

Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board

*P.O. Box 166
Bovey, MN 55709*

DATE: March 4, 2021
TO: Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board Members
FROM: Leo Trunt, Chair
SUBJECT: March 11, 2021 meeting, Marble Community Hall at 6:00 PM
(health protection protocols are to be followed)

MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Agenda approval
3. Approval of February 11, 2021 meeting minutes
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Bills
6. Correspondence
7. Unfinished Business:
 - A) Priority items: status, planning
 1. Hill Annex Mine State Park, rising pit water, highway 169 improvement
 2. Other Priority item planning for 2021
 - B) Field Trip
 - C) Critical and Strategic Minerals
 - D) DNR regarding Board involvement in local minerals decisions
 - E) Other unfinished business
8. New Business
 - A) Bank account authorizations and designations
 - B) Updates about minerals/mining industry, projects or new developments, issues
 - C) Member reports and updates
 - D) Community input
 - E) Other new business
9. Adjourn

A Joint Powers Board			Officers:	Staff:
Arbo Township	City of Grand Rapids	Lone Pine Township	Leo Trunt, Chair	R.D. Learmont, Coordinator
City of Bovey	Greenway Township	City of Marble	Greg Tuttle, Vice Chair	Deborah Rantala,,
City of Calumet	Itasca County	City of Nashwauk	Cal Saari,	Recording Secy/Treasurer
City of Cohasset	City of Keewatin	Trout Lake Township	Secretary/Treasurer	e-mail to: dlearmon@2z.net
City of Coleraine	City of LaPrairie			

Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board
Marble Community Center
February 11, 2021
Meeting Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Leo Trunt called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. AGENDA APPROVAL: Motion by Merry Lee, seconded by Al Guddeck and carried to approve the meeting agenda.
3. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 14, 2021 MEETING MINUTES: Motion by Cal Saari, seconded by Guddeck and carried to approve the meeting minutes as submitted.
4. TREASURER'S REPORT: The January financial report was sent to Board members prior to the meeting. The 2021 member contribution invoices were mailed shortly after the January meeting. Payment has been received from three members. Motion by Guddeck, seconded by Greg Tuttle and carried to approve the Treasurer's Report.
5. BILLS: The following invoices were received and submitted for payment approval:
 - Solutions and Strategies Group-Coordinator fees and expenses for January 2021 - \$808.99
 - Deb Rantala-Recording Secretary/Treasurer fees and expenses for January 2021 - \$320.09Motion by Tuttle, seconded by Edith Dorry and carried to approve payment of the bills.
6. CORRESPONDENCE: Received the draft status report to the legislature from the DNR Commissioner reporting on the Canisteo and Hill Annex mine pit water.
7. SPEAKER: TAMARA LOWNER, ITASCA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION: Ms. Lowner provided an update on IEDC activity during the past year. IEDC received funds, quickly developed loan fund program rules, and administered and distributed funds from IRRR, from the CARES Act via the State of Minnesota and Itasca County, from Blandin Foundation, and also used some of its own funds to provide loans for businesses and various other programs needing assistance as a result of the Covid pandemic. IEDC also participated in local programs with other entities in providing funding and program coordination. Since May 2020 they have provided loans and grants to 94 businesses, mostly in small towns and cities within Itasca County, with some of the funds to be repaid and developed into a revolving loan fund. IEDC, in cooperation with partners such as APEX, actively recruits new businesses to the area. IEDC is also looking to initiate efforts to develop strategic local economic plans and conduct a summit meeting in anticipation of needs that could result from expected major changes, such as the planned reduction and closure of Minnesota Power's Boswell two remaining coal-fired generating units and other changes and is seeking expressions of interest in such efforts by local individuals and organizations.

Chair Trunt thanked Ms. Lowner for the update.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. Priority items: status, planning:

1. Hill Annex Mine State Park, rising pit water, highway 169 improvement:
 - a) Hill Annex Mine State Park: Bills have been introduced in both the House and Senate. Copies of the House bill were distributed. The bill calls for establishing a Hill Annex Mine State Park Advisory Council which includes WMMPB, is to meet at least quarterly and with which DNR will consult, and requires DNR to operate the park at a minimum at the level and service and the days and hours of operation maintained in fiscal year 2016, until such time that active mining resumes.
 - b) Rising pit water: The Coordinator distributed copies of the 2004 Barr Engineering technical memorandum and their summary of estimated costs. The cost estimate provided info for three options for flowing pit water into Trout Lake and one each for the Holman Lake and Prairie River options. At this time, DNR has worked only on updating the Prairie River option. An updated draft of DNR's Status Report to the legislature was also distributed. The report will be submitted on February 15, 2021. The Coordinator also distributed draft pit outflow funding legislation for discussion purposes. Suggestions are needed since the proposal must be submitted to the legislature within the next few weeks.
 - c) Highway 169 improvement: The previous legislative bill requested \$15 million. Following discussion, including a discussion with MN DOT, member consensus is that the same amount is unattainable at this time. Motion by Guddeck, seconded by Dwight Kessler and carried to request a legislative appropriation of \$95,000 for preliminary studies only.
2. Field trip: Several suggestions have been made for field trip sites including Prairie River Minerals, Talon Metals in Tamarack, Northern Foundry in Hibbing, and Mesabi Metallics. Motion by Guddeck, seconded by Kessler and carried to work toward a WMMPB field trip this year including to Prairie River Minerals.
3. Other Priority item planning for 2021: No new items were suggested.

B. Critical and Strategic Minerals: No new information was presented.

C. DNR regarding Board involvement in local minerals decisions: There was no new information to report.

D. Tax Forfeit Property Land Classification Recommendations: Copies of WMMPB Advisory Committee recommendations regarding the disposition of tax forfeit property parcels were distributed and discussed. Motion by Tuttle, seconded by Lee and carried to send the Advisory Committee recommendations to Itasca County Land Department as the WMMPB recommendations.

E. Other unfinished business: None.

9. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Bank account authorizations and designations:** A Board resolution is needed to approve changes to the bank account signature authorization removal of former Secretary/Treasurer Joe Abeyta and adding newly elected Secretary/Treasurer Cal Saari. Motion by Kessler, seconded by Guddeck and carried to approve the change resolution.
- B. Updates about minerals/mining industry, projects or new developments, issues:** No new updates were presented.
- C. Member reports and updates:** Saari reported that the City of Nashwauk has signed a six month lease with Mesabi Metallics for part of the Nashwauk City Hall space for use as an office. He saw this as a positive step forward for the project, especially as it would provide Mesabi Metallics improved space to host possible project investors doing due diligence.
- D. Community input:** None.
- E. Other new business:** No additional new business items were brought forth.

10. ADJOURN: Chair Trunt adjourned the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

The next regular WMMPB meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Marble Community Center.

ATTENDEES

Board Members:	Leo Trunt	Itasca County
	Al Guddeck	Marble
	Cal Saari	Nashwauk
	Greg Tuttle	Cohasset
	John Dimich	Coleraine
	Merry Lee	Marble
	Edith Dorry	Arbo Township
	Jon Korpi	Lone Pine Township
	Dwight Kessler	Trout Lake Township
	Nancilyn Meyer-Nail	Bovey
	Kory Cease	Itasca County
Others Present:	Doug Learmont	Coordinator
	Deb Rantala	Recording Secretary/Treasurer
	Tamara Lowney	IEDC