



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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APEX Annual Meeting Focuses on the Connection Between Water and Industry

Duluth, Minnesota: On January 25, 2018, the Area Partnership for Economic Expansion (APEX) hosted their annual Board of Directors and investor-member meeting and reception at the Kitchi Gammi Club. The meeting featured guest speaker LaMarr Barnes, CEO of U.S. Water Services, Inc. (U.S. Water) speaking about the interconnection of water and industry in our region and the importance of understanding and managing water in a sustainable way.

Barnes shared valuable insight into the changing hydrological cycle, explaining the intricacies of the water/energy nexus throughout industries. Generating electrical power, agriculture, public water and industry are the largest water-using sectors in our economy today. Northern Minnesota and Wisconsin face unique concerns in terms of water treatment and management. We need to consider the impacts of using fresh water for industry, commercial and residential applications. For example, even salt from snow removal can have very real impacts on our water supply.

“We have the largest reservoir of fresh water in the world, right here on our doorsteps,” said Barnes. “And we have some opportunities to lead the nation, and maybe even the world, in changing the way we think about industrial water in particular.”

In order to use, manage, and treat water sustainably for years to come, Barnes suggested understanding the true cost of industrial water usage and making infrastructure improvements to make better use of clean water, impaired/gray water and wastewater. A deeper understanding will lead to better long-term decisions regarding public and industrial water use.

“We have access to an excellent water supply in Minnesota,” continued Barnes. “We also have sensitive environments that need to be protected. The key to long-term sustainability will be forging stronger partnerships between municipalities and industry, so water may be used most efficiently.”

“The smart use of water impacts the lives of all of us and APEX investor-members are very aware of that fact,” said Brian Hanson, APEX President and CEO. “The industries in which we all work depend heavily on the use of, and care for, our water resources. Understanding the



connections between water and industry will lead us to sustainable choices for economic development and water use.”

Barnes’ presentation provided valuable insight into the future of our region, leaving his audience with much to consider regarding the importance of water in their respective industries.

At the annual meeting, the APEX Board of Directors also elected the 2018 Executive Committee members.

APEX 2018 Officers and Executive Committee

Chair: Brian Thun, [maurices](#) and dressbarn

Vice Chair: Steve Burgess, [National Bank of Commerce](#)

Immediate Past Chair: Nancy Norr, [MN Power, an ALLETE Company](#)

Secretary: Bill Bennett, [LHB, Inc.](#)

Treasurer: John Strange, [St. Luke’s](#)

At-Large: Chancellor Lendley Black, [University of Minnesota Duluth](#)

At-Large: Lisa Bodine, [Giant Voices](#)

At-Large: Ravi Dharnidharka, [Cirrus Aircraft](#)

At-Large: Brian Maki, [Lakehead Constructors, Inc.](#)

At-Large: Dr. Daniel Nikcevich, [Essentia Health](#)

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About APEX

The Area Partnership for Economic Expansion (APEX) is the private-sector-led business development engine for northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin. APEX investor-members represent some of the most influential companies in the region, with a collaborative approach to promoting sustainable economic growth. APEX attraction, expansion and retention efforts focus in areas including aviation, manufacturing, professional services and next-generation forest products. Since 2003, through attraction, expansion and retention efforts, APEX has impacted over 4,020 jobs in the region, resulting in an annual regional payroll of over \$164 million and contributing to over \$22 million in state and local taxes annually. For more information, visit <http://www.apexgetsbusiness.com/>