

Vikings Receive Informational Hearings at Minnesota Capitol

By [Christine M. Zimmer](#) on December 01, 2011

This week the Senate Tax Committee paired up with the Committee on Local Government and Elections for a joint informational hearing. The committees heard background and site information from the Metropolitan Sports Commission, the Vikings, Ramsey County/Arden Hills and the city of Minneapolis. Public testimony was taken regarding site specific support or opposition. Chairs Julianne Ortman (R-Chanhassen) and Ray Vandevveer (R-Forest Lake) led the hearing.

Senate members, specifically Ortman and Jobs and Economic Growth Chair Geoff Michel (R-Edina), pushed Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak to settle on one site. Michel pointedly told Rybak, "If you've got three, you really have none." Ortman urged Ramsey County to come prepared to provide details on local revenue for the proposal at the December 6 hearing.

The second informational hearing will be held on December 6. It is a joint hearing of the Senate Tax Committee and the Committee on State Government Innovation and Veterans. This hearing will address the state and local support requested and the various financing options for a stadium. The committee agenda list sources of revenue as: art and cultural funds, Minneapolis convention revenue, charitable gaming electronic pulltabs, racino, sports memorabilia sales tax, NFL income tax surcharge and a ticket surcharge on professional sports.

Already over 30 individuals or groups have signed up to testify. Chairs Ortman and Mike Parry (R-Waseca) have allotted six hours for the hearing and are planning on overflow crowds.

State Representative Terry Morrow (DFL-St. Peter) had scheduled a press conference for Monday of this week to bring forward some additional ideas. He cancelled the press conference after seeing the Vikings advertisement over the weekend that highlights the "but for" the Vikings revenue streams.

Morrow, a member of the working group on the stadium issue, wants to be sure all options are on the table for the stadium discussion. The "but for" Vikings revenue, includes the taxes and money collected because the Vikings play in Minnesota. Without a team, there will be a revenue hole in the general fund. The taxes collected on Vikings players' salaries and those of the opposing teams salaries during the time the play in Minnesota and sales tax on items in the facility are some the revenue streams created by the team.