



MEMBERSHIP MEETING SUMMARY
Wednesday, June 14, 2024 (10:00 AM to 12:00 PM)
1003 Discovery Drive | Chisholm, MN 55719
And via Zoom

MEETING OBJECTIVE

VISION | Shaping evolving landscapes for future generations.

MISSION | A regional collaboration that invests in our diverse community by:

- Developing opportunities for dynamic minescapescapes,
- Preserving lands to sustain current and future mining, and
 - Providing resources and education

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1. Optimizing Organization & Communications
2. Investing in Mineland Communities
3. Enhancing Stakeholder Partnerships
4. Educating Partners & the Public

Check out the updated website: www.mvpmn.org

MEETING SUMMARY

- Welcome & Introductions
- Legislative Panel
- SME Conference Recap
- 25 Years of MVP
- Special Announcement, MDC
- MVP/LVP 25th Celebration Lunch & Adjourn

Legislative Panel

Robert Farnsworth, Senator
Grant Hauschild, Senator
Dave Lislegard, Representative

Summary

Representative Dave Lislegard began the session by saying it will be known as an historic legislative session. It was a trifecta of political power, and they acted fast: \$80 million in additional funding for communities. Lislegard shared the State of Minnesota does not raise property taxes. It is the cities, counties and schools that raise taxes. He clarified we do not send our money down south; we keep our production taxes here. Lislegard continued, 68% of money generated comes from the metro. The more money brought north, the lower our taxes. Money for funding schools comes from the metro.

Lislegard noted he did not vote for the paid family leave bill because it was too expansive. He felt it added to the already challenging workforce situation. Lislegard referenced the massive change of 1/3 in the legislature, and he congratulated Senator Grant Hauschild for stopping problematic bills.

The representative shared that \$1 million is going to the Northland foundation to hire someone to help with housing. He commented on last week's "devastating" announcement on the NewRange Copper Nickel permit and expressed concern about an entity being able to set their own water standards. He congratulated Stauber for sliding in streamlined permitting language into the debt ceiling bill. If the government does not lead on streamlined permitting, we will not see it improved. As a region we need to stay engaged in that conversation.

Lislegard concluded saying \$12 billion is one time money. They gave property tax relief. They funded public safety. He thanked the mining companies and described Redhead mountain bike park as a project diversifying our economy. It was a good session overall.

Senator Grant Hauschild began by thanking Dave Lislegard and Rob Farnsworth for protecting the Iron Range. He noted there are successes and some challenges. They got Northshore miners 26 weeks of unemployment, and Northshore is back up and running. He noted, if we support mining, we support the mine workers. Hauschild described the decision from the Army Corp on NewRange permitting as "unfathomable." It lacks transparency and clarity. The senator has been talking to folks about where we go from here to get guidance on how we make these projects happen. He is not losing faith. Hauschild said the DNR decision that we can mine safely was critical. He supports the DNR making permitting decisions. We know how to protect our land, water, air. Regarding the bonding deal, Hauschild voiced pride in the bi-partisan work, stating that our districts did better than all others in the State. The legislature invested in quality of life: the tax bill, taconite taxes used for the Ely nursing home to stay open, money to clubs like ATV, snowmobile and the Redhead MTB park. He shared he is following Tomassoni's practice of inserting money for the Iron Range into every bill.

Senator Rob Farnsworth began by saying he has a differing view than the other two, but he chose to focus on the positive. The senator said his district got the most in bonding projects in the State, including \$300,000 for a pro mining exhibit to be erected in Duluth. Farnsworth said money for nursing homes was a priority. It was possible that up to 40 nursing homes would have closed. They got \$300 million for nursing homes. He shared they got money for the Canisteo project and HWY 169 cross range express, a project that has been in discussion for decades. The Senator said that he, Lislegard and Hauschild have a united front when it comes to economic development. Farnsworth said we have the potential with our precious metals to increase wealth. We need to get the new projects up and running.

In the Q&A, Steve Giorgi (RAMS) asked for a champion in the delegation to take on broadband, a project Ecklund previously led. Giorgi served on the governor's taskforce. It is estimated we could lose \$100 million in DEED funding because Minnesota refuses to address the map showing underserved. If we don't have a champion, we are going to get left behind longer and longer. Broadband is our highway in economic development.

Hauschild responded saying they want to be a champion for our region. Farnsworth agreed broadband and housing development is economic development. He shared if we built houses with broadband on the Range, it is like building factories.

PRESENTATION

SME Conference Recap

Katie Larson, MnDNR

Katie Larson, the SME chair for 2023-2024, provided an update on the 2023 conference. The 2023 conference chair was Katrina Davis, which Larson described as “the quarterback” of the event. Larson thanked Davis and the team of organizers and presenters.

The conference was held at the Iron Trail Motors Convention Center (ITMCC). They were over capacity for vendors, and greater than 900 people attended the conference. NewRange Copper bought out the vendor reception, and it was available for no cost to attendees. Sponsorships sold out. The conference resulted in 48 paid SME memberships, and the silent auction raised \$2,000 for the SME foundation.

Larson gave an overview of the presenters, and noted Julie Lucas was the (best) ethics speaker. The conference had six technical tracks. Per Larson, the event had pluses and minuses. The ITMCC was helpful and accommodating. The committee was very excited to showcase and use local vendors (restaurants and providers out of Virginia). This year they notified restaurants that 900 people were in town, and restaurants were open and staffed. Larson noted a benefit of a local conference is you get folks who work at the mine at the show. She shared that Virginia needs a hotel at the convention center.

