



AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MINNESOTA

Tuesday, February 2, 2021, 9:30 A.M.

**Government Services Center
Lake Superior Room
320 West 2nd Street
Duluth, Minnesota**

NOTE: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting is being conducted in accordance with Minnesota Statutes § 13D.021, which provides that members of the St. Louis County Board may attend the meeting by telephone or other electronic means. This statute also provides that, if telephone or other electronic means are used to conduct a meeting, to the extent practical, the county shall allow a person to monitor the meeting electronically from a remote location. For information on how to view or participate in the County Board meeting, please visit the county website at www.stlouiscountymn.gov, scroll to the County Board Meeting section, and click on the meeting date.

**FRANK JEWELL
First District**

**PATRICK BOYLE
Second District**

**ASHLEY GRIMM
Third District**

**PAUL McDONALD –
VICE-CHAIR
Fourth District**

**KEITH MUSOLF
Fifth District**

**KEITH NELSON
Sixth District**

**MIKE JUGOVICH –CHAIR
Seventh District**

County Auditor
Nancy Nilsen

County Administrator
Kevin Gray

County Attorney
Mark Rubin

Clerk of the Board
Phil Chapman

The St. Louis County Board of Commissioners welcomes you to this meeting. This agenda contains a brief description of each item to be considered. The Board encourages your participation. Citizens can either appear at the meeting in person or submit comments for the public comment portion or for specific Board agenda items prior to the meeting by e-mailing them to publiccomment@stlouiscountymn.gov. Except as otherwise provided by the Standing Rules of the County Board, no action shall be taken on any item not appearing in the agenda.

Comments to individual Commissioners or staff are not permitted. The St. Louis County Board promotes adherence to civility in conducting the business of the County. Civility will provide increased opportunities for civil discourse in order to find positive resolutions to the issue before the Board. Tools of civility include: pay attention, listen, be inclusive, do not gossip, show respect, be agreeable, apologize, give constructive criticism and take responsibility [County Board Resolution No. 560, adopted on September 9, 2003]. Speakers will be limited to five (5) minutes.

****In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for this meeting should notify the Administration Department 72 hours prior to the meeting at (218)726-2450.****

All supporting documentation is available for public review in the County Auditor's Office, 100 North 5th Avenue West - Room No. 214, St. Louis County Courthouse, Duluth, MN, during regular business hours 8:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday. Agenda is also available on our website at <http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/GOVERNMENT/BoardofCommissioners.aspx>

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9:30 A.M. Moment of Silence
 Pledge of Allegiance
 Roll Call

Presentation: HRA of Hibbing and Center City Housing Corporation

AT THIS TIME CITIZENS WILL BE ALLOWED TO ADDRESS THE BOARD ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA. [Speakers will be limited to 5 minutes each.]

FOR ITEMS LISTED ON THE BOARD AGENDA OR COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDA, CITIZENS WILL BE ALLOWED TO ADDRESS THE BOARD AT THE TIME A MOTION IS ON THE FLOOR.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of business submitted on the consent agenda.

REGULAR AGENDA

Public Works & Transportation Committee – Commissioner McDonald, Chair

1. Purchase of ten (10) dump bodies with hydraulic systems and snow removal equipment from Towmaster, Inc., of Litchfield, MN. {21-49} [Without recommendation.]

Central Management & Intergovernmental Committee – Commissioner Jewell, Chair

2. Resolution opposing legislation instituting a moratorium on issuing permits for nonferrous mining or withdrawal of land for future exploration in Northeastern Minnesota. {21-53}

ADJOURNED:

BOARD LETTER NO. 21 – 49

PUBLIC WORKS & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE NO. 3

FEBRUARY 2, 2021 BOARD AGENDA NO. 1

DATE: January 26, 2021 **RE:** State Contract Purchase of Ten
Dump Bodies with Hydraulic
Systems and Snow Removal
Equipment

FROM: Kevin Z. Gray
County Administrator

James T. Foldesi
Highway Engineer/Public Works Director

RELATED DEPARTMENT GOAL:

To provide a safe, well maintained road and bridge system.

ACTION REQUESTED:

The St. Louis County Board is requested to approve the purchase of ten Dump Bodies with Hydraulic Systems and Snow Removal equipment including: Plows, Hitches, Wings, Sanders, Brine Distribution, GPS/AVL and Underbody Scrapers from Towmaster, Inc., of Litchfield, MN.

BACKGROUND:

The Public Works Department's 2021 equipment budget includes the purchase and installation of ten Dump Bodies with Hydraulic systems and Snow Removal equipment for ten Tandem Cab and chassis purchased separately.

The ten Dump Bodies with Hydraulic Systems, Snow Removal Equipment, and Installation will be purchased from Towmaster, Inc., of Litchfield, MN, using the available State of Minnesota Contract. The purchase price for the ten Systems is estimated to be \$1,522,980.00. The total cost is within that budgeted for the purchase.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the St. Louis County Board authorize the purchase and installation of ten Dump Bodies with Hydraulic Systems, and Snow Removal Equipment from Towmaster, Inc., of Litchfield, MN, in the amount of \$1,522,980.00 payable from Fund 407, Agency 407001, and Object 666300.

