

ARROWHEAD REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (ARDC)

January 15, 2026 – 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

ARDC, 221 West First Street, Duluth, MN 55802

Minutes

Present = X	Member's Name	Representing
	Adee, Kevin	Townships
X	Baltus, Mike	Townships
X	Briggs, Brian	Communities Under 10,000
	Cuffee, Jr., Laurence	Communities Under 10,000
X	Davis, Dirk	At Large
X	DeRosier, Richard	Communities Under 10,000
	Deschampe, Bobby (Deshaw)	NATC – Grand Portage
	Drift, Perry	NATC – Bois Forte
X	Franklin, Pam	Advisory Committee - AAAA
X	Garry, Michael "Mike"	Communities Under 10,000
X	Goutermont, Richard	County Commissioners (Lake)
	Grimm, Ashley	County Commissioners (St. Louis)
X	Harala, Annie	County Commissioner (St. Louis)
	Hautala, Walter	School Boards
X	Hell, Destry	County Commissioner (Koochiching)
X	Hollinday, Jason	NATC – Fond du Lac
	Hoops, Mike	At Large
X	Hoppe, Joel	At Large
X	Johnson, John	County Commissioner (Itasca)
X	Kauppila, Clayton	Townships
X	Kearney, Mike	County Commissioner (Aitkin)
X	Lucas, David	Communities Under 10,000
X	Lyons, Steve	Advisory Committee on Aging
	MacGregor, Molly	Communities Over 10,000
	Maki, Roger	Communities Over 10,000
	McLaughlin, Kim	School Boards
X	Medure, Pat	At Large
	Nephew, Lynn	Communities Over 10,000
X	Nevanen, Paul	At Large
X	Rasmussen, Allen	At Large
X	Sherman, Grant	Townships
X	Storlie, Ginny	County Commissioners (Cook)
	Sydow, Steve	At Large
X	Whitney, Chris	Communities Over 10,000
	Zmyslony, Susan	County Commissioner (Carlton)
Present = X	Name	Representing
X	Binstock, Dee	ARDC
X	Chicka, Ron	ARDC
X	Kane, Kristi	ARDC

X	Alexandra, Renee	ARDC
X	Winter, Nate	ARDC
X	Sash, Rebecca	ARDC
X	Teskey, Beth Ann	ARDC
X	Yunk, Tony	
X	Bachschneider, Annie	

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Chair Storlie at 10:00 a.m. Round robin introductions.

Motion by Harala/Kearney to support. Motion carried unanimously. No members opposed or recused upon request.

2. **ANNUAL ELECTIONS – Allen Rasmussen (Referred to the Nominating Committee Report in Sent Packet)**

A. Commission – Ratified

- County Commissioner
Itasca County - John Johnson
Koochiching County – Destry Hell
St. Louis County - Annie Harala
St. Louis County - Ashley Grimm

Motion by Allen Rasmussen. Motion carried unanimously as no members opposed or recused upon requests.

- Township Officials
Itasca County – Mike Baltus

Motion by Allen Rasmussen. Motion carried unanimously as no members opposed or recused upon requests.

- Communities Under 10,000
Aitkin County – Mark Jeffers
Itasca County – Tony Yunk
St. Louis County - Annie Bachschneider

Motion by Allen Rasmussen. Motion carried unanimously as no members opposed or recused upon requests

- Communities Over 10,000
Cloquet – Carlton – Roger Maki
Grand Rapids – Itasca – Rick Blake

Motion by Allen Rasmussen. Motion carried unanimously as no members opposed or recused upon requests

- Native American Tribal Council
Grand Portage – Bobby Deschampe

Motion by Allen Rasmussen. Motion carried unanimously as no members opposed or recused upon requests

- Advisory Committee
Area Agency on Aging – Steve Lyons

Motion by Allen Rasmussen. Motion carried unanimously as no members opposed or recused upon requests

B. Commission – To be voted

- At Large Members
Aitkin County - Joel Hoppe
Koochiching County - Allen Rasmussen
St. Louis County - Dirk Davis

Motion by Allen Rasmussen. Motion carried unanimously as no members opposed or recused upon requests

C. Board of Directors – To be ratified

- County Commissioners
Itasca County – John Johnson
Koochiching County – Destry Hell
St. Louis County – Annie Harala

Motion by Allen Rasmussen. Motion carried unanimously as no members opposed or recused upon requests

D. Board of Directors – To be voted

- Officers
Chair – Commissioner Virginia “Ginny” Storlie
Vice Chair – Commissioner John Johnson
Treasurer – Allen Rasmussen
Secretary – Jason Hollinday

Motion by Allen Rasmussen. Motion carried unanimously as no members opposed or recused upon requests

- At Large
Allen Rasmussen

Motion by Allen Rasmussen. Motion carried unanimously as no members opposed or recused upon requests

E. Recognition of Outgoing Members

Members were recognized and thanked for their service to the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission.

3. CONSENT AGENDA for approval of the following:

Board Meeting Minutes, October 16th, 2025

Motion by Johnson/Medure to support. Motion carried unanimously. No members opposed

or recused upon request.

4. CHAIR COMMENTS

- Appointment of building assessment committee
 - Chair Ginny Storlie appointed a Building Assessment Committee -
- Commission Meetings Locations
 - Chair Storlie confirmed that the Annual Meeting will stay on its current date and location.

5. **RESOLUTION:** Authorization to enter into a Professional Services Contract for Human Resources services with Northwest Regional Development Commission (NWRDC) for up to \$10,000 – *Kristi Kane*

Motion by Harala/Johnson to support. Discussion Occurred. Motion carried unanimously. No members opposed or recused upon request.

6. **AMENDED RESOLUTION:** Title III-C Nutritional Supplement Amendment for January Meeting – *Rebecca Sash*

Motion by Harala/Nevenen to support. Motion carried unanimously. No members opposed. One member recused.

7. **AMENDED RESOLUTION:** Authorizing ARDC to Accept the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging (AAAA) Area Plan activities and funding, authorized under the Federal Older American Act and distributed through the Minnesota Board on Aging in the amount of up to \$5,000,000 – *Rebecca Sash*

Motion by Hoppe/Medure to support. Motion carried unanimously. No members opposed or recused upon request.

8. **DISCUSSION:** Fiscal Agent – *K. Kane*

- *Executive Director Kristi Kane mentioned that there's been a request from the Arrowhead Trails Association asking for assistance to be a fiscal sponsor for a grant. During a subcommittee meeting, they determined that they would not provide the fiscal aid. There is another request on the table for fiscal sponsorship. In the past internal capacity wasn't large enough to handle federal grants but now has determined they do have the capacity for this fiscal sponsor considering it a low-risk venture. Grant is to establish a coalition of trails. Discussion to add a financial committee. Motion to move forward with this proposal as fiscal sponsor if ATA is successful in receiving funding. Motion by Johnson/Harala. Motion carried unanimously. No members opposed or recused upon request.*
- *Finance Committee Volunteers– Annie Harala – Pat Medure - John Johnson*

9. **PRESENTATION:** CLA Finance Department Assessment – *Presented by Jocie Die and Angela Weinell*

10. **REVOLVING LOAN FUND (RLF) REPORT:** was referred to by Executive Director Kane. The Executive Director noted Funds are available in Legacy and CARES fund. Spoke with Board last

month about making changes to the Legacy guidelines to focus in investigating in developer incentives for housing projects for \$30,000-\$50,000. Also noted that ARDC continues to talk with Department of Commerce on capitalizing a C-PACE loan program and is expecting an award in the vicinity of \$600,000.

11. AGENCY WIDE BUDGET – Kristi Kane, Executive Director

- 2026 Final Agency Wide Budget
- **RESOLUTION:** Adoption of Final Agency Wide 2026 Budget and 2025 Tax Levy Apportionment.

Motion by Medure/Johnson to support. Motion carried unanimously. No members opposed or recused upon request.

12. FINANCIAL REPORT: December 2025's financial reports were reviewed by Nate Winter from Clifton Larson Allen, ARDC's temporary acting Finance Director. Winter noted an increase in payroll for end of year. Right on mark for annual budget, and a healthy fund balance. There were a few new loans and activity in the RLF fund.

- Discussion occurred over swapping to local banks rather than national/state banks. From investigation, the bylaws state that ARDC is required to use State and National banks only. Proposal to change the bylaws accordingly.

13. PRESENTATION: CEDS Activity – *Presented By: Josh Bergstad*

14. MANAGEMENT UPDATE

- **Planning**
 - Teskey provided a brief overview of the Planning Division to new members
 - **Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC):** Reviewed final draft of Strategies for the Greater Minnesota Transit Plan. RTCC Program Evaluation Kick Off meeting with University of Minnesota (U of M). Work with U of M Empowering Small Minnesota Communities (\$3,000 MOU in process). Adult Behavioral Health Institute (ABHI) and Transportation Group data request and online survey drafted – next meeting January 30th.
 - **Regional Transportation Advisory Council (RTAC):** Gavin Bukovich invited by Carlton County to serve on bike pedestrian trail transportation grant committee for master planning. Functional Class Rating meetings occurred with MnDOT Central Office and District 1. Letter of Support for Carlton Public Health and Human Services Active Transportation Planning Assistance. Scenic Byway meetings being planned.
 - **Age-Friendly Minnesota:** Currently 65 survey respondents. State of Minnesota Grant Monitoring Virtual Visit January 22nd.
 - **Upper Minnesota Valley RDC GIS Staff Assistance:** Creating updated MOU to provide as needed GIS assistance to UMVRDC for full-year 2026.

- **Keystone Policy Center Department of Energy Collaboration Grant:** Selected Life with Vigor/LWV Productions for ARDC and ARDC Planning website redesign and Cheryl Glaeser/Achieve Consulting to complete CEDS Public Engagement.
- **NOAA-Saint Louis County Climate Resilience Project:** Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa event January 10th – well-attended. Deciding on the Regional Plan format, Work Plan for the working groups, updating reporting metrics as exceeded expectations in a year (15 events/576 participants). Presentation to Board anticipated for February.
- **MnDOT Safe Routes to School (Duluth/Floodwood SRTS):** Preparing to schedule second Steering Committee virtually for ISD 709 to share/assess data collected thus far. Preparing to write Floodwood’s SRTS Plan.
- **Energy Efficiency and Conversation Block Grant (EECBG):** Working on final Proctor School District sub-grant selection paperwork for energy audit/plan. Submitted Floodwood School District project to Minnesota Department of Commerce for review.
- **MN Department of Commerce State Competitiveness Fund:** C-PACE/RLF work can be done through this grant as discussed at prior ARDC Board meeting.
- **City of Buhl Comprehensive Plan:** Meeting with City Clerk January 15th to review progress and set future dates.
- **Edge of the Wilderness Comprehensive Plan:** Josh Bergstad reached out to confirm specific contract extension date so amendment to contract term can be made – awaiting a reply.
- **Economic Development Administration:** Close to submitting multiple grants. Goal to submit by January 23rd. New economic impact statement is slowing the process. Also working on a new Brownfields Coalition Grant submission due January 28th.
- **Coastal Erosion Hazard Mapping IV:** Met with Minnesota’s Lake Superior Coastal Program January 12th to provide status update. Intern started same date and began digitization of two additional DSAS maps.
- **North Shore Management Plan STAR Grant Phase 2:** North Shore Management Board provided plan updates for 30-day review, which will be followed by public 30-day review period in February. Plan to then be finalized and project to complete end of March.
- **North Shore Management Board:** Board to meet today, January 15, with a request to discuss DSAS map data release.
- **Gitchi-Gami Trail Association:** Board meeting January 8th. Board would like the next budget proposal to be provided for its March meeting. Anticipate website redesign go-live end of January.
- **Northeast Minnesota Area Transportation Partnership:** Preparation for NEMNATP funding application review meetings underway. New February 1st contract is in place.
- **Northshore Roadway Resilience/Highway 61:** MnDOT working on selecting and announcing a consultant. Work will begin once consultant onboarded.
- **Waters of the Dancing Sky Corridor Management Plan:** MnDOT contract signed late December. Northwest and Headwaters RDC subcontracts in process of being signed.

- **Tower Breitung Comprehensive Plan:** Work slated to begin in February.
- **LaPrairie Comprehensive Plan:** Josh Bergstad following up on status of our proposal and scope of work submission with the community.
- **LCCMR:** Josh Bergstad completing work plan updates. Presentation to ARDC Board anticipated for February.
- **MIC**
 - Chicka introduced his division to new members, giving a brief overview of the MPO.
 - Safe Streets for All will be in the next bill in the next few months. Received funding, mentions presenting on it soon.
 - Been doing work with the Joint Powers Agreement
- **Aging**
 - Sash introduced her division to new members.
 - WRAPs resources pilot which ended last September was nominated for a national innovations award
 - OAA legal services provider, Justice North, has merged with NWLASMN, will remain “Justice North” This is considered a positive merger as it will increase capacity and coverage. Working with NWRDC as this is a shared contractor to reduce reporting and other admin functions.
 - Will be posting for two new positions: Resource Specialist and Volunteer/Education Coordinator. Posted internally today for one week and then will go external.
 - OAA Grantee/Contractor training planned for March. Will focus heavily on components of compliance for a few new grantees, and long-time. But several changes to policy and procedures. This is done annually but this year’s seems to be especially relevant.
- **Operations**
 - Kane reported that the conversion from Sick and Vacation to Combined accrual is almost finished. She commended operations team, especially finance for all their hard work.
 - Working on getting administrator access to Sam.gov. Believe the process is complete. Setting up a backup contact.
 - Working on updating the ARDC website.
 - New workplan has been sent out.
 - CEDS is launching soon and Kane is hoping to structure the 2026 Workplan accordingly to feedback.
 - Plumber ‘blew out’ the pipes but problems with the plumbing continue. Heating issues appear to be resolved.
 - Kane noted that there would be an orientation for new members in April, after the Commission meeting.

15. APPRISE FROM BOARD MEMBERS &/OR GUESTS.

16. UPCOMING MEETINGS

- **Board Meeting** – February 19th, 2026 – ARDC
- **Board Meeting** – March 19th, 2026 – ARDC
- **Commission Meeting** – April 16th, 2026 - Hermantown Public Safety Building (Fire & Police) in the Training Center

17. ADJOURN Meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Attest:

Virginia L. Starlin

ARDC Chair



Submitted by Renee Alexandra, Exec. Assistant, Board & Commission Coordinator