



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

SA
Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: January 24, 2017

Title of Item: Annual Goal setting discussion

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA	Action Requested:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested
<input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA	<input type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item
<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY	<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing* <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>

Submitted by: Patrick Wussow, Interim County Administrator	Department: Administration
--	--------------------------------------

Presenter (Name and Title): Patrick Wussow	Estimated Time Needed: 15 minutes
--	---

Summary of Issue:

Question: Does the County Board want to set Goals and objects for the County Board and staff for 2017. It may be to late in the process to create legislative goals.

We have included the Aitkin County 2009 Legislative Platform and the Association of MN Counties 2017 Legislative Priorities as background information for you to review.

In my previous work history with Aitkin County, previous County Boards and staff found it useful to identified objectives and goals for the Board to adopt and review on an annual basis. I am inquiring if the Board members would like staff to prepare department specific goals and objectives for 2017 and future years.

i believe County Board members would find a similar process useful for themselves to complete prior to a new County Administrator coming on staff.

This is a discussion item.

Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:

Recommended Action/Motion:

Financial Impact:

Is there a cost associated with this request? Yes No

What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$

Is this budgeted? Yes No *Please Explain:*

Aitkin County 2009 Legislative Platform

DRAFT

Top Five

1. **Local Road and Bridge Improvement Program**
Aitkin County strongly supports continuing state funding of the following local transportation programs: Local Bridge Bonding, Local Road Improvement Program – Rural Road Safety Program and Routes of Regional Significance Program and Wetland Replacement for Local Transportation Projects. These programs provide a steady source of much needed funding for local transportation projects.
2. **Great River Road Bonding**
Aitkin County strongly supports State of Minnesota financial assistance to complete the third phase of the construction and paving of the Great River Road National Scenic Byway in Aitkin County. The projected cost of the project is \$1.6 million.
3. **Eliminate County Sales Tax on Purchases**
In 2007, Aitkin County paid approximately \$192,000 of sales tax. Additionally, all of our cities and townships are paying sales tax adding to this large payment to the state of Minnesota. Aitkin County supports the elimination of county sales tax on the basis that government should focus on working together rather than big government charging little government to function and operate within the state. This user fee was not established to redistribute taxpayer dollars among governmental entities.
4. **Tribal Court Ordered Child Placements**
The Agreement on Indian Child Welfare dated February 22, 2007 obligates local social service agencies (counties) to pay for the cost of foster care of Indian children who are placed by tribal court order. Aitkin County supports legislative action to remove the costs of tribal court ordered child placements from the property tax levies of Minnesota counties as it creates disproportionate property tax impacts on Minnesota counties.
5. **Impaired Waters**
Aitkin County proposes that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency be limited in designating additional impaired waters until those already designated are restored. Additionally, funding for this program should be from general funds and not through direct property tax assessments on septic systems. The proposal to charge a tax adds additional bureaucracy, provides minimal improvement to northern Minnesota, and avoids issues of deficient funding for nonconforming or failing individual sewage treatment systems, which is a bigger issue to Aitkin County.

Impaired Waters Impact on County Ditch 5

Aitkin County has spent 10 years in attempting to repair and maintain County Ditch 5. Aitkin County has prepared an EAW and made a negative declaration on the need to prepare an EIS for the realignment of County Ditch 5. Aitkin County chose the environmentally preferred alternative for the repair and maintenance of County Ditch 5. Aitkin County opposes the Impaired Waters Laws when it conflicts with Minnesota Statutes 103E on ditch repair and maintenance.

Aitkin County supports the City of McGregor's request for state bonding money to assist in the development of a plan and procedure for diverting the water from County Ditch 5 that runs through the City that has been brought about because of the Impaired Waters Laws.

Legislative Positions by Category

Corrections

Detox Cost

Aitkin County supports the remittance of 20% of the liquor tax collected in each county to be paid to the county for liquor-related expenses.

Downward Departure

Aitkin County supports the full funding of any state inmates that are transferred to county jails.

Methamphetamine

Treatment:

Aitkin County strongly supports dollars for treatment and rehabilitation of methamphetamine users and strongly supports the proposal that a Regional Residential Treatment Center be established on the Brainerd Regional Treatment Campus. State bonding dollars estimated at \$5.6 million would be utilized for the purchasing materials and equipment and other expenses incurred to develop a regional pregnant female residential chemical dependency program, as well as a female addicted program for mothers with children under the age of 8 years of age in treatment of their addiction.

Clean-Up:

Additionally, Aitkin County also supports state funding for the clean-up of methamphetamine production sites. The illegal production and use of methamphetamine (meth) has been increasing in Minnesota since the late 1990s. In 2003, there were more than 500 clandestine drug labs where methamphetamine was made and other meth-related events (meth chemical dumps, anhydrous ammonia thefts) discovered in the state. Most of the meth labs (75%) were located away from the largest Minnesota cities, in rural or semi-rural areas. Therefore, each meth lab or meth chemical dump is a potential hazardous waste site, requiring evaluation, and possibly cleanup, by hazardous waste (HazMat) professionals.

