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Whitewater Joint Powers Board
August 16, 2018
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: Rich Hall, Chuck Fick, Matt Flynn, Josh Elsing and Steve Jacob

Others Present: Sheila Harmes, Coordinator Whitewater Watershed; Emily Bartusek, PCA SE Watershed Unit Project Manager

Board Members Absent: Claron Krogness

2. **Approve Minutes of June 21, 2018 Meeting**

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 C. Fick to approve the agenda.

Voting: Yes – All.

4. **Approve Consent Items**

Bills & Payroll

Sheila Harmes: An amended bills payable, to include 2 invoices received after the packet was sent out, was presented to the board members. There were 2 payments to the nitrate reduction program – one to MVTL for nitrate testing and the other is to HACH Company for nitrate test strips for farmers to use. The check to Olmsted SWCD is for assistance in providing food to their Soil Health Field Day. The check to Winona County SWCD is for 2018 office rent and utilities. The check to QTH is for web hosting renewal through 8-7-2019. The check to Jennifer Wahls is for her work on the Forest Action Plan for July and July 2018. The check to the County of Winona is for Sheila Harmes' time and mileage for her shared position. The invoices total \$15,457.16. Also included in the bill payable were anticipated deposits from MAWQCP (Ag Certainty) and 319 Nitrogen Reduction Grant.

A motion was made by S. Jacob and seconded by C. Fick to approve the consent items.

Voting: Yes – All.

5. **Board Reports**

Steve Jacob (Winona County Board): S. Jacob shared that the Winona County Board received a bid for the Winona County Government Center and the County is looking into consolidating to the County Office Building. Winona County will be extending the county water plan and hold off on moving forward with One Watershed One Plan.

Chuck Fick (Wabasha County SWCD): At their last meeting, BWSR staff gave a presentation on One Watershed One Plan.

53 Rich Hall (Wabasha Co. Commissioner): The WWJPB members discussed a soil loss ordinance.
54 He will bring the subject up at the next County Board meeting to see what other board members
55 think. The intent is to protect waterways and develop better land management. A soil loss
56 ordinance would still need to be complaint driven as there's not enough staff to check compliance.

57
58 Josh Elsing (Winona SWCD Supervisor): Winona County SWCD has received several
59 applications for cover crops. The Winona County SWCD hosted a celebration in honor of their 80th
60 Anniversary. The weather was beautiful; two greyhound buses were used for the conservation
61 tour, and there was representation from several organizations at the celebration.

62
63 Matt Flynn (Olmsted County Board): Seneca Foods Corp. in Rochester, MN, is closing its
64 seasonal canning production at the end of this season.

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

67 68 **a. Financial Update – Sheila Harmes**

69 After subtracting the grant money received but not earned, the balance for the money market
70 and the checking account in June was \$62,248 and for July was \$62,251. S. Harmes discussed
71 the anticipated Ag Certainty deposit.

72 73 **1) 2017 Audit (paper copies provided at meeting)**

74 The audit was approved at the last meeting and copies of the audit were handed out.

75 76 **2) Notice of bank transition to Minnwest Bank**

77 Notice letter was included in the packet.

78 79 **b. BWSR Clean Water Fund grant application**

80 Sheila Harmes: S. Harmes requested approval to move forward with the grant application,
81 which is due August 31st. Funds are available through the BWSR Clean Water Funds. Federal
82 money from the 319 Grant, can be used as a match. This grant would promote networking and
83 education with farmer led councils in regards to nitrogen management. She would also like to
84 include with the grant some focus interviews with landowners and crop consultants to
85 determine incentives for better nitrogen management practices. She spoke with Glen Haag
86 from the Farmer Led Council and he is in support of the grant. G. Haag's request was to include
87 some speaking opportunities for farmers to speak with non-farmers about farming practices.

88
89 On motion by C. Fick and seconded by J. Elsing, the WWJPB voted to approve S. Harmes to
90 apply for the BWSR Clean Water Fund Grant. Voting: Yes – All.

91 92 **c. 319 Small Watersheds Program Update**

93 S. Harmes submitted a letter of interest for the 319 Small Watersheds Focus Program. Ten
94 small watersheds would be chosen and 16 years of funding would be provided to address all
95 the water quality impairments. S. Harmes was selected for a phone interview regarding the
96 program. A total of 41 interviews were conducted and the list was pared down to 15. S. Harmes
97 received an email that she was not included in the selected 15, which she shared with the
98 WWJPB. There will be 3 more years of this program where 10 small watersheds will be
99 selected each year. S. Harmes intends to submit a letter of interest next year.