**State Contract Purchase of Ten Dump Bodies with Hydraulic Systems
and Snow Removal Equipment**

BY COMMISSIONER_____

WHEREAS, The Public Works Department's equipment budget includes ten (10) Dump Bodies with Hydraulic Systems and Snow Removal Equipment for trucks purchased separately; and

WHEREAS, Towmaster, Inc., of Litchfield, MN, responded with the State of Minnesota contract price for ten (10) Dump Bodies with Hydraulic Systems and Snow Removal Equipment for \$1,522,980.00.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the St. Louis County Board authorizes the purchase order for the installation of ten (10) Dump Bodies with Hydraulic Systems and Snow Removal Equipment from Towmaster, Inc., of Litchfield, MN, for \$1,522,980.00, payable from Fund 407, Agency 407001, Object 666300.

BOARD LETTER NO. 21 – 53

CENTRAL MANAGEMENT & INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE NO. 3

FEBRUARY 2, 2021 BOARD AGENDA NO. 2

DATE: January 26, 2021

**RE: Resolution Opposing
Legislation Instituting a
Moratorium on Issuing Permits
for or Banning Nonferrous
Mining in Northeastern
Minnesota**

**FROM: Kevin Z. Gray
County Administrator**

RELATED DEPARTMENT GOAL:

To ensure effective and efficient government.

ACTION REQUESTED:

The St. Louis County Board is requested to consider a resolution in opposition to state or federal legislation placing a moratorium on issuing permits for nonferrous sulfide ore mining and/or banning future precious metal exploration and potential mining in Northeastern Minnesota.

BACKGROUND:

On December 20, 2011, the St. Louis County Board adopted Board Resolution No. 11-685, declaring its support for the existing open, transparent, and comprehensive environmental review and permitting process in place for the various nonferrous mining initiatives planned for development in the county. On February 14, 2017, the County Board adopted Board Resolution No. 17-112, requesting the rescission of the Bureau of Land Management and United States Forest Service proposal to withdraw 240,000 acres of land in NE Minnesota from future leasing, exploration, and potential development.

Legislation has been introduced during the 2021 State of Minnesota legislative session (SF 59) which would place a moratorium on all permits for, or pertaining to, nonferrous sulfide ore. At the federal level, a bill was introduced in early 2020 to withdraw 234,328 acres of federal land and waters in the Rainy River Watershed of the Superior National Forest from leasing, exploration and future development and a similar bill may be reintroduced in 2021, at both the federal and state levels.

Independent economic analysis by the University of Minnesota Duluth in June 2020 projected that one of the four non-ferrous mines is anticipated to be operational by 2024; and one to two more will have proposed projects in the environmental review phase. This is expected to produce an increase of 436 direct employment jobs and \$300 million in economic impact. The study further showed that ferrous and non-ferrous mining will support more than 11,000 jobs total in 2024 and nearly \$4.1 billion to the state's economy.

The County Board has long been supportive of strict state and federal laws to protect both human and environmental health, including the preparation of and regular updating of detailed closure plans designated to pay for the closure and associated environmental cleanup/mitigation, along with financial resources designated to pay for such closure. The County Board also continues to be supportive of an objective scientific and evidence-based permit review process to ensure the safe and responsible exploration and future mining of ferrous, nonferrous and other precious metals.

Given the extensive state and federal environmental review and permitting standards for exploration and development of mining operations in Minnesota, and the significant financial impact nonferrous mining can have on job(s) and the local economy, it seems counter-productive to enact legislation which arbitrarily undermines expert guidance and thorough review process.

RECOMMENDATION:

Should the County Board wish to go on record in opposition to a moratorium on issuing permits for nonferrous mining operations and withdrawal of federal and state lands and minerals from future exploration and potential development in Northeastern Minnesota, a resolution is attached.

**Resolution Opposing Legislation Instituting a Moratorium on Issuing Permits for
or Banning Nonferrous Mining in Northeastern Minnesota**

BY COMMISSIONER _____

WHEREAS, Bills in federal and state legislative bodies are or may be introduced to enact a moratorium on issuing permits for nonferrous mining operations or withdrawal of lands from future exploration and potential development in Northeastern Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, Enacting such legislation could cause devastating and irreversible damage to the citizens, communities and economy of St. Louis County and the region; and

WHEREAS, St. Louis County Board Resolution No. 11-685, adopted on December 20, 2011, declared the county's support for the existing open, transparent, and comprehensive environmental review and permitting process in place for the various nonferrous mining initiatives planned for development in the county; and

WHEREAS, St. Louis County Board Resolution No.17-112, adopted on February 14, 2017, requested the rescission of the Bureau of Land Management and United States Forest Service proposal to withdraw 240,000 acres of land in NE Minnesota from future leasing, exploration, and potential development; and

WHEREAS, A thorough and comprehensive environmental review process is already established under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); and

WHEREAS, The responsibility of the federal agencies is to accept proposed mineral development projects and subject them to the science-based review established under NEPA.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the St. Louis County Board opposes state or federal legislation which places a moratorium on issuing permits for nonferrous mining operations or withdrawal of lands from future exploration and potential development in Northeastern Minnesota.

RESOLVED FURTHER, That a copy of this resolution be sent to federal and state legislators to demonstrate the County Board's continued support of state and federal environmental review and permitting standards for the continued exploration and development of all ferrous and nonferrous mining operations in Minnesota.