Environment And Natural Resources

Environmental Shorelands Regulation H.F. 1855

Aitkin County opposes H.F. No.1855 as it will require the consideration of cumulative impacts in administering and enforcing land use regulations which may prevent any form of development within the shoreland area, result in the increase in county staff required to administer and enforce regulations, significantly increase the cost of land use permits in order to determine the environmental impacts for every project, and require oversight of the MN DNR on land use decisions which is in conflict with Minnesota Statutes Chapter 394 and Minnesota Statutes 15.99. The implementation of interim rules and model standards by the MN DNR does not have support of the Association of Minnesota Counties or Minnesota Association of County Planning and Zoning Administrators

Alternative Individual Sewage Treatment Systems

Aitkin County has spent an estimated \$50,000-70,000 per year to administer individual sewage treatment system rules in Minnesota. Additionally, Aitkin County's taxpayers will spend an estimated \$42,000,000 to bring each of their individual systems into compliance. Aitkin County supports state

incentives and funding to support this program by way of an amendment to the municipal wastewater treatment funding bill.

Impaired Waters Policy Proposal

Aitkin County strongly opposes the proposal to charge a tax of \$36 on residential and \$150 on nonresidential establishments to correct actions on impaired waters. This proposal adds additional bureaucracy, provides minimal improvement to northern Minnesota, and avoids issues of deficient funding for nonconforming or failing individual sewage treatment systems, which is a bigger issue to Aitkin County. Additionally, Aitkin County is concerned with the deception that would be caused to the citizens of Minnesota by putting this "user fee" on the local property tax statements.

Wetlands

Counties need new definitions on what constitutes a wetland and how they affect county road and trail projects. Aitkin County supports definitions that do not hinder the county's ability to build roads and trails.

Waste Management

Aitkin County supports legislation regarding management of electronic waste that incorporates the following: shared responsibilities among manufacturers, retailers, and generators; reliable and convenient recycling options; responsible recycling of CRTs; a mechanism to address the backlog of CRTs; and, a preference for cost internalization or advance recycling fees over end-of-life fees and without relying on local government.

Pesticide Program

Aitkin County supports continued funding of the Department of Agriculture's pesticide program.

Chapter 394 Planning and Zoning Laws

Aitkin County opposes any changes to Chapter 394 that will lessen the notification requirements for conditional use permits and variances, and any lapse time for variances. In order to promote the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the counties within the State of Minnesota, Aitkin County supports legislation that would prevent any changes or legislative acts that alter or change any section, subdivision or subitem of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 394 without going through the rule making process and having support of the Association of County Planning and Zoning Administrators.

Mississippi Headwaters Board

Aitkin County supports passage of legislation that would provide funding for the Mississippi Headwaters Board through the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources, as originally established, and to the \$170,000.00 level as set in 1998. Aitkin County does not support the current funding of the MHB as a pass through grant from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Funding for County Agricultural Inspectors

Aitkin County supports passage of legislation that would provide funding to reimburse counties for an amount up to 50% of the actual annual expenses the County's Agricultural Inspector.

General Government

ATV Usage

Aitkin County supports the usage of funds from the all-terrain vehicle account in the natural resource fund for repairing damages caused by all-terrain vehicle use on public and private lands, public roads, and public road right-of-ways. Aitkin County also supports the use of these all-terrain funds by counties and municipalities for enforcement of all-terrain vehicle rules and laws. Aitkin County supports amending laws to allow ATV use on frozen class 3, 4, 5 wetlands and on Class 8 wetlands.

Aitkin County supports the development and maintenance of a useable, environmentally sound, well managed ATV trail system.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes

Aitkin County strongly supports an increase in the payment that counties receive on state owned natural resource lands within the County. There are approximately six hundred thousand (600,000) acres of State owned natural resource land in Aitkin County. The County and Township provide services to and have costs related to this land. This rate was adjusted in 2000, but was not fully indexed back to 1979.

Payment in Lieu of Taxes Apportionment

Aitkin County supports the current methodology for appropriating payment in lieu of taxes.

Setting County Commissioner Salaries

Aitkin County supports legislation that requires County Boards to set the following year's County Commissioner Salary prior to the open filing period in election years.

Long Distance Phone

Many local areas cannot call in close proximity without long distance charges, some within the same county. Aitkin County supports legislation to reduce the adverse impacts in these areas.

Supplemental Compensation for Active Military Personnel

Aitkin County supports state legislation to provide supplemental income for citizens who are called to active military duty via a presidential recall. Citizens should not be put at an economic disadvantage by serving their county.

