



Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board

P.O. Box 166
Bovey, MN 55709



Advisory Committee

Meeting Notice and Agenda

DATE: March 25, 2021

MEMO TO: Members of the Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board Advisory Committee

FROM: R. D. Learmont, Chair

SUBJECT: **April 1, 2021**, WMMPB Advisory Committee Meeting
6:00 PM, Nyberg Center, Coleraine, Minnesota (note: health protocols will be observed)

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of agenda
3. Approval of October 1, 2020 Advisory Committee meeting minutes
4. Unfinished business:
 - A. 2021 Board priorities: Hill Annex Mine State Park, Rising pit water: Canisteo/Hill Annex, Highway 169 improvements and support
 - B. Identify and consider other 2021 priorities
 - C. Strategic and critical minerals designation and building on mineral resources
 - D. Educational/informational presentations for Board, schools, community
 - E. Project or permitting participation by Board, local government units
 - F. Project news or updates
 - G. Advisory Committee member retention and recruitment
 - H. Other unfinished business
5. New business
 - A. Election of officers
 - B. Mining Friendly State
 - C. Other new business
6. Adjourn

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CITY OF COLERAINE

A Joint Powers Board

Arbo Township
City of Bovey
City of Calumet
City of Cohasset
City of Coleraine

City of Grand Rapids
Greenway Township
Itasca County
City of Keewatin
City of LaPrairie

Lone Pine Township
City of Marble
City of Nashwauk
Trout Lake Township

Officers:

Leo Trunt, Chair
Greg Tuttle, Vice Chair
Cal Saari,
Secretary/Treasurer

Staff:

R.D. Learmont, Coordinator
Deborah Rantala,,
Recording Secy/Treasurer
e-mail to: dlearmon@2z.net

WESTERN MESABI MINE PLANNING BOARD ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES – October 1, 2020
6:00 PM, Nyberg Center, Coleraine, MN

ATTENDEES: Doug Learmont, Chair; Tim Sullivan, Vice Chair; Kyle Bartholomew, Secretary; Melody Garza, Recording Secretary

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:06 PM.
2. The Chair called for approval of the October 1, 2020 meeting agenda. The meeting agenda was approved by consensus.
3. The Chair called for corrections to or approval of minutes from the June 4, 2020 Advisory Committee meeting. Sullivan noted a correction should be made to the ending line to note that the next Advisory Committee meeting would be August 6 and not February 6 as listed. There were no further corrections and Sullivan moved to approve the minutes from the June 4 meeting as amended. The motion was seconded by Learmont and motion was carried.
4. Unfinished business:
 - A) Board priorities and committees: The Chair stated that the three Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board priority items seem to be stalled in the state legislature as the legislature focuses on pandemic and related economic issues. Other than introduction of bills by all local legislators for all three priority issues, only the pit water issue has advanced. Mike Liljegren of DNR plans to talk at a forthcoming Board meeting about the issue.

As for ideas regarding Board priorities for 2021, the continued need for improved broadband coverage was mentioned. It was also noted that Board priorities do not have to be limited to items needing legislative action. Advisory Committee member ideas included 1) developing a primer and identifying opportunities for value-added mineral processing that could utilize local resources, 2) examining the economic impact of local mining production rate decreases and how to ameliorate them, 3) looking at the role and importance of suppliers of and need for products in our area, and 4) identifying new approaches of resource management, mineral resources development and others, that could result in new local projects. Discussion of new priorities is expected at upcoming Board meetings, with hope that Board members will bring new ideas to the next Board meeting for review, discussion, and priority setting.

B) Strategic and critical minerals designation and building on mineral resources: the Board has decided to defer follow-up action until after the November elections.

C) Educational/informational presentations for Board, school, communities: Discussion was deferred until more Advisory Committee members are present to participate.

D) Project or permitting participation by Board, local government units: It was reported that there had been no response from state agencies regarding a Board resolution and letter that had been sent requesting more Board and local government involvement in state activities related to mining and minerals in and near the western Mesabi corridor.

This also led to extensive discussion about activating existing projects, such as Mesabi Metallics, and closed mining operations, such as Keetac. Especially in the case of Mesabi Metallics, recent meetings by local government units with senior state officials, at which the state report indicated that there was little to no state progress and very limited state ideas regarding how to resolve issues related to Mesabi Metallics that would start moving the project forward while there was seeming unwillingness by the state to consider suggestions from knowledgeable people in the local area, including several specific areas where information should be either available or developed and pursued and promoted. Members also raised questions about whether WMMPB would be up to the task of being more involved if the state would provide more opportunities for Board involvement. Learmont asked what we can do for the Board as its Advisory Committee. Recognizing the current lack of state activity and lack of but need for more local involvement, Sullivan moved as follows:

The Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board Advisory Committee hereby recommends that the Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board take a lead in organizing and establishing a select committee to reactivate and promote the Mesabi Metallics and other major mining projects within and near Itasca County, including assembly of key personnel and information that may be helpful in promotion and reactivation of the project(s).

Bartholomew seconded the motion and, following additional discussion, the motion was carried with all voting in favor.

E) Project news or updates: Learmont informed that the pumped storage permit application to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) was discussed at the Board meeting and the Board had concerns with it, including concerns about limited ability to submit and respond to comments which in turn raised concerns about what might be going on but unstated.

F) Advisory committee member retention and recruitment: Bartholomew stated that he will reach out to one person who may be interested and Sullivan indicated that could also reach out to a possible new member. Learmont stated that we should also reach out to existing members who have not attended meetings regularly. All WMMPB Advisory Committee members should try to come up with suggestions for new members and contact them.

