

**Whitewater Joint Powers Board
November 13, 2014
Whitewater State Park Visitor's Center**

Minutes

- 1. Call to Order:** Chair Matt Flynn called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.
Board Members Present: Matt Flynn, Rich Hall, Arlene Nelson and Thomas Gosse.

Others Present: Sheila Harmes, Whitewater; Brein Maki, Winona SWCD; Marcie McLaughlin, Minnesota Department of Agriculture; David Schmidt, Landscape Stewardship Plan contractor; Mark Root, Winona SWCD; and Joyce Tlougan, Winona County Planning & Environmental Services.

John Keefe arrived at 8:42 a.m.

Absent: Steve Jacob and Roland Wood.

2. Approve Minutes of October 16, 2014 meeting

A motion was made by Richard Hall and seconded by Arlene Nelson to approve the minutes. Vote: Yes – 4 Motion carried.

3. Approve Agenda

A motion was made by Thomas Gosse and seconded by Richard Hall to approve the agenda. Vote: Yes – 4 Motion carried.

4. Approve Consent Items

Bills & Payroll

Sheila Harmes explained the bills and payroll.

A motion was made by Arlene Nelson and seconded by Richard Hall to approve the Consent Items. Vote: Yes – 4 Motion carried.

5. Board Reports

Arlene Nelson

Reported her group that an Inter-Agency Professional Services Agreement with Winona County was approved. This is to support the Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid project work.

Richard Hall

Reported Wabasha County is moving ahead with feedlot issues.

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

Thomas Gosse
Nothing to report.

John Keefe
Olmsted SWCD office space is getting tight are there are logistic issues in trying to insure that FSA, Olmsted SWCD, and NRCS are able to be co-located.

Matt Flynn
Explained further regarding FSA, SWCD, and NRCS; advised rent is an issue. He advised Olmsted County offered to work with them for one location but haven't heard anything back. Brein Maki explained the finance side for Winona County SWCD. Matt updated the group on the DMC project in Rochester. Each month Olmsted County exceeds the previous month's record for construction permits. There will be a lot of announcements related to DMC in the next few months.

6. Board Discussion and Action Items

a. Financial Update

Sheila explained the financial update. The JPB Board members received the audit for 2013. It will need to be posted on the Whitewater website. A motion was made by Arlene Nelson and seconded by Rich Hall to approve the audit. Vote: Yes – 4 Motion carried.

b. Landscape Stewardship Plan work update

David Schmidt gave an overview of the work he has been doing to develop the Landscape Stewardship Plan for the Mississippi River Winona Watershed. In his work, he has been compiling various data for the watershed and using mapping tools to evaluate areas that would benefit the most from landowner outreach. A Landscape Stewardship Plan was completed for the Root Watershed last year. There are plans to have this work completed for the Cannon and Zumbro Watersheds as well. A point person is needed to coordinate follow-up work; at this time no one is named.

c. MN Ag Certainty update

Marcie McLaughlin gave an update. She stated she is pleased with the Whitewater Pilot Project. She advised there are currently five (5) certified farmers plus an additional five (5) are scheduled to be certified soon, in the watershed. The State will be increasing funding for the Whitewater for next year; next year's (2015) grant agreement amount will be \$176,250. She is pleased with relationships she saw at the Citizen's Summit and between Winona County's SWCD and Winona County Commissioners. Marcie advised that a KAP survey will be mailed out to landowners in the watershed after Thanksgiving. This survey will assess landowner Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) regarding conservation practices. She is pleased with Winona County staff to insure compliance by producers. The Ag Certainty Pilot is a 2 year project and MDA is discussing how the program will roll out to the rest of the state in 2016.

Matt Flynn asked if the project is reaping benefits and if enough people are interested. Marcie answered “yes”. In addition to farm operators, land owners that are not farming are also interested in the program. For example, the DNR wants its renters’ management practices to be evaluated using the Assessment Tool. Other landowners have inquired about certifying their rented land. There are ten (10) now and twenty-eight (28) other farmers that are going through the certification.

The Board discussed how the success of the program will be evaluated. Money is being spent and the public and legislature will want to see tangible results. Currently the farmers that are achieving certification are the ones who are already doing well with respect to water quality. Reaching the farmers that need more changes in their operation will take more effort. It was noted that education also needs to be an important aspect of project work. Reaching the landowners that rent their land is also a challenge.

d. Mississippi River – Winona Civic Engagement Grant Report Update

1) Citizens Summit: Sheila reported on the summit and referred to the placemats, business cards, and handouts that were at the summit. Arlene commented on how good the summit was.

2) Strategies Development: Sheila advised a technical committee meeting would take place the week of November 17th. She advised that the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) table is being worked on.

Brein advised that the Memorandum of Agreement for the Root Watershed was signed by the Winona SWCD. With the One Watershed One Plan, one (1) member from each partner Board will serve on the Policy Committee. Karin Sonneman had worked the MOA language with all the other County Attorneys. Also, in election results, Gerald Mueller is replacing Mr. Riddle on the SWCD Board.

7. Next Meeting: December 18, 2014.

Adjournment: 10:05 a.m. Thomas Gosse made a motion and seconded by Richard Hall to adjourn. Vote: Yes – 4 Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by:

Joyce Tlougan
Recording Secretary

Signed _____
Roland Wood, Secretary/Treasurer