

**Whitewater Joint Powers Board
January 21, 2016
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: Matt Flynn, Roland Wood, Arlene Nelson, Steve Jacob, and Richard Hall.

Absent: Claron Krogness.

Others Present: Ron Benjamin, MN DNR; Vaughn Snook, MN DNR Fisheries; Katherine Logan, MPCA – Rochester; Joe Magee MPCA – Rochester; Jeremy Darst, DNR; Sara Holger DNR; Sheila Harmes, Whitewater Watershed; and Joyce Tlougan, Winona County Planning and Environmental Services.

2. **Approve Minutes of December 17, 2015**

A motion was made by S. Jacob and seconded by R. Hall to approve the minutes.

Voting: Yes – 5.

3. **Approve Agenda**

Sheila Harmes stated she needed to remove item F. from the agenda because she had not received the Watershed Planning Framework Grant Agreement. A motion was made by S. Jacob and seconded by A. Nelson to approve the amended agenda. Voting: Yes – 5.

4. **Approve Consent Items**

Bills & Payroll

Sheila Harmes explained she had received all SWCD's invoices for final payments for Ag Certainty. The only item on the bills payable list not related to Ag Certainty is the annual invoice from MCIT. A motion was made by S. Jacob and seconded by R. Wood to approve the Consent Items.

Voting: Yes – 5.

5. **Board Reports**

Arlene Nelson

Reported that Winona SWCD has re-adopted the Winona County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan with its extension until 2018. The SE Minnesota Envirothon is scheduled for Wednesday, May 4th at Whitewater State Park. Approval was made to offer a \$100.00 incentive for school districts in Winona County to participate. Winona SWCD Board also approved the \$100,000.00 local capacity service agreement. The new Planning and Environmental Services Director, Eric Evenson-Marden attended the meeting. She advised that there will be "Life of the

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

Soil” meeting March 5th, at the Lewiston Community Center sponsored by Sustainable Farming Association. Speakers include Dr. Don Huber, Dr. Art Dunham and Dr. Michael McNeil.

Steve Jacob

Reported that the new Planning Director for Winona County had started. He attended a buffer webinar; that Winona County shoreland ordinance is stricter and will likely stay with the 50 foot buffer. Winona County had approved two (2) solar projects. Fiber optic broadband will be installed in the Spring as a result of a grant. Winona County is working on an ATV ordinance.

Richard Hall

Wabasha County has four (4) new solar project coming in. One of the projects is large.

Roland Wood

Wabasha County is working on finances; auditing, end of year reports, etc. They had re-elected officers, remained the same. He said Wabasha SWCD decided not to participate in RC& D this year.

Matt Flynn

Reported they are working on the Root River One Watershed One Plan.

6. Board Discussion and Action Items

a. Election of Officers:

A motion was made by S. Jacob and seconded by R. Hall nominating M. Flynn to Chair. Vote: Yes – 5.

A motion was made by A. Nelson and seconded by R. Wood nominating S. Jacob to Vice Chair. Vote: Yes – 5.

A motion was made by R. Hall and seconded by S. Jacob nominating R. Wood to Secretary/Treasurer. Vote: Yes – 5.

b. Financial Update: Sheila Harmes stated there was \$81,000.00 in the bank, most is dedicated to Ag Certainty. \$20,000.00 that will be received this month will bump the numbers up.

c. Whitewater Fish Kill Report Summary: Sheila Harmes introduced Vaughn Snook, DNR Fisheries. He gave a summary of how DNR and other state agencies responded to the fish kill that occurred in late July along with conclusions of the investigation.

Actions taken:

- Fish kill reported on July 30, 2015
- Three state agencies responded (DNR, MDA, MPCA) and conducted unified investigation
- Protocol included collecting and quantifying dead species, water and soil samples and collection of recent and historical data for Whitewater’s South Branch

Conclusions:

- The fish kill was related to a high intensity rainfall event that occurred July 28, 2015
- Dead fish were found along 6.5 miles of the South Branch and likely the result of a short duration, acutely toxic event

- The fish kill was not caused by disease
- Cause of fish kill was inconclusive

Lessons Learned:

- Reporting timeliness is crucial – delay in reporting resulted in evidence being lost. The State Duty Officer number is 1-800-422-0798
- Immediate sampling of downstream and upstream sites is necessary in fish kills with delayed reporting

- d. Ag Certainty Update: Sheila Harmes advised that there was a meeting in Goodhue to discuss strategies for statewide implementation. There are 85 farms currently certified in the state and each of the SWCD's has \$6,000.00 to promote Ag Certainty. One of the farmers participating in Ag Certainty program has installed terraces. He chose to not use federal money and completed the project. This farmer completed an application for receiving Ag Certainty state incentive funds; 75% of project cost is \$8,238.94. He is requesting state cost share. A motion was made by S. Jacob and seconded by R. Hall to approve payment for Ag Cert #007 cost share. Vote: Yes – 5.
- e. Soil Health Workshop Update: Sheila Harmes stated the Whitewater and Rush Pine Farmer Led Councils have partnered up for a Soil Health Workshop that will be held Friday, February 5th from 10:00 – 3:30 at the St Charles Community Room. Featured speaker is Jay Fuhrer, Soil Health Conservationist from NRCS in North Dakota.

7. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

8. Agency Reports

Katherine Logan, MPCA – Rochester, advised that the Total Maximum Daily Loads portion of the Mississippi River –Winona Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies are available for public comment. The document will be finished by the spring.

9. Next Meeting: February 18, 2016

10. Adjournment: 10:00 a.m. A motion was made by S. Jacob and seconded by R. Hall to adjourn. Voting: Yes – 5

Respectfully submitted by:

Joyce Tlougan
Recording Secretary

Signed _____
Roland Wood, Secretary/Treasurer