

Fredrikson and Byron Legislative Update



MAT/MATIT STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

February 21, 2021

Congratulations on a successful L&R earlier this week! It's always good to see the number of legislators who participate and appreciate townships. Now it's a matter of taking that good will and transferring it toward our MAT legislative priorities...

Things are starting to heat up more at the State Capitol. This past week saw efforts to address public safety costs borne by protests in Minnesota's metro cities, advancement of legalizing marijuana and announcements around the re-opening of schools. This week will be busy as more bills are heard in committees of interest to MAT and the February Budget Forecast will show how much of an estimated budget deficit the state has for the FY2022-23 Biennium. So buckle up!

Just a reminder, we are now three weeks away from the beginning of the "committee deadline season" of the legislative session. Here are the key legislative deadlines and their meanings:

- ☐ 1st Deadline: Friday, March 12, 2021 (Committees must act favorably on bills in the house of origin)
- ☐ 2nd Deadline: Friday, March 19, 2021 (Committees must act favorably on bills, or companions of bills, that met the first deadline in the other house)
- ☐ 3rd Deadline: Friday, April 9, 2021 (Committees must act favorably on major appropriation and finance bills)
- ☐ Passover/Easter Break: March 29 – April 5
- ☐ Final day of session: May 17, 2021.

Here are some MAT highlights from last week:

- Because of the L&R, MAT devoted the majority of its activities this week to the Wednesday program.
- Ted Kowalski, Spring Lake Township Chair, testified before the House State Government Policy & Finance Committee in support of Rep. Sandra Masin's HF 527, legislation to allow local government to charge a street impact fee on developers.
- MAT staff and Fredrikson & Byron (F&B) lobbyists met with county lobbyists (AMC) on the Local Board of Appeal & Equalization (LBAE) MAT priority.
- MAT's annexation bill was introduced Monday, Feb. 15, as Senate File 1032.

As for MAT highlights for this coming week:

- Meeting with Rep. Olson to discuss MAT legislation (eg; annexation). This meeting was scheduled for last week but was rescheduled.
- Workers Compensation Advisory Council (WCAC) Meeting
- Committee Hearings:
 - Feb. 24 – House Local Government Division
 1. HF820 (Koegel) Open Meeting Law; public body member allowed to attend meetings from a private location more than three times in 2021
 2. HF1140 (Elkins) Open Meeting Law; terminology and requirements modified related to meetings conducted through the use of telephone or interactive technology.
 - Feb. 24 – Senate Agriculture Committee:

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1. S.F. 946 (Westrom) - Broadband grant program funds transfer
 2. S.F. 1186 (Draheim) - Broadband grant program appropriation.
- Feb. 26 – House State Govt. Finance Committee:
 1. (Pending Referral) HF820 (Koegel) Open Meeting Law; public body member allowed to attend meetings from a private location more than three times in 2021
 2. (Pending Referral) HF1140 (Elkins) Open Meeting Law; terminology and requirements modified related to meetings conducted through the use of telephone or interactive technology.

KEY MAT ISSUES

- LBAE – MAT has determined to not move the LBAE issue forward. After conferring with the counties (AMC), there just isn't enough time in the legislative process to make this happen in time for the LBAE hearings starting as early as April 1.
- Local Govt. Street Assessment – MAT continues to participate in the coalition to push this bill forward in the legislative process (see above with Spring Lake Township's Ted Kowalski).
- Culvert Replacement Cost Shift – MAT leadership (Gary Burdorf), MAT staff and F&B lobbyist continue to pursue this issue via the proper state agencies/boards to determine if legislation is necessary.
- Broadband – Various funding proposals from key legislators continue to be heard in the House and will be in the Senate. The Governor has recommended funding for broadband. This will come into focus as we get closer to the Third Committee Deadline. MAT and F&B lobbyists will continue to monitor and, if appropriate, testify in committee.
- Open Meeting Law/Mandated Public Comments – MAT continues to work in coalition with other state/local government stakeholders to make sure that, as this and other germane legislation moves through the legislative process, it is user-friendly for townships and doesn't create unfunded mandates.
- Elections – Various election-law bills are currently moving through the legislative process. Because of the 2020 election outcomes and its aftermath, there are strong feelings and it could be a while before any significant changes make it into law. For example, read this story about a House "technical" elections bill that was approved this week on a partisan vote - ['Technical' elections bill approved by committee on partisan vote - Session Daily - Minnesota House of Representatives \(state.mn.us\)](#).
- Transportation – MAT leadership (Gary Burdorf), MAT staff and F&B lobbyists are exploring transportation funding options for the transportation committee chairs. We are also working with Sen. Howe on SF625, which dedicates a percentage of revenue from auto sales parts to a township road account.
- Annexation – Sen. Anderson introduced SF1032 last week on the orderly annexation agreement change. MAT staff & F&B lobbyists are working with him to introduce a second annexation bill which includes the orderly annexation stipulation, elimination of other city annexation powers and strengthens townships' detachment powers. MAT is in the process of recruiting a House chief author for both bills.