Regular Board Meeting

DECC Authority Board of Directors
Thursday, April 30, 2026

Duluth Entertainment Convention Center

AGENDA

DECC Authority Board of Directors

Regular Meeting
Thursday, April 30, 2026
Harbor Side Convention Center – Horizon Room 203

MISSION

We host events, create experiences, and drive our regional economy.

VALUES

Hospitality | Entertainment | Community | Visionary | Stewardship

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MEETING AGENDA

I. **Call to Order**

II. **Public Open Comment Period**
   a. *Members of the public sign in and each receive 3 minutes to speak.*

III. **Approval of Consent Agenda**
   a. Agenda
   b. Regular Board Meeting Minutes – February 26, 2026
   c. Finance Statements January and February

IV. **Executive Director Report**
   a. Update on Strategic Goals

V. **Committee Reports**
   a. Strategy
      i. Update
   b. Finance
      i. January 2026 Financial Report
      ii. February 2026 Financial Report
   c. Governance
      i. Update

VI. **Old Business**

VII. **New Business**
   a. Non-voting Regional Board Members

b. Arena Network – 5 year agreement
c. Executive Director Salary

VIII. Other Business

IX. Adjournment

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next regular business meeting is Thursday, May 28, 2026, in the Harbor Side Convention Center – Horizon Room 203 location.

Duluth Entertainment Convention Center

Thursday, February 26, 2026
12:00PM to 1:30PM
Harbor Side Convention Center – Horizon Room

DECC AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEETING MINUTES

February 26, 2026, Regular Meeting

MISSION

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CALL TO ORDER

A Regular Board Meeting was held on Thursday, February 26, 2026, in the Harbor Side Convention Center – Horizon Room location. Chair T. Sertich called the meeting to order at 12:00PM. A quorum of directors was present.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Tony Sertich, Chair
Jason Vincent, Vice Chair
Maya Mattke, Treasurer
Carli Amatuzio, Secretary
Laura Mullen
Peter Singler
Kristi Schmidt
Stephanie LaFleur
Zack Filipovich

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Pat Mullen
Shane Peterson

DECC STAFF PRESENT

Dan Hartman
Amanda Denton
Alex Wink
Lucie Amundsen

OTHERS PRESENT

Lynn Marie Nephew, Duluth City Council Liaison
Media

PUBLIC OPEN COMMENT PERIOD

Chair T. Sertich asked for a review of the public open comment period sign-up sheet. No members of the public signed up for comment.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Chair T. Sertich reviewed the consent agenda, which included:

- Meeting agenda,
- Meeting minutes from the January 29, 2026, Regular Board Meeting

MOTION to approve the consent agenda requested by Chair T. Sertich; motion made by Z. Filipovich and seconded by K. Schmidt. The motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Explore Minnesota Tourism Conference

- The DECC recently hosted the Explore Minnesota Tourism Conference. As part of the event, staff installed a temporary igloo feature on the roof deck, which became one of the more talked-about elements of the evening reception.
- The roof deck activation demonstrated that the space can be effectively used during winter months and reinforced the importance of creatively leveraging underutilized areas of the campus.
- Executive Director D. Hartman noted that hosting peers from across the state's tourism industry was both professionally rewarding and operationally demanding, and the event was considered a success from both hospitality and food service standpoints.

Strategic Planning & Facilities Work

- The Facilities Condition Assessment (FCA) agreement has passed the necessary approval stages and is currently in final administrative processing. Once executed, the DECC will issue the related RFP.
- The assessment is viewed as a critical foundational tool to guide long-term facility improvement decisions and address aging infrastructure across the campus.
- Public purpose planning was completed in the prior year. In connection with next steps, DECC leadership have met with an architectural planning group to better understand what a comprehensive campus/master plan could entail. The Strategy Committee discussed the possibility of inviting a planning firm to present educational information to the Board regarding what a campus plan typically includes, prior to any formal selection process.

Suite Operations & Premium Experience Development

- Executive Director D. Hartman shared observations from a recently hosted suite experience during a UMD hockey game. The suite functioned largely as a social and networking space rather than a traditional game-viewing environment, with guests congregating around food and beverage areas.
- The configuration allowed for both quieter conversation space and proximity to the ice, illustrating flexibility in how premium space can be programmed.
- The concept originated from prior benchmarking conversations with the Minnesota Vikings regarding conversational-friendly suite environments.
- There is internal interest in continuing to evaluate other potential premium or rentable areas within AMSOIL Arena and elsewhere on campus, including event-specific suite concepts for concerts and specialty programming.

Ticketing & Attendance Observations

- Attendance for the North Dakota hockey series was discussed, with approximately 6,500 tickets distributed and approximately 4,800 scanned in attendance for one of the games.

- Executive Director D. Hartman emphasized that distributed season tickets not translating into in-building attendance negatively impacts concessions and other event-day revenue sources.
- Many season tickets are held by corporate partners, which can create coordination challenges in redistributing unused tickets.
- Industry practices were also referenced, including requiring season ticket holders to claim seats by a certain deadline or allowing unused inventory to be released back into public sale.
- The transition to fully digital ticketing was noted as an additional challenge for some user groups.

