated to the Highway User Tax Distribution Fund (HUTDF) for transportation purposes could include:
 - Gas Tax including indexing or other inflationary increases
 - Motor Vehicle Registration fees
 - Motor Vehicle Sales Tax
 - Leased Vehicle Sales Tax dedication
 - Gross Receipts Tax on petroleum distribution
 - General Sales Tax Increases
 - MCHD recommends that if there is significant new transportation revenue, all transportation revenue directed to the County State Aid Highway Fund, regardless of source (excluding the leased vehicle sales tax), be split with 68% distributed according to the apportionment sum formula and 32% distributed using the excess sum formula. This recommendation would only be enacted in conjunction with significant new transportation revenue.
 - MCHD supports providing transportation revenue through traditional general and trunk highway bonding programs to address:
 - Local Bridge program
 - Funding for the Local Road Improvement Program including:
 - Routes for Regional Significance
 - Rural Road Safety
 - Railroad Grade Crossing safety funding
 - Local Road Wetland Replacement program
 - Greater MN Transit
 - Safe routes to school
 - Trunk highway bonding for priority trunk highway infrastructure
 - MCHD supports efforts to capture revenue from all highway users, including hybrid or electrical vehicles
2. Other Issues:
 - MCHD opposes any reductions, either temporary or permanent, in transportation funding programs including the gas tax, the Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP), Local Option taxes, tab fees, etc.
 - MCHD opposes the diversion of Highway User Tax Distribution Fund revenues to non-highway purposes.
 - MCHD opposes increased funding of ATV and snowmobile trails out of the Highway User Tax Distribution Fund
 - MCHD supports a portion of the funds raised by the 3/8 percent sales tax for the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Constitutional Amendment be authorized to reimburse local road authorities for expenses incurred in implementing new NPDES and other environmental permitting requirements for road and bridge construction activities.
 - MCHD Supports the streamlining of Federal Aid Project implementation by enabling MnDOT to host "Fund Swapping" to allow Federal Aid Funds to be bundled to larger projects and/or larger local agencies who then give up an amount of state aid dollars to the ATP process.
 - MCHD supports efforts to clarify the requirements when advertising for bid a highway project to clearly allow Counties the ability to establish web advertising in lieu of print publication as the only required official notice to bidders. (331A.03)

- MCHD supports revision to Minnesota Statutes 177 so that Prevailing Wages and Truck Rental Rates will be frozen on the date of Advertisement for Bids to prevent bid amendments and confusion by all involved regarding wage requirements for the project.
- MCHD supports efforts to use new technology for the purpose of creating asset inventory. The expense of some new technology often exceeds the capabilities of local governments, so partnering with State and/or Federal agencies should be encouraged. The benefit of geospatial data to create and manage transportation asset management tools is a critical cost component for local governments.

Information Technology Department

1. No issues to submit

Parks Department

1. Support legacy funding for Greater MN Parks and Trails

Recorders Office

1. No issues to submit

Solid Waste Department

1. Increase Solid Waste Grant and Loan Program to enable counties to meet State mandates by the MPCA
2. Increase SCORE Funding
3. Appeal Metro Waste Restriction
4. Reduce duplication of reporting requirements
5. Support Solid Waste Planning jurisdiction for counties willing to take all the “risk” associated with State mandates relative to processing/receiving HHW and SW Recycling activities.
6. Center product stewardship legislation around existing government waste and recycling programs.

Veterans Services

1. No issues to submit