The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees Wednesday elected Clarence Hightower as Board Chair and Thomas Renier as Vice Chair. Their one-year terms begin July 1.

“I am honored by my colleagues’ confidence in me,” Hightower said. “I look forward to our continuing efforts to advance the board’s Strategic Framework and to improve Minnesota State Colleges and Universities’ contribution to Minnesota’s economic prosperity.” Hightower, of Plymouth, is executive director of the Community Action Partnership of Ramsey and Washington Counties, a member of a nationwide partnership organization of more than 1,000 agencies, and the largest partnership agency serving Minnesota. He previously served as president and chief executive officer of the Minneapolis Urban League. Hightower was first appointed to the Board of Trustees by Gov. Jesse Ventura in 2002 and was reappointed by Gov. Tim Pawlenty in 2008 for a six-year term expiring June 30, 2014.

Renier, of Duluth, is the president of the Northland Foundation, a nonprofit organization involved in grant making, business lending and a variety of other initiatives to assist the children, families, older adults, business and communities of northeastern Minnesota. Prior to joining

Northland in 1986, he served 11 years on the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission. Renier was first appointed to the Board of Trustees by Gov. Pawlenty in 2004 and was reappointed in 2010 for a six-year term ending June 30, 2016.