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**Whitewater Joint Powers Board  
April 20, 2017  
Whitewater State Park Visitor's Center**

**Minutes**

**1. Call to Order:** Matt Flynn called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Board Members Present: Matt Flynn, Steve Jacob, Claron Krogness, Rich Hall, Roland Wood, and Josh Elsing

Others Present: Sheila Harmes, Coordinator Whitewater Watershed and David Schmidt, The Nature Conservancy; Daryl Buck, Winona County SWCD

Board Members Absent: None

**2. Approve Minutes of March 16, 2017**

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

Voting: Yes – All.

**3. Approve Agenda**

A motion was made by S. Jacob and seconded by J. Elsing to approve the agenda.

Voting: Yes – All.

**4. Approve Consent Items**

**Bills & Payroll**

There are two bills payable for the month of March. One is for Winona County for Sheila's work on the grant; the other is for Sheila's services associated with Ag Certainty. The amounts that are paid to Winona County are a bit high. Sheila has reviewed this with Maureen and this will be adjusted. It is supposed to be based on a percentage of Sheila's time and right now that isn't what is happening.

A motion was made by S. Jacob and seconded by J. Elsing to approve the consent items.

Voting: Yes – All.

**5. Board Reports**

Josh Elsing

Josh went to legislative session; legislators were very receptive and they saw the need. The monies look like they are coming through on that side. SWCD is in process of putting final budget together for the year.

Steve Jacob

Steve thanked the JPB for the letter of support for his application to fill the County Commissioner seat on the State Board of Water and Soil Resources Board.

51 In Winona County, there are a couple of hog expansions coming up before the Planning  
52 Commission tonight. A number of groups have expressed their opposition at the meeting in St.  
53 Charles; however, the MPC has given their approval, so will see what happens with these.  
54

55 The SE Minnesota Water Resources Board is looking for a replacement for administrator, Linda  
56 Dahl. Steve asked Sheila if this was something she could pick up. Sheila stated that she has a  
57 full work schedule right now. For right now administrative work load for the SE Minnesota Water  
58 Resources Board is not as high as it has been. However, the plan is that this Board and the TSA  
59 (Technical Services Area) Joint Powers Board would work together and all grants would be under  
60 one director between them. Once all the TSA and Water Resource Board grants are all together,  
61 this will no doubt be a full time position. R. Hall said that seems like a good time to combine some  
62 of these duties, as they are all trying to do the same thing and applying for the same grants.  
63 Board members discussed the logistics of combining the two Boards.  
64

65 Rich Hall

66 Has nothing to add at this time.  
67

68 Roland Wood

69 Matt Kruger is leaving Wabasha SWCD and the Ag Certainty Program; he accepted a position  
70 with Land O' Lakes. SWCD recently hired Dennis Stelling to do accounting/secretary work part-  
71 time. Now, a replacement for Matt Kruger is needed.  
72

73 Claron Krogness

74 Olmsted County Administrator, Richard Devlin, is going to retire on October 31<sup>st</sup>. He has currently  
75 stepped down as County Administrator but will stay on until October to finish up projects. The  
76 County Deputy Administrator, Heidi Welsch, will be Interim County Administrator until this position  
77 is filled. Richard Devlin has worked for the County for 49 years and has done a great job.  
78

79 Matt Flynn

80 On July 1<sup>st</sup>, sales taxes to fund roads will increase by .25% which brings the total to .5%. This  
81 .25% increase will bring in \$7 million for road funding. It could still go up another .25% if voted in.  
82 This is for rural roads and major roads running through cities. Olmsted County has roughly 500  
83 miles of roads to maintain. The new Pine Island Middle School was built on a township gravel  
84 road and now needs a new road from the Middle School to Hwy 52, which will include a new  
85 bridge, for a total cost of \$15 million dollar project to be done over the next 2-3 years.  
86  
87

88 **6. Board Discussion and Action Items**

89 a. Financial Update

90 S. Harmes explained finances for March and reported the balance.  
91

92 b. Forest Action Plan to Support Landscape Stewardship Program – Approval  
93 Forest Action Plan Update – Landowner Outreach Position.  
94

95 Sheila informed the JPB that the 319 Grant Agreement provided in the agenda packet has  
96 now been finalized, presented to and given approval by Stephanie Nuttall, Assistant Winona  
97 County Attorney. This grant will provide \$70,000 in addition to the \$45,000 which was  
98 approved last month. The \$45,000 needs to be spent before the end of 2017; the \$70,000  
99 added will run through December 31, 2018.  
100

101 David Schmidt explained that this grant agreement is very similar to the one approved last  
102 month. This grant will allow an individual to make contact with landowners of key parcels  
103 within the project areas; build and maintain relationships necessary to help foster  
104 conservation. More than likely this person will be going out and approaching landowners who  
105 may not have thought about this, or about going to the forestry office.  
106

107 Steve stated that his concern with this was adding another layer of government that people  
108 need to go through. David Schmidt explained that this should help to guide landowners to the  
109 right agency for help. This isn't a new branch with a separate set of programs. This would be  
110 a contracted position; not an employee.  
111

112 This office area already exist on TNC preserves. Most of the time this person would be out in  
113 their vehicle. This should not affect Weaver Dunes, it would be working with private lands.  
114

115 On motion of R. Wood and seconded by J. Elsing to enter into this Grant Agreement with The  
116 Nature Conservancy.

117 Voting: Yes – All.  
118

119 c. Ag Certainty Update

120 Matt Kruger is leaving his position with Wabasha SWCD. Land O'Lakes is promoting the Ag  
121 Certainty with their clients and Matt's experience with the program made him a good candidate  
122 to work on Land O'Lakes efforts in promoting Ag Certainty. Government alone cannot do it  
123 and we need private sector to assist.

124 There was an internal audit and review of the Ag Certainty program. Records were submitted  
125 and this was done without a problem.  
126

127 d. 319 Grant Application Update

128 S. Harmes reported that she submitted the 319 Grant Application for the Middle and South  
129 Branch for nitrate reduction and was 1 out of 12 that was selected in Minnesota to be  
130 submitted to the EPA for further review. The SE Minnesota Water Resources Board  
131 application for feedlots was also selected. Work plans need to be submitted by next week  
132 Thursday. S. Harmes clarified for the JPB that this 319 Grant is federal funding for non-point  
133 source pollution. Once the work plan is submitted there will be a lot of back and forth. It will  
134 reviewed by the PCA and then the EPA and edits and suggestions.  
135

136 If S. Harmes' 319 Grant is picked, it would begin in spring of 2018 and run through August  
137 2021. This grant would be for nitrate reduction and best management practices on landscape.  
138 This is Jake Overgaard's last year working on the Minnesota Department of Agriculture grant  
139 working with landowners. Included in the grant proposal is a continuation of what Jake is  
140 currently working on, enrolling farmers and their crop consultants in strategies to reduce nitrate  
141 loading. Cover crop incentives were also put into the grant. The landowner would need to  
142 match 50% on this.  
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145 **7. Public Comments**

146 There were no public comments.  
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149 **8. Agency Reports**

150 None  
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**9. Next Meeting:** It was suggested that the May 18th meeting be cancelled; unless there are documents that need to have Board approval on.

The Whitewater Joint Powers Board adjourned at 10:05 a.m. on a motion of R. Hall and second by S. Jacob.

Voting: Yes - All

Respectfully submitted by:  
Sue Henderson, Administration

Signed   
~~Roland Wood, Secretary/Treasurer~~  
Joshua Eising ALT S/T