

**Whitewater Joint Powers Board
June 18, 2015
St Charles Community Room
830 Whitewater Ave, St Charles, MN**

Minutes

- 1. Call to Order:** Chair Matt Flynn called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
Board Members Present: Matt Flynn, Roland Wood, Steve Jacob, Richard Hall, Arlene Nelson

Absent: John Keefe.

Others Present: Paul Schollmeier, Winona SWCD; Derek Husmoen, NRCS – Winona Co; Mark Root, Winona SWCD; Al Kean, BWSR; Brad Redlin, MN Dept. of Ag; Sheila Harmes, Whitewater Watershed Coordinator; and Joyce Tlougan, Winona County Planning & Environmental Services.
- 2. Approve Minutes of May 21, 2015**
A motion was made by Steve Jacob and seconded by Arlene Nelson to approve the minutes.
Voting yes: All.
- 3. Approve Agenda**
A motion was made by Steve Jacob and seconded by Roland Wood to approve the agenda.
Voting yes: All.
- 4. Approve Consent Items**
Bills & Payroll
Sheila Harmes explained the bills and payroll listed and noted she had received a corrected invoice from Nancy North. A motion was made by Richard Hall and seconded by Steve Jacob to approve the Consent Items.
Voting yes: All.
- 5. Board Reports**
Arlene Nelson
Arlene advised that Winona County’s recommendation for an Office Administrator was approved by SWCD Board. Arlene’s farm has newly installed solar panels; electric bills for the last two months are greatly reduced. She shared an article from the Rushford Newspaper, titled “Value of buffers, stewardship not measured in bushels”.

Steve Jacob
Steve reported the Winona County Planning Commission met regarding the animal unit cap and they recommended a review committee to the Board of Commissioners; the cap (1500 Animal units) has not changed in 15 years. The Board voted 3 – 2 not to form a committee. He asked Matt and Rich if Olmsted and Wabasha counties had caps, both replied that they did not. 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

number of dairy farms has dropped in Winona County; dairy business may be going to neighboring counties. He advised Winona County Family Night at the Farm would take place at the Duane and Liz Wirt farm on June 30, 2015.

Richard Hall

Richard advised the next board meeting would take place at the Wabasha County Fair. The rain simulator will be there; it will demonstrate runoff for various management systems. His solar system will be started in August and completed in September.

Roland Wood

Roland advised Wabasha SWCD is hiring another employee. Three resolutions were sent to the state: 1) Deer Damage to trees, 2) Riparian Buffers and, 3) Insurance for crops that are inter-seeded with cover crops. He also advised the Wabasha County Night on the Farm will take place at the Klein's this year on June 25th.

Matt Flynn

Reported that he toured the Wetland Reservoir Project at Cascade Meadows. These reservoirs will be used during floods. The concept is that water flows over banks into pools where it is slowly absorbed. This creates habitat for wildlife and slows the volume of water during floods.

6. Board Discussion and Action Items

- a. Financial Update: Sheila Harmes explained the financials and added she is waiting for a \$17,000.00 check from the Mississippi Winona Grant. This grant ends June 30, 2015.
- b. Audit update: The Whitewater recently had an audit visit. Sheila gave a brief update and added that she needs authorized signatures from the Board and Bank to confirm ending balances on accounts for 2014. Roland Wood and Matt Flynn sign the checks, they need to sign this document. After they sign, the document will need an authorized signature from Security State Bank.
- c. Ag Certainty Update: Sheila advised Marcie McLaughlin was absent. Brad Redlin, MN Dept. of Ag, updated the Board on progress of the program in the state. He stated the Whitewater Watershed is in the lead with 23 certified farms. Local SWCD staff is doing a great job with the program. The current Ag Certainty contract ends December 31, 2015.
In January, the program was awarded \$9 million dollars for five years from the USDA to provide funding for conservation practices using EQIP and other programs. For FY 2016 (starting July 1, 2015), Ag Certainty must be taken statewide. MDA staff had originally planned to transition state-wide over a three-year period. Per legislature, the program will now be available to the entire state for FY 2016.
- d. SARE Grant:
Sheila stated that she did not get the grant, but would like to research other funding sources. She has six seats reserved for farmers to attend the Bismarck Soil Health Tour and needs to find \$1900.00 to pay for, travel time, meals and hotel accommodations.
- e. Board Packet Mailing:
Discussion took place regarding when the board members would like to receive their hard copies of the meeting packets. Matt Flynn, Arlene Nelson, and John Keefe will continue to receive hard copies. Roland Wood, Steve Jacob, and Richard Hall requested electronic only on a trial basis.

7. Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

8. Agency Reports:

Sheila read the thank-you card from John Sloan's widow.

9. Next meeting:

July 16, 2015

10. Ag Certainty Tour of Watershed

Following the board meeting, the Ag Certainty State Advisory Committee, MDA staff, local Ag Certainty committee, Whitewater JPB and others will participate in a tour of selected certified farms in the Whitewater Watershed.

11. Adjournment:

9:52 a.m. Richard Hall made a motion and Roland Wood seconded the motion to adjourn.

Voting: Yes – All.

Respectfully submitted by:

Joyce Tlougan
Administrative Specialist

Signed _____
Roland Wood, Secretary/Treasurer