

BUSINESS

9 TO 5

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State chamber president recalled as great leader, listener

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

David Olson, 57, longtime president of the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, died Wednesday after an 18-month fight with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Olson is credited for the Chamber being recognized as the state's premier business advocacy organization, and was respected for his ability to bring people together to set strategy and solve problems.

Olson was named president of the Minnesota Chamber in 1991. Under his leadership, the Chamber sought private-sector solutions to statewide problems, and its Waste Wise program has helped hundreds of Minnesota businesses reduce waste and be more envi-

ronmentally sustainable for nearly 20 years, said the chamber.

International Falls Mayor Bob Anderson worked closely with Olson after he, was appointed to the Minnesota Chamber Board of Directors in 1991. Anderson served for 14-15 years on the board, and during that time served as chairman of the board and chair of the transportation committee.

"He developed a strong grassroots network with businesses throughout the state, and with local chambers, including the one here in International Falls," Anderson said.



David Olson

One of Olson's strengths was his determination to develop relationships throughout the state, and not just in the Twin Cities area, Anderson said. Olson would visit International Falls two to three times each year and business mixed with relaxation as he and Anderson spent time on Rainy Lake, he said.

"Through business and friendship we became good friends," Anderson said. "We fished together and played cribbage, which he very much loved to do."

Olson also strove to develop relationships with all political parties, and formed coalitions with labor union leaders as well, Anderson said. By bringing all sides to the table, he was able to find solutions that work best for employees and employers.

"He was an extraordinary leader, he listened, and he cared about how your business was doing, and how he and the Chamber could help your business," Anderson said. "Minnesota has lost a great leader, and I've lost a wonderful friend."


When it comes to Olson's legacy, Anderson said he hopes people remember the work he put in to develop the grassroots network with businesses throughout the state, that helped turn the Chamber into the organization it is today.

"He visited every community, and he visited every business, many of them here in International Falls," Anderson said. "That was his real strength, he traveled, and he was on the road a lot."

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VNP to receive donation from settlement

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

A recent settlement between Minnesota Power and the U.S. government will result in a donation to the National Park Service to restore wetlands at Voyageurs National Park.

The Department of Justice and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency report the settlement includes provisions that Minnesota Power agrees to install pollution control technology and meet stringent emission rates to reduce air pollution from the company's three coal-powered power plants in Cohasset, Hoyt Lakes, and Schroeder.

The settlement will resolve claims Minnesota Power violated the New Source Review provisions of the Clean Air Act by unlawfully constructing major modifications at its plants without obtain-

ing required permits and installing and operating the best available air pollution control technology, as the act requires, said a news release. Minnesota Power estimates it will spend more than \$500 million to implement the measures.

The settlement also requires the company pay a civil penalty of \$1.4 million to resolve Clean Air Act violations and spend more than \$4.2 million on environmental projects to benefit local communities. Included in the \$4.2 million total is \$200,000 for the NPS to restore wetlands at VNP. The state of Minnesota is co-plaintiff in the settlement, and will receive \$200,000 of the penalty.

VNP staff told The Journal they knew no more about the wetlands that will be restored with the money from Minnesota Power than the information included in the

release.


The EPA expects the actions required by the settlement will reduce harmful emissions by more than 13,350 tons per year, which includes approximately 8,500 tons per year of sulfur dioxide. According to a release, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide are two predominant pollutants emitted from power plants, have multiple negative effects on health, and are significant contributors to acid rain, smog, and haze. These pollutants can cause severe respiratory and cardiovascular problems, and premature death.

This settlement is part of EPA's national enforcement initiative to control harmful emissions from large sources of pollution, which include coal-powered power plants, under the Clean Air Act's New Source Review requirements.

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