The event was attended by a lot of local people, which meant folks went home for the evening and did not attend the evening events as heavily. They are considering alternating the venue with Duluth every other year, and they will be touring the DECC. Looking ahead, the board would like new members and existing members to help participate in the conference planning effort. The SME board is a board where you put in the work. She asked attendees to please consider participating. They are hoping to form a k-12 outreach committee. They are also in the process of developing a periodic newsletter and social media push. They hired a consultant to help with that effort. Larson noted that if folks are interested in receiving the newsletter or connecting on social media, to please reach out to Katie at the DNR in Hibbing. She also invited attendees to the July 20 picnic which will include a bike ride on Redhead, followed by a picnic at the mining museum in Chisholm.

PRESENTATION

25 Years of MVP

Pete Kero, Barr Engineering

Jim Plummer, IRRR

Plummer introduced Kero, sharing that Kero’s new book “Minescapes” is published and available on Amazon and at the Minnesota Discovery Center.

Kero started the presentation by saying he is an environmental engineer and now a part time historian. He invited attendees to remember the 1990’s: the fall of the Berlin wall, it was pre-9/11, and on the Iron Range had emerged from the challenges of the 1980’s. He shared a picture of a natural ore pits, noting that there were 400, and at the University of Minnesota Jim Swearingen called together a meeting of landscape architects because of a conversation with Tom Rukavina. Swearingen and Rukavina had discussed what MINNTAC would like after they were done mining, and Rukavina said we could have ski hills, lake fronts... The conversation triggered Swearingen to call the meeting to map out a future.

That initial meeting was successful. The University suggested the group think about the whole Mesabi range, and rather than under private contract, do this as a public open forum. People were invited to the table, and meetings were

professionally facilitated.

After the first planning years, they developed charrettes (Kero shared a short video). The Laurentian Vision effort was born and named after the Laurentian divide. Following the video, Kero shared pictures of the charrettes depicting the east side of Virginia, the Red Rock Amphitheater, framed imagery through landscape design, how landscape could be used for habitat transformation, and Kero's favorite piece: the gateway bridge, which was a centerpiece of the charrette. The design was auspicious as we now have the Tom Rukavina bridge.

Kero shared the Chisholm and Hibbing charrette depicting waterfront development and the "boy scout hill regional park." He shared a charrette showing how the 6130 regulations could be overlaid with recreational, waterfront development and still be compliant with mineland recreation standards. Kero shared a photo of a charrette with a "Ting Town mountain bike project" overlaid with the Redhead MTB park in its current location. And Kero displayed a slide of the 2007 Biwabik Charrette showing how active taconite mining could be used to develop the desired landscape.

Plummer shared the next phase of MVP which has three components: strategic plans, a regional approach to land use, and education. He shared the past LVP Vision, "transforming pits and piles into lakes and landscapes, our legacy for the future," and the newer MVP vision, "shaping evolving landscapes for future generations."

With MVP they have taken a regional approach, following the iron formation. The perception is that Northeast MN has vast expanse of wilderness; Plummer noted that we have intense competition for the resources. The best use of mineland for financial return is mining, and this has guided their work.

Of their focus on education, Plummer shared their approach of three yearly meetings, facilitated by Northspan, maintaining a website with all meeting minutes and presentations, and a couple of past mine engineer workshops. Plummer noted they implement the vision. Over the last 15 years, the IRRR has awarded 41 grants amounting to over \$5 million in grant awards and projects of \$21 million +.

Plummer then shared photos of projects built over the last years. Taconite Ridge, a stockpile reclamation (video shared), Hibbing Taconite pit shoreland development, stockpile projects in Hibbing taconite (with purposeful habitat created for grouse), Northshore mining: Peter Mitchell Pit Master Plan, the Hoyt Lakes Sulfate Reducing Bioreactor Pilot project, Eveleth United Taconite stockpile reclamation project, Black Beach in Silver Bay, Chisholm Scram Tailings Reclamation Study, Buhl's Judson Mine Pit Disc Golf Course, Virginia United Taconite Barrier Berm project, Tom Rukavina Bridge View Park, and Chisholm's Redhead Mountain Bike Park.

Of Redhead, Kero shared the final high school state mountain bike race held last fall is estimated to have had over \$900,000 in economic impact race weekend, with 4,000 people coming to Chisholm. Plummer then played a short Redhead "Reclaimed" teaser video.

Plummer shared additional projects completed: Cohasset's Tioga Recreation center, the Nashwauk Disc golf course, Chisholm Bruce Mine Park, Hibbing Mine View relocation, additional stockpile revegetation, the Hibbing Disc Golf relocation, the Kinney Mine Pit improvements, Coleraine public golf course improvements and Gilbert Ore-Be-Gone Campground improvements. With this, the presentation concluded.

PRESENTATION

Special Announcement

Jordan Metsa, Minnesota Discovery Center

Metsa invited the group to join him at the Redhead trailhead for a press release and announcement. He noted that trail counts suggest approximately 35,000 in last year at the main Redhead trail head. Metsa thanked all the players for developing the project. At the trailhead, Metsa announced the award of \$1.6 million plus an additional \$500,000 for Redhead, which will be used for new trail construction as well as park amenities and accessibility.

- MVP/LVP 25th Celebration Lunch and meeting was adjourned at 11:38 AM.
- Save the date of October 18, 2023, for our next MVP Partnership meeting.

A d j o u r n e d

Mineland Vision Partnership thanks its financial contributors:



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RESOURCES & REHABILITATION**