State Deficit

In consideration of the continued challenge of balancing the state budget and eliminating the state deficit, Aitkin County supports legislation for the elimination of all state mandates if funding is cut in any given year except for those specifically identified in the bill which balances the state budget and resolves the state deficit contingent on the indemnification of Local Government by the State of Minnesota for any claims which result due to cuts in service and programs and the removal of any legislation which provides for the opportunity to challenge any budgets and salaries that the County Board adopts.

State Aid

Aitkin County also supports an elimination of program mandates on a dollar for dollar basis on any funding cuts the state makes to local government.

State Truth in Financial Forecasting

Aitkin County supports legislation to require financial forecasting which instills practices which financial professionals would endorse such as including a reasonable level of inflation on both expenditures and revenues when trying to communicate the truth to the people of the State of Minnesota.

Return of State Fees

Aitkin County supports the return of all state fees to local government for all services that are provided for the state by local government. As an example: Mortgage Registry Deed Tax.

Health And Human Services **Out-of-Home Placement.**

Aitkin County supports state funding of out of home placement. Aitkin County has spent between \$300,000 and \$1,200,000 for out of home placement per year in each of the past 10 years. Aitkin County believes state funding of this social issue is more equitable than spreading these variable costs over the property tax base that may not have been the origination of the problem. In addition, Aitkin County supports direct federal funding of the Indian Child Welfare Act placements. Aitkin County's actual costs for out of home placement over the past ten years have been:

YEAR	AMOUNT	NUMBER OF CHILDREN
1993	\$380,497.65	87
1994	\$485,070.70	75
1995	\$479,058.88	71
1996	\$309,224.35	55
1997	\$385,075.19	52
1998	\$468,372.70	68
1999	\$619,811.58	88
2000	\$680,797.52	85
2001	\$862,377.16	116
2002	\$944,889.30	94
2003	\$1,210,524.55	81
2004	\$1,054,034.05	76
2005	\$915,853.83	69
2006	\$847,823.00	73

Medical Assistance Disparity – Rural

Aitkin County supports increased funding of medical assistance for rural counties to reduce the disparity between urban and rural counties.

Uncompensated Care

Aitkin County supports a state fund to compensate a portion of the hospital uncompensated care burden, which is picked up by property tax payers.

Regional Treatment Centers

Aitkin County supports funding for counties for any service cost increases due to the reorganization of the regional treatment centers.

Tobacco Endowment Fund

Aitkin County supports maintenance of the integrity of the tobacco endowment funds to build youth resilience and reduce the risk of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection amongst all of our youth.

Transportation

Wetland Mitigation

Aitkin County supports continuing state funding from non-transportation funding sources for wetland mitigation of county highway projects as provided by the 1996 amendments to the Wetland Conservation Act.

Bridge Bonding

Aitkin County supports continuing state funding for local bridges at the level recommended by the Minnesota Department of Transportation Office of State Aid.

Minnesota Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST) Constitutional Amendment

Aitkin County supports the Constitutional Amendment to dedicate the remaining 46% of MVST to transportation for highway and transit systems.

Road Construction Permitting

Aitkin County supports the efforts of state and federal regulatory agencies to streamline current environmental permit requirements for road construction projects.

Gas Tax

Aitkin County supports an increase in the state gas tax providing Aitkin County maintains its current funding level and realizes a reasonable level of increased funding from the increased taxes collected.

Aid for Beaver Damage and Containment

Aitkin County supports funding for counties with large beaver control issues to preserve and protect county roads and property owners by funding damage caused by beavers and by funding county containment programs for beavers.

Ten Ton Roads

Aitkin County supports a statewide initiative that will build a comprehensive statewide system of 10-ton local roads to connect to major transportation routes. The system will provide greater transportation efficiencies for farm and forest-to-market roads.

Eminent Domain

Aitkin County supports the current balance in statutes between landowner rights and public agency eminent domain rights as those rights relate to transportation projects.

Aitkin County does not support statutory changes that require public agency reimbursement of landowner attorney fees in eminent domain proceedings.



2017 Legislative Priorities

Draft December 2016

For more than 100 years, the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) has assisted the state's 87 counties in providing effective governance for all citizens.

Legislative Principles

- **AMC strives** to preserve local control so that counties have the flexibility to address the most pressing needs of their communities.
- **AMC supports** state budget solutions that avoid adding or shifting a disproportionate burden to counties through cost shifts, cost shares and unfunded mandates.
- **AMC believes** that funding for county-administered services should be commensurate with the level of service or results deemed acceptable.

2017 Legislative Action Items

County Program Aid

AMC supports legislation that strengthens county program aid (CPA) in a sustainable way and provides relief for counties experiencing dramatic reductions in tax-base equalization aid.