Tourism Data & Market Trends

- The DECC hosted the Explore Minnesota Tourism Conference on February 11 & 12, so Executive Director Dan Hartman shared some of the data that was presented at the conference and how it relates to the DECC:
    - 91% of American travelers plan to travel within the next six months.
    - Travel spending intent remains strong, with only 17% planning to reduce spending.
    - Rest and relaxation continue to rank as the top travel motivation.
    - Growth in "togethering" (multi-generational travel) and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) was highlighted.
    - A continued preference for driving over air travel benefits Duluth as a regional destination.
    - Minnesota welcomed approximately 81.6 million visitors in 2024, generating $14.7 billion in total economic impact.
    - Domestic travel significantly outweighs international travel in Minnesota's visitor profile.
    - St. Louis County generated approximately $1 billion in visitor spending, ranking among the top counties outside the metro region.
    - Tourism trends remain positive and Duluth is well-positioned within the regional drive market, particularly given continued demand for outdoor recreation and rest-focused destinations.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Strategy

- The Strategy Committee met prior to the Board meeting and focused primarily on preparation for agenda items scheduled for Board consideration.

Finance

Finance Director A. Denton and Treasurer M. Mattke provided the following financial update for December 2025:

- Total current assets: $7,277,383
- Total current liabilities: $4,284,039
- Year-to-date retained earnings: $542,278
- December net loss: $26,908 compared to a budgeted loss of $190,685 for a favorable variance of $163,777

Key Financial Notes:

- December finished ahead of budget due to stronger-than-expected performance tied to event activity, including sports programming, seasonal events, and entertainment.
- Positive variances were noted in catering and concessions, entertainment, and administrative activity, including year-end adjustments.
- Building Services reflected an unfavorable variance primarily related to building and ice rental activity trending below budget.

- The December financial statements are marked as drafts, as year-end adjustments remain in progress. Finance Director A. Denton noted that final figures may change as closing entries are completed.
- Audit fieldwork is currently underway, with the same audit firm engaged for a second consecutive year. The audit process will continue over the coming months.

Forecast:

- Finance Director A. Denton noted that while December performance helped offset weaker results earlier in the quarter, 2026 first quarter performance continues to trend conservatively.
- The favorable December variance helps stabilize year-end positioning; however, the DECC is not yet fully "in the clear" for early-year performance.
- Continued event activity and booking performance will be important in maintaining positive retained earnings momentum into the next fiscal period.

MOTION to approve the December Financial Report requested by Chair T. Sertich; motion made by S. LaFleur and seconded by L. Mullen. The motion carried unanimously.

Governance

- The Governance Committee met and primarily discussed the three non-voting positions that are being considered for the Board, which was discussed later in the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

No Old Business was discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

MediaUSA Contract

- Executive Director D. Hartman presented a revised advertising agreement with MediaUSA, noting that negotiations have been ongoing since mid-2025. The updated agreement reflects significant structural improvements over the prior contract.
- The DECC's share of advertising revenue generated from in-building ad sales increases from 20% to 40%.
- The agreement establishes a defined minimum annual revenue floor that exceeds recent historical returns, which have ranged between approximately $75,000 and $95,000.
- The agreement is for a five-year term.
- The prior auto-renew provision has been removed, ensuring future Board review before renewal.
- Advertising sold prior to the October implementation date will carry the updated 40% revenue share.

MOTION to approve the MediaUSA contract requested by Chair T. Sertich; motion made by P. Singler and seconded by Z. Filipovich. The motion carried unanimously.

Non-Voting Regional Board Members

- A proposal was presented to add three non-voting regional board member positions to increase regional input and participation, reflecting themes raised during listening sessions about how the DECC can better incorporate regional perspectives.
- The proposal identified three regions for representation: Iron Range, the Carlton County area, and North Shore/Lake Superior. A two-year term and a public application process were discussed, with review and recommendation work assigned to the Governance Committee.

- The Board discussed expectations for engagement, travel considerations, and flexibility options if participation barriers arise.
- Board discussion also included how to appropriately approach tribal engagement and representation.
- Based on discussion, the Board agreed that additional refinement was needed before moving forward.

MOTION to revert the proposal back to the Governance Committee was requested by Chair T. Sertich; motion made by Z. Filipovich and seconded by P. Singler. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Executive Director D. Hartman reminded the Board of upcoming Duluth & St. Louis County Days in St. Paul and noted that DECC will provide Board members with talking points in advance of the event. Priorities expected to be included in those talking points were described as facility-related needs impacting staff safety and building performance, as well as accessibility issues across campus.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair T. Sertich adjourned the meeting at 12:50PM.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next regular meeting will be held March 26, 2026, in the Senator Sam Solon Board Room location.

Submitted by:

Tony Sertich, Chair	Carli Amatuzio, Secretary
Date	Date