

**Whitewater Joint Powers Board
December 18, 2014
Whitewater State Park Visitor's Center**

Minutes

- 1. Call to Order:** Chair Matt Flynn called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m.

Board Members Present: Arlene Nelson, Steve Jacob, Rich Hall, Roland Wood and Matt Flynn.

Others Present: Sheila Harmes, Whitewater; Brein Maki, Winona SWCD; and Joyce Tlougan, Winona County Planning & Environmental Services.

Absent: John Keefe.

- 2. Approve Minutes of November 13, 2014 meeting**

A motion was made by Roland Wood and seconded by Richard Hall to approve the minutes. Vote: Yes – 5 Motion carried.

- 3. Approve Agenda**

Sheila Harmes stated she had an addition to the agenda: Add grant application request to the end of the agenda.

A motion was made by Steve Jacob and seconded by Richard Hall to approve the agenda as amended. Vote: Yes – 5 Motion carried.

- 4. Approve Consent Items**

Bills & Payroll

Sheila Harmes explained the bills and payroll.

A motion was made by Steve Jacob and seconded by Arlene Nelson to approve the Consent Items. Vote: Yes – 5 Motion carried.

- 5. Board Reports**

Arlene Nelson

Reported that representatives from Winona SWCD were going to attend the Legislative Day at the Capital. She advised that funding was approved for work on the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) project. The December 10th SWCD board meeting was Jim Riddle's last day on the board. An organic crop forum document was distributed to the Board members for informational purposes.

Joint Powers Board Members

Matt Flynn, Chair
Olmsted Co. Commissioner

Steve Jacob, Vice-Chair
Winona Co. Commissioner

Richard Hall
Wabasha Co. Commissioner

Roland Wood, Secretary/Treasurer
Wabasha SWCD Supervisor

Arlene Nelson
Winona SWCD Supervisor

John Keefe
Olmsted SWCD Supervisor

Steve Jacob

Reported the Winona County Comp Plan was completed and that there was good public input; the community was on board. He attended the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) convention and noted Winona County has an active, passionate political base. He learned that transportation and the lack of funds thereof is a big issue.

Rich Hall

Reported he attended the AMC conference and found it to be very educational. He said networking proved to be advantageous and recommends attending the AMC for all commissioners.

Roland Wood

Reported he had attended the Soil and Water Conservation District Convention. The outstanding forester for the state is from Wabasha County – Dale & Suzanne Rohlifing. He advised that NRCS had a staff change. Don Baloun, NRCS state conservationist, will be retiring January 2, 2015.

Matt Flynn

Reported the DMC (Destination Medical Center) plans had been unveiled December 17th. Matt advised the DMC project will change Rochester and neighboring counties. Unemployment in Olmsted County is at a record low.

6. Board Discussion and Action Items

a. Financial Update

Sheila explained the financial update items.

b. Amendment of Contract for Services with Winona SWCD

The Ag Certainty contract for services with Winona SWCD is spent and additional funds are needed to complete work in the project. An amendment to the current contract for services will increase funding \$5,000.00; these funds are available in the grant funds for the first year of the pilot project. A motion was made by Steve Jacob and seconded by Arlene Nelson to approve the amendment. Vote: Yes – 5 Motion carried.

c. Approval of FY2015 MAWQCP Grant Agreement Amendment

Sheila explained the Ag Certainty application amendment. There is \$176,250 available for funding for the second year of the Ag Certainty pilot project. This is an increase of \$70,000 from first year funding. A motion was made by Steve Jacob and seconded by Arlene Nelson to approve the application amendment. Vote: Yes – 5 Motion carried.

d. Contract for Services with Winona SWCD (Year two of Ag Certainty)

Sheila explained the contract for services with Winona SWCD and advised the amount will be \$70,000.00. A motion was made by Steve Jacob and seconded by Arlene

Nelson to approve the Contract for Services with Winona SWCD. Vote: Yes – 5 Motion carried.

e. Watershed Specialist Training Course (U of M Water Resources Center)

Sheila requested to attend the training course. She advised that it is a web based course. The cost of the course is \$800.00. Sheila explained she would split the cost, \$400.00 from the Joint Powers Board and \$400.00 from Winona County for the training. A motion was made by Steve Jacob and seconded by Arlene Nelson to approve attendance in the web based training. Vote: Yes – 5 Motion carried.

f. Whitewater JPB 2014 Accomplishments

Sheila provided a summary of JPB accomplishments for 2014. Activities included work in the Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Pilot program, the Adaptive Nitrogen Management Project, the Mississippi River-Winona Restoration and Protection grant (ends June 2015) and the Landscape Stewardship Plan project (ends December 2014). MPCA is currently following up on possible funding for training sessions for area agronomists. Board members recommended an incentive for grid sampling. Brein Maki also suggested partnering with NRCS.

g. Ag Certainty (MAWQCP) Update

Certifications are continuing. Today, three more farmers will be certified in Wabasha County (total - 14). The funding for Year Two of the project will be available when BWSR receives the signed grant agreement. Contracts for services with Olmsted and Wabasha SWCDs will be available at next month's meeting.

h. Mississippi River Winona Civic Engagement Grant Update

The Mississippi River Winona Watershed technical committee met on November 19, 2014. Several meetings were also held with city and township groups to determine feedback on what is needed in restoration and protection strategies for the watershed.

i. Landscape Stewardship Plan Update

The Landscape Stewardship Plan for the Mississippi River-Winona Watershed is in its final drafts. Today the SE Landscape Committee is meeting and members are also actively reviewing the draft plan. This evening an open house is being held at the Altura Community Center. Invitational post cards were mailed to landowners with more than 20 acres located within the three Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs) of the watershed.

j. Grant Application Request

The Whitewater JPB was contacted to submit an educational grant application. The Whitewater State Park interpretive staff developed a new outreach program that is geared to 7-12 graders. It is a two-day program that focuses on karst topography and land use impacts. Funds are needed to cover expenses of fees at Mystery Cave State Park, camping fees and transportation. The Mississippi Watershed Management Organization has grants available up to \$3,000 for educational projects. Would the

JPB be willing to submit an application for this project? After discussion, the Board decided they would like to see the curriculum before deciding to support the project.

7. Public Comments

None

8. Agency Reports

Arlene Nelson noted that the Prigge family were selected as conservation farmers.

9. Next Meeting: January 15, 2015

Adjournment: 10:25 a.m. Rich Hall made a motion and seconded by Steve Jacob to adjourn. Vote: Yes – 5 Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by:

Joyce Tlougan
Recording Secretary

Signed _____
Roland Wood, Secretary/Treasurer