

**2021 Minnesota County Highway Accountants Association  
Conference May 19-20, 2021  
Virtual Conference  
Minutes from the 47<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Conference**

**Notes:**

- The 2021 Conference was held virtually. There were 85 Accountants who registered for the conference. The attendance number may be higher if there are multiple staff for each County, and only 1 registered; Accountants could have shared the dial in and handout info with other staff.
- Since there was not a conference in 2020, the executive committee served 2 terms. The below is the Executive Committee for 2020 and 2021.
  1. Tracey Worzala from Stearns County is the President
  2. Patsy Waytashek from Wright County is the Vice President
  3. Erica Ellefson from Washington County is the Secretary/Treasurer
- I received the below communication to update the 2019 meeting minutes:
  1. Sherry Welinski – update spelling of name on page 2

**Wednesday, May 19, 2021**

**8:00 AM Webinar Opens**

**8:30 AM Welcome and Orientation**

New highway accountants were welcomed.

Tracy Worzala opened the conference by welcoming all attendees and thanked District 2 who organized the 47th annual (virtual) meeting. Thank you to Kari Moyer for heading up the planning committee.

Tracy introduced Patsy Waytashek, the Executive Committee Vice President and Erica Ellefson, the Executive Committee Secretary/Treasurer.

**9:00 AM New Accountants Refresher**

New Accountants (and returning Accountants) were able to attend the New Accountants Refresher meeting hosted by State Aid Finance (Mike Kilanowski). Chapters 1-6 of the State Aid Accounting Manual. Training was completed on the Annual Apportionments, along with T accounts for different expense/payment tracking. Presentation Material is available.

**9:45 AM Break**

**10:00 AM Project Funding Database**

Mike Kilanowski, from State Aid Finance, went through the Project Funding Database that went in to detail on the project/contract process start to finish. Presentation Material is available.

**10:45 OneOffice and TimePlus**

Melissa Scherer from RtVision spoke on OneOffice and TimePlus and discussed upgrade and statistics. Presentation Material is available.

**11:30 AM Lunch Break/Networking**

**12:30 PM Mixed District Roundtable Discussions**

Breakout Zoom rooms were made and the conference attendees were assigned to rooms.

The moderators of the rooms are noted below:

**Lake of the Woods:** Jane Larson

**Red Lake:** Lyle Mathison

**Mille Lacs:** Erica Ellefson

**Leech Lake:** Julie Huneke

**Lake Minnetonka:** Sarah Olsen

**Swan Lake:** Kristina Rice

**Lake Shetek:** Emily Johnson

**1:15 PM Job Costing 101**

Erica Ellefson presented on Job Costing 101. This was about how to track project expenses to budget over multiple years. Gave tips and tricks. Presentation Material is available.

**2:15 PM Break**

**2:30 PM New Roads Update**

Jacob Hackenmueller spoke on the New Roads construction cost accounting software.

**3:30 PM Counties Providing Technology (CPT) Update**

Dominique Mueller gave an update on CostRite highway/construction cost accounting software.

**4:30 PM Adjourn**

**Wednesday, May 19, 2021**

**7:30 AM Webinar Opens**

**8:00 AM MN County Engineers Association Update**

Brian Giese is the Preside of the MN County Engineer Association. Brian gave an update on the MN County Highway Engineers Association. He talked about the demand for County Engineers and their recruitment efforts to assist smaller counties.

**8:30 AM General Session – State Aid Update**

Cindy Degener, State Aid Finance Supervisor presented on State Aid Finance Updates. She discussed CRRSSA Funding splits for the State and Metro. She also presented on retainage and the change coming for TH Transfers/Turnbacks. Presentation Material is available.

**9:45 AM Break**

**10:00 AM MCIT – Protect Your Property: A Guide to Maintaining Coverage Schedules**

Tom Suppes presented for MCIT on insuring County Property and what MCIT will cover and what is needed as back up in order to obtain coverage. HE also went in to detail on the insurance schedules and how to read them. Noted that if you do not see it on the schedule, then you probably are not covered. He also went in to detail on how a property is valued at time of loss. Presentation Material is available.

**11:00 AM Your PERA Benefits**

Luis Argueta presented on behalf of PERA on PERA Member Benefits and tips on how to plan for retirement.

**12:00 PM Lunch Break/Networking**

**1:00 PM Navigating the Floodwaters: Lessons Learned in Dealing with Disaster Declarations and Wading through the Paperwork**

Scot Olsen and Heather Winkleblack discussed their lessons learned in how to deal with a disaster (storm/flooding) and the steps needed before the storm starts that will help your disaster clean up and reimbursement go smoothly.

**2:00 PM Fraud Awareness**

Erica Ellefson presented on Fraud Awareness; what is could look like and how prevenient it is in not only the US, but world. She discussed Rita Cromwell from Dixon, IL who was able to steal millions of dollars over a 20 year span and how she did not get caught for so long and then how it was detected. Presentation Material is available.