The total appropriation counties receive in state aid has fluctuated drastically over the past twenty years, and is significantly depressed in real dollar value. AMC convened a work group to study the CPA formula and recommend improvements. The work group included leadership from over twenty counties along with input from the Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA) and the Minnesota Rural Counties Caucus (MRCC). After more than a year of work, the work group developed recommendations that reduce volatility and protect counties from losing significant funding when there is a sudden shift in their demographics.

Transportation Funding

AMC supports a comprehensive transportation funding package that includes new revenue for roads, bridges, and transit.

The solution should be comprehensive (multi-modal), balanced (regionally and between modes), sustainable (on-going funding), and dedicated (constitutionally for roads and statutorily for transit).

Mental Health in Jails and the Community

AMC supports county initiatives that reduce the incarceration of those with mental illness in local jails and redirects the existing county cost share dollars to efforts that increase mental health system capacity.

Many counties are already developing initiatives to reduce the number of mentally ill Minnesotans in jail. Some efforts are state supported and others are county financed. The legislature should support expansion of existing programs and create incentives for new programs aimed at this goal. Also, a significant portion of the mental health infrastructure is funded by county cost shares. While counties would prefer the elimination of these cost shares, as long as they are in place, this revenue should be used in ways that meet county needs in delivering these services.

Buffer Aid

AMC supports ongoing state funding for counties that opt to implement and enforce the requirements of the Minnesota buffer law.

County officials agree that local implementation and enforcement of the new buffer law may be best, however, these responsibilities will require additional staff time and resources, and ultimately leave counties with an unfunded mandate. State funding will help ensure the program is implemented and enforced locally and on a statewide basis.

Determining Fiscal Impact on Counties

AMC supports legislation that would require bills to include county investment as a line item of funding to encourage transparency in taxation, and consideration of the property tax impact of cost shifts.

In recent legislative sessions there have been increased requirements for county investment in areas of child protection and mental health. These mandated cost shifts have become crippling for county budgets across the state. This bill would require that the cost of a legislative proposal take into account county investment to accurately reflect taxpayer investment.

METS Funding

AMC supports legislation that would provide increased funding to the Minnesota Eligibility Technology System (METS).

Counties are responsible for determining eligibility for assistance programs. The METS system is the computer program that county workers use to assist in this determination. The system is still new, and requires additional programming investment so that county workers are able to efficiently and accurately navigate the system to ensure integrity of eligibility determinations.

Local Road Wetland Replacement

AMC supports the immediate need for short-term cash funding for the Local Road Wetland Replacement Program (LRWRP) and long-term continued funding of the program.

The LRWRP has been an integral part of the “no net loss” policy under the Wetlands Conservation Act. Recently, the state has not been meeting its funding obligation. As a result of underfunding, BWSR has closed two of the ten Wetland Bank Service Areas (BSAs). Since local governments have not budgeted to step in to meet the state’s legal obligation to replace the lost wetlands, the Legislature needs to act immediately to meet the state’s legal obligation to fund the replacement of the affected wetlands. BWSR will need approximately \$6 million in cash to buy wetland credits from private wetland banks to meet immediate LRWRP obligations, as well as \$10 million in bonding authorization for BWSR to recapitalize its wetland banks to meet LRWRP obligations in future years.

Broadband Development Funding

AMC supports the build-out of broadband infrastructure in Minnesota, including legislation that would provide funding for the Office of Broadband Development and continued funding for the Border-to-Border Broadband Development Grant Program.

The Legislature approved \$35 million be designated for the grant program this year, which is more than recent years, but far short of the \$100 million suggested by Gov. Mark Dayton and supported by AMC. Continued funding for this program is necessary to support the infrastructure needed.

AMC Intergovernmental Services Staff

Executive Director

Julie Ring
Office: 651-789-4330, Cell: 651-247-9418
ring@mncounties.org

Legislative Coordinator

Anne Kilzer
Office: 651-789-4323, Cell: 651-303-4858
akilzer@mncounties.org

Environment & Natural Resources

Jennifer Berquam
Office: 651-789-4322, Cell: 651-308-8266
jberquam@mncounties.org

General Government, Taxes & County Operations

Matt Hilgart
Office: 651-789-4343, Cell: 612-805-5088
mhilgart@mncounties.org

Health & Human Services

Rochelle Westlund
Office: 651-789-4325, Cell: 651-341-8487
rwestlund@mncounties.org

Public Safety & Corrections

Ryan Erdmann
Office: 651-789-4345, Cell: 612-581-0026
erdmann@maccac.org

Transportation & Infrastructure

Emily Pugh
Office: 651-789-4339, Cell: 952-994-8816
epugh@mncounties.org

Policy Liaison

Ben Baglio
Office: 651-789-4321
bbaglio@mncounties.org

Updated December 14, 2016