



STATE OF MINNESOTA
L'Étoile du Nord

Office of Governor Mark Dayton
& Lt. Governor Tina Smith

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Dayton Names Michael Vekich as Chair of the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority, Laura Bishop as Member

Michael Vekich will replace Interim Chair Kathleen Blatz, who has led the MSFA since February of this year

Laura Bishop will fill the MSFA Board opening created by Ms. Blatz's prior appointment as Interim Chair

ST. PAUL, MN – Today, Governor Mark Dayton named Michael Vekich as Chair of the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority (MSFA). Mr. Vekich will replace Kathleen Blatz, who has served as Interim Chair of the MSFA Board since February of this year, for a term expiring January 7, 2019.

"I am grateful to former Chief Justice Kathleen Blatz for her superb leadership, in chairing the Stadium Authority Board. Michael Vekich will be an outstanding successor. Throughout his career, he has repeatedly served the State of Minnesota with great distinction," said Governor Dayton. **"I am also delighted to appoint Ms. Laura Bishop to the Board, where she will also provide excellent leadership."**

"I thank Governor Dayton for the opportunity to have served the MSFA and the people of Minnesota as Interim Chair," said Blatz. **"It has been an honor to work with the Board members, Executive Director Evans, staff, and key partners in our ongoing efforts to ensure that U.S. Bank Stadium is run as a world class operation for the good of all Minnesotans. Chair Vekich has my best wishes and full confidence as he takes on this important role."**

Governor Dayton today also appointed Laura Bishop to the MSFA Board. Ms. Bishop will fill a vacancy on the Board created by the prior appointment of Ms. Blatz as Interim Chair, for a term expiring December 31, 2020. At the time, Ms. Blatz served as a member of the MSFA Board.

“Interim Chair Blatz has embodied the true role of the MSFA Board, providing accountable public leadership of U.S. Bank Stadium for the people of Minnesota,” said Lt. Governor Tina Smith. **“I know that Chair Vekich and Board Member Bishop will continue their excellent records of public service, and ensure the MSFA continues to serve all Minnesotans well.”**

Mr. Vekich will assume the position of MSFA Chair following the next MSFA Board meeting, on July 21, 2017. Ms. Bishop’s appointment to the MSFA Board is effective immediately.

“I am honored to continue my service to the State of Minnesota as Chair of the MSFA,” said Vekich. **“I look forward to continuing the work of Interim Chair Blatz to inspire trust in the important role of the MSFA in the operation and oversight of U.S. Bank Stadium, for the public benefit of all Minnesotans.”**

“I thank Governor Dayton for the opportunity to serve the people of Minnesota on the MSFA Board,” said Bishop. **“The MSFA delivered an incredible stadium for our state, on time and on budget. I look forward to joining in this important work, to make sure U.S. Bank Stadium continues to work for Minnesotans.”**

About Michael Vekich

Michael Vekich is CEO of Vekich Chartered in Minneapolis, and recently became a member of BNCCORP’s Board of Directors. Mr. Vekich also serves as President of the National Association of Corporate Directors – Minnesota. Mr. Vekich has served as Chair of the Minnesota State Board of Trustees since 2015, and as a Member of the Board since 2010. Mr. Vekich also previously served on the Board from 1996 to 2002, including four years as Chair.

Mr. Vekich previously served as the Interim Director of the Minnesota Lottery from February 2016 to April 2017, and previously served as Interim Director in 2004. Previously, he was the Chairman of HF Financial Corp and Home Federal Bank; Executive Chairman and President of Skyline Exhibits in Eagan; CEO of Vekich Arkema and Company; President of The Bank Holding Company Association; and Chair of the Minnesota Board of Accountancy, where he currently serves as the Secretary/Treasurer. He has also served as the vice chair of the Minnesota Ballpark Authority.

A photo of Michael Vekich **is attached.**

About Laura Bishop

Laura Bishop is the Chief Corporate Responsibility & Sustainability Officer for Best Buy Co., Inc., where she is responsible for developing and implementing goals, programming, and policies related to environmental, social, and community initiatives aimed at supporting Best Buy’s business and furthering commitments to communities where the company operates. Ms. Bishop is responsible for Best Buy’s corporate responsibility, community relations, and philanthropy and volunteerism, and environmental sustainability and compliance efforts. In 2003, Ms. Bishop joined Best Buy as a manager to establish and grow the Best Buy Government Affairs Department. In this work, she helped advance policy initiatives aimed at electronics recycling and helping communities prepare for the digital television transition.

Previously, Ms. Bishop spent much of her career in the public sector where she served in public affairs and political assignments for the White House, the U.S. Department of State at the U.S. Embassy in Switzerland, the State of Minnesota, and the United States Senate. Laura’s active community and professional involvement includes the Public Affairs Council Board of Directors in Washington, DC; the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Board; the Page Education Foundation Board; and the Humphrey School for Public Affairs Advisory Board.

A photo of Laura Bishop **is attached.**

About the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority (MSFA)

The Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority (MSFA) was established by the Minnesota Legislature in 2012 and charged with the design, construction, and operation of a new multi-purpose stadium in downtown Minneapolis, now known as U.S. Bank Stadium. The MSFA consists of five members: three, including the Chair, are appointed by the Governor, with the two additional members appointed by the City of Minneapolis. For more information, visit [the MSFA website](#).

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