**3:00 PM Break**

**3:15 PM MN County Highway Accountants Business Meeting**

Tracy Worzala, President, called the business meeting to order. A copy of the 2019 meeting minutes was supplied electronically. There were a few changes to the 2019 minutes and they are highlighted below. A copy of the updated minutes will be sent out for approval to the members of the association.

1. Requested by Sherry Welinski, wished to update the spelling of her name on page 2.
2. Unknown person requested to change Poke to Polk on page 1.
3. Unknown person requested to remove Amanda Stradtman and Sheila Shroeder as new accountants.

Tracy announced Stephanie Larsen retired in March 2020 and Cindy Johnson retired in June 2020, both from Chisago County along with Nancy Boogaard in October 2020.

The Treasurer’s report was read by Erica Ellefson. A full copy of the report is available as attachment B to these minutes. Motion to accept, second. Approved. Due to the virtual conference, I was not able to capture who made these motions.

Tracy started discussing the possibility to split the Secretary/Treasurer position as a way to get more interest in becoming a part of the executive committee. It was communicated that the way to change the by-laws is to present the suggested changes

ahead of time to the members (with conference registration) and vote on at the conference needing a 2/3 majority vote to pass. These are the 2 bylaws that would need to be communicated and then voted on: Separating the position of Sec-Treas (Article II) and changing the term of the position (Article III).

Tracey communicated that her term as president is over and the Vice President, Patsy Waytashek from Wright County will be moving in to the President role, Secretary/Treasurer, Erica Ellefson from Washington County will be moving in to the Vice President Role. No nominations were received for the Secretary role. Tracey requested if there were any self nominations and Sheila Schroeder from Houston County volunteered to be the Secretary/Treasurer. I believe that Gloria Winkler, Mahnomon County, made the motion to approve the 2021 Executive Committee, but I was not able to capture who made the second.

Tracey and the rest of the executive committee wanted to discuss the conference locations and having them in a central city/county, at the same location for a period of 3 years. She communicated that this would make it easier on the planning committees and hopefully be able to lock us in to better pricing. It was communicated that we could not vote on this item at this conference and that we would have to bring it to the 2022 conference ahead of time by sending out formal communication about the proposed changes, and then voting on the change. This is something that can be discussed formally at the 2022 conference.

#### 2022 Conference:

- The location will be Central. (St. Cloud).
- Nicole Prickett, Anoka County is the Planning Committee Chair
- Metro is the Planning Committee
- District 2 is in charge of the Hospitality Room.

#### 2023 Conference

- The location will be South.
- The Planning Committee Chair is TBD. Sheila Schroeder, Houston County, said she can chair if no one else volunteers.
- District 6 is the Planning Committee
- District 7 is in charge of the Hospitality Room.

Tracey moved to adjourn the meeting. Sheila from Houston County approved the motion and Erica Ellefson second the motion. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Erica Ellefson, Washington County  
2020, 2021 Secretary/Treasurer

## Attachment A – Secretary Report

Minnesota Highway Accountants,

My name is Erica Ellefson and I am the current Secretary/Treasurer of our Association. I thought that I was signing up for a 1 year term but I was lucky and got to be it for 2 years now! I am going to be presenting the 2020 and 2021 budget with actual revenues and expenses.

When I assumed the Secretary Role in April 2019, the Checking and Savings Account total balance was \$6,419.22. As you know, in 2020, the Annual Highways Accountants Conference was cancelled and that is the event every year where the majority of expenses take place. We received the annual \$1,000 donation from the MN County Engineers Association in February 2020. There was also \$210 received from Association Members for the Wednesday night bowling; the entire \$210 was refunded to all member on 3/20. There were some expenses that were incurred for the conference of: \$1,000 to RockIt Man and \$200 for Bowling.

The starting balance in May 2020, which should have been the start of a new Secretary Role, was \$6,225.03. We did not request the \$1,000 donation from the MN County Engineers Association since there was not a conference in 2020, and the \$1,000 donation was unspent. This donation request should be resumed for the 2022 conference and be requested in January 2022. We did receive the \$1,000 refund for RockIt Man Entertainment that was booked for the 2020 conference which was cancelled. The plan was to have RockIt Man Entertainment be the entertainment for the 2021 conference, but when it went virtual, we requested a refund. We are waiting on 1 pending refund of \$200 for the Wednesday Night Bowling down payment and Lyle Mathison is working with Bemidji Bowl to get this paid back. The only expense that was incurred from June 1 – May 20, 2021 was a check to a fellow highway accountant whose husband passed away, per the Association bylaws.

The expected ending balance in both the checking and savings account as of May 31, 2021 is \$7,180.03. The final ending balance will depend on the monthly interest payment for the month. Commissioners, thank you for your time so I could give you an updated on the 2021 financials. I stand for any questions.

Thank you,  
Erica Ellefson