

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA  
Thursday, November 14, 2019  
Room G-23, State Capitol**

In attendance: Governor Tim Walz  
Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan  
Attorney General Keith Ellison by telephone  
State Auditor Julie Blaha  
Secretary of State Steve Simon

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Governor Tim Walz called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Governor Walz welcomed members to the Executive Council meeting and requested a roll call of attendance. All members were present.

Sarah Strommen, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources presented the request to approve issuance of state taconite iron ore mining lease to ArcelorMittal Hibbing Inc., Cliffs Mining Holding Sub Company, Ontario Hibbing Company, and Hibbing Development company as required by Minn. Stat., Sec. 93.1925. Commissioner Strommen outlined the area where the request for approval resides and explained the five-year term of the agreement.

Lt. Governor Flanagan asked if there is tribal agreement. Joe Henderson, Director of the Department of Natural Resources Division of Lands and Minerals, explained that Hibbing Taconite has a cultural site, Hill of Many Waters, that is important to tribal members. Mr. Henderson has established quarterly meetings with the tribes and briefed the tribe on the proposal as the tribes wish to continue to have access to the cultural site. There is no objection from the tribes.

State Auditor Blaha asked about oversight and making certain the numbers in the proposal are correct for appropriate mining. Mr. Henderson explained the multi-step process that keeps records of the trucks, utilizes the scales on site, monitors truck logs, and weights and measures ensures the scale is accurate. They also have GPS systems on shovels and haulers.

Secretary Simon asked how soon they expect to begin mining. Mr. Henderson said immediately and thanked the Executive Council for calling this meeting to review the request. Commissioner Strommen noted the lease is critical to the current mine life.

Governor Walz called members of the public who requested to address the council to the podium. John Ongaro, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, St. Louis County, spoke on behalf of the County Board in favor of the request. Bill Sandvig, USW Local 2705 representative, spoke on behalf of the 650 union employees of Hibbing Taconite in favor of the request. Ed LaTendresse, General Manager of Hibbing Taconite spoke in favor of the request.

Governor Walz asked if anyone had questions. Being none, Commissioner Alice Roberts-Davis called for a roll call vote as follows:

Governor Tim Walz – aye

Lt. Governor Peggy Flannagan – aye

State Auditor Julie Blaha – aye

Secretary of State Steve Simon – aye

Attorney General Keith Ellison – aye

The motion unanimously passed, and the meeting adjourned at 1:26 p.m.

Approved at 12.02.19 Executive Council meeting