

**Whitewater Joint Powers Board
May 15, 2014
Whitewater State Park Visitor's Center**

Minutes

- 1. Call to Order:** Chair Matt Flynn called the meeting to order at 8:39 a.m.
Board Members Present: Matt Flynn, Roland Wood, Steve Jacob, and Arlene Nelson.
Richard Hall arrived at 8:40.
Absent: John Keefe
Others Present: Sheila Harmes, Daryl Buck SWCD, Dean Thomas Soil Health Tech, and Joyce Tlougan.

- 2. Approve Minutes of April 17, 2014 meeting**
A motion was made by Roland Wood and seconded by Steve Jacob to approve the minutes.
Vote: Yes – 5 Motion carried.

- 3. Approve Agenda**
Sheila requested to amend the Agenda by placing Dean Thomas at 6.a. Also, the agenda lists the 2015 Whitewater proposed budget twice. One should be removed from the agenda.
A motion was made by Steve Jacob and seconded by Arlene Nelson to approve the amended agenda. Vote: Yes – 5 Motion carried.

- 4. Approve Consent Items**
Bills & Payroll
Sheila Harmes explained the bills and payroll listed and she advised Ag Certainty will be reimbursed by Trout Unlimited.

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**
Richard Hall
No report

Steve Jacob
No report

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

Arlene Nelson

Advised That SWCD will be having a booth at the Winona County Fair. She gave an update on budgets requests that were submitted to BWSR.

Roland Wood

Advised the SWCD had an educational/outreach conservation event. Plainview, Wabasha and Lake City 5th graders attended.

Matt Flynn

Reported the Pine Island construction had been passed.

6. Board Discussion and Action Items

a. Dean Thomas introduced himself and provided the Board with an overview of his work to provide soil health training and technical assistance. He is the Regional Soil Health Technician and covers 13 counties in SE Minnesota. He works with BWSR and NRCS, bringing staff up-to-date with new technologies and is working on education pieces. In just 5 years, technologies have significantly changed farming; robots can now be used to plant and fertilize in fields. Dean also explained the cover crop process and its importance in improving soil health. Joyce Tlougan will send Dean her distribution list for the Whitewater Joint Powers Board so that he can send them updates on informational events.

b. Financial Update –

1) Sheila Harmes explained the 2015 Proposed Budget that was included in the packets. She is requesting the same amount that she did for 2014. The \$21,000 proposed budget request will be divided among the three counties based on acreage within the watershed. The total budget includes only grants that the Whitewater Joint Powers Board currently has, not anticipated or possible grants that have not yet been applied for. She requested that the Board approve the 2015 proposed budget and she will submit it to each county.

A motion was made by Steve Jacob and seconded by Arlene Nelson to approve the 2015 Budget. Vote: Yes – 5 Motion carried.

2) Sheila Harmes explained that she needed the Secretary/Treasurer's signature on the bank statements for the 2013 audit. A motion was made by Richard Hall and seconded by Steve Jacob for the Secretary/Treasurer to sign the bank statements. Vote: Yes – 5 Motion carried.

c. Whitewater Watershed proposed budget for 2015

(Previously discussed.)

d. Mississippi River – Winona civic engagement grant report update

The May newsletter was distributed to households within the watershed and copies were available at the meeting. Sheila Harmes advised the board the available grant funds for newsletters is spent and at this time no other funds are available to continue the quarterly newsletter. MDA is able to support costs of the newsletter, but other

sources of finding need to be found. Other options, including online newsletters are being considered.

She advised that MPCA will soon be providing stressor ID data so that work can continue on the strategies document. Jake Overgaard is working with (3) three farmers for strip tests. The results can be part of a field trip in the fall.

e. MN Ag Certainty Update

Sheila Harmes reported more interest from farmers. (2) Two staff training webinars have taken place for the SWCD staff who are working to certify farmers. MDA staff will be meeting Sheila and local Ag Certainty staff on May 15th.

Sheila advised she had received a letter from the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy authored by Kris Sigford. The letter stated concern with the assessment tool and seeks comments from the pilot watersheds. Board members discussed the stated concerns and the Ag Certainty pilot program. A response letter will be sent.

f. Biennial Budget Request (FY2016 – 17) Update

Sheila advised that she submitted the biennial budget request (BBR) to BWSR. Included in the request was funding to complete Focused Conservation Mapping and incentives for the Farmer Led Council. Per the Board request at the previous meeting, the BBR also included \$100,000 for stream bank restoration, \$20,000 for cover crop/perennial vegetation and \$50,000 for fencing.

g. JPB 25th Anniversary updates

Sheila referred to a draft invitation that she had presented to each Board member, for review. She asked that Matt Flynn, as Chairperson, welcome the attendees. Sheila will have a power point presentation at the reception. Steve Jacob asked if there is any baseline proof of improved water quality within the last 25 years. Sheila is researching data relative to the improved water quality.

7. Public Comments

Daryl Buck, SWCD, advised they were receiving zero dollars in Projects & Practices from BWSR, but that now they are receiving some money for feedlots. Steve Jacob asked how much money they were receiving, Daryl advised \$275,000. These funds will be used for (4) four feedlots. Daryl also reviewed what the SWCD submitted to BWSR for their biennial budget request.

Daryl also advised that the federal government may be taking action to update the SWCD office space in Lewiston.

8. Agency Reports

There were no agency reports.

9. Next Meeting: June 12, 2014 (followed by WJPB 25th Anniversary celebration)

Adjournment: 9:45 a.m. Steve Jacob made a motion and seconded by Arlene Nelson to adjourn. Vote: Yes – 6 Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by:

Joyce Tloutan
Recording Secretary

Signed _____
Roland Wood, Secretary/Treasurer