G) Other unfinished business: There was an update on discussion by the Board about its current membership payments and need for revisions to the payments or payment structures to more sustainably fund Board activities.

5. New Business: Bartholomew inquired about the Cleveland Cliffs/ArcelorMittal deal that was publicly announced. The Board should be aware of what this deal could mean to the western Mesabi corridor and the local economy with regard to local iron ore resources and also because Cleveland Cliffs would be reshaped from being a mining producer to a steel producer operation.

6. With the agenda having been completed, Sullivan moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Bartholomew, and with all voting in favor the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm

The next WMMPB Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for 6:00 PM on Thursday, December 3, 2020 at the Nyberg Center in Coleraine.

Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board

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

DATE: March 31, 2021
TO: Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board Members
FROM: Leo Trunt, Chair
SUBJECT: April 8, 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 March 11, 2021 meeting minutes
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Bills
6. Correspondence
7. Speakers: MN Department of Transportation regarding Highway 169 Summer 2021 Plans
Arrowhead Regional Development Commission regarding Highway 169 Planning
8. Unfinished Business:
 - A) Priority items: status, planning
 1. Hill Annex Mine State Park, rising pit water, highway 169 improvement
 2. Other Priority item suggestions for 2021
 - B) Field Trip
 - C) Critical and Strategic Minerals, Minnesota Mining Friendly State
 - D) DNR regarding Board involvement in local minerals decisions
 - E) Other unfinished business
9. New Business
 - A) Updates about minerals/mining industry, projects or new developments, issues
 - B) Member reports and updates
 - C) Community input
 - D) Other new business
10. Adjourn

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Lone Pine Township
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Greg Tuttle, Vice Chair
Cal Saari,
Secretary/Treasurer

Staff:

R.D. Learmont, Coordinator
Deborah Rantala,,
Recording Secy/Treasurer
e-mail to: dlearmon@2z.net

Western Mesabi Mine Planning Board
Marble Community Center
March 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 Dwight Kessler, seconded by Merry Lee and carried to approve the meeting agenda.
3. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 11, 2021 MEETING MINUTES: Motion by Lee, seconded by Greg Tuttle and carried to approve the meeting minutes as submitted.
4. TREASURER'S REPORT: The February financial report was sent to Board members prior to the meeting. The bank account authorized signature change has been completed. Membership contribution checks for 2021 were received from six more member entities. Motion by Kessler, seconded by Lee 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 February 2021 - \$556.90
 - Deb Rantala-Recording Secretary/Treasurer fees and expenses for February 2021 - \$221.36Motion by Tuttle, seconded by Kessler and carried to approve payment of the bills.
6. CORRESPONDENCE: There was no new correspondence.
7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:
 - A. Priority items: status, planning:**
 1. Hill Annex Mine State Park, rising pit water, and highway 169 improvement:
 - a) Hill Annex Mine State Park: Bills were introduced in both the House and Senate. Most area legislators are supportive of the bills.
 - b) Rising pit water: Numerous meetings were held with IRRR, DNR, Itasca County, WMMPB, Arbo Township and the City of Bovey to develop a project funding bill for the legislature, focused on rising water in the Canisteo pit complex. Representative Sandstede is working to quickly move the bill through the introduction process. There was also discussion regarding property leases for the pit water control system.
 - c) Highway 169 improvement: Bills were introduced in the state legislature after the last Board meeting and copies of bill HF 1894 were distributed for information. The bill calls for \$95,000 in fiscal year 2021 to MN DOT from the general fund for preliminary work and also requests that the major improvement project be included as part of MN DOT's ten year construction plan. Senator Tomassoni and Representative Sandstede are the authors. Shorter term safety improvements to Highway 169 are to

be done this summer. MN DOT expects to provide more details at the next WMMPB meeting. MN DOT has also requested the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC) to work with WMMPB to review the entire Highway 169 Cross Range Expressway with focus on the remaining two lane section. A representative from ARDC will also attend the April Board meeting.

2. Other priority item planning for 2021: No new suggestions were made.

B. Field Trip: A few suggestions have been made and work on coordinating a trip has started.

C. Critical and Strategic Minerals: Representative Igo introduced a bill declaring Minnesota as a mining-friendly state. Copies of HF 1009 were distributed. Several other bills were introduced by legislators from outside the local area regarding various anti-mining efforts. Motion by Cal Saari, seconded by Edith Dorry and carried to draft letter of support for HF 1009 for members to review and discuss at the April meeting in anticipation of issuing a letter of support. RAMS is issuing a letter opposing many anti-mining bills submitted by out-of-area legislators.

D. DNR regarding Board involvement in local minerals decisions: This agenda item is addressed in Item C above.

E. Other unfinished business: None.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Bank account authorizations and designations: The checking account at American Bank has been changed by deleting Joe Abeyta and adding Cal Saari as an authorized signer on the account.

B. Updates about minerals/mining industry, projects or new developments, issues: No new updates were provided.

C. Member reports and updates: None.

D. Community input: None.

E. Other new business: No additional items were brought forth.

9. ADJOURN: Chair Trunt adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

The next regular WMMPB meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 8, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Marble Community Center.

ATTENDEES

Board Members: Leo Trunt
Cal Saari

Itasca County
Nashwauk

Merry Lee
Jim Sellner
Edith Dorry
Tim Zaren
Nancilyn Meyer
Kory Cease
Rick Blake
Greg Tuttle
Jon Korpi
Dwight Kessler

Marble
Greenway Township
Arbo Township
Calumet
Bovey
Itasca County
Grand Rapids
Cohasset
Lone Pine Township
Trout Lake Township

Others Present: Doug Learmont
Deb Rantala
Jay Bloom

Coordinator
Recording Secretary/Treasurer
Citizen