

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA
February 23, 2017
Minnesota State Capitol, Room G23 Senate Committee Room
Saint Paul, MN**

In attendance Governor Mark Dayton
 Lt. Governor Tina Smith
 Secretary of State Steve Simon
 Attorney General Lori Swanson
 State Auditor Rebecca Otto
 Commissioner of Administration Matt Massman

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. by Governor Mark Dayton. The minutes of the December 1, 2016 meeting were approved with a move to approve by Governor Dayton, seconded by Auditor Otto and unanimously approved.

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

Jon Klockziem, Director of Property Tax Relief, Department of Revenue, presented the requests to approve Property Tax Relief Requests for property damage that occurred as a result of severe weather events in 2016 from Waseca County. Mr. Klockziem reminded the Council of their December 2016 approvals for Aitkin, Blue Earth, Meeker, Pine, Saint Louis, and Steele Counties, but at the time, Waseca was unable to submit their request. Mr. Klockziem informed the Executive Council he would bring the Waseca request to their next meeting.

- A motion to approve was made by Attorney General Swanson, seconded by Lt. Governor Smith and unanimously approved.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR)

Governor Dayton asked if there were members of the public wishing to address the Council after presentation of this item. Four individuals affirmed their intent.

Tom Landwehr, Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources, presented the request for approval of Negotiated State Metallic Minerals Leases in Aitkin and Carlton Counties. Commissioner Landwehr outlined the lease process as included in the meeting materials. Jess Richards, Director of Land and Minerals, outlined the leasing duration.

Governor Dayton welcomed comments from the audience. Greg Bernu, Carlton County Land Commissioner, is in favor of the request and stated it was approved by the Carlton County Land board. Craig Sterle, Member, Carlton County Land Stewards, expressed concern about the timing and geography and suggested a moratorium on exploration and mining. Bob Tammen, former mining worker, gave an overview of the Minnesota mining economy and the undesirable impact of iron mining on the environment over the last 30 years. Don Arnosti, Conservation Program Director, Izaak Walton League, requested more steps in the process and an environmental review.

Governor Dayton thanked the group for their thoughtful contributions.

State Auditor Otto indicated the Department of Natural Resources does a good job of notifying the public of the lease mining process. Auditor Otto noted she receives email notifications from the DNR and hears from residents. Auditor Otto remains concerned about the financial impacts on the state as well as due diligence on behalf of the State of Minnesota. Auditor Otto indicated for these reasons she will vote against the request.

- Governor Dayton called for a motion and Lt. Governor Smith moved to approve the issuance of 14 negotiated state metallic minerals leases in Aitkin and Carlton counties before the Council. Governor Dayton, Lt. Governor Smith, Secretary of State Simon and Attorney General Swanson voted aye. State Auditor Otto voted nay. Motion approved by majority vote.

Meeting was adjourned by Governor Dayton at 10:30 am.

Draft for approval at May 31, 2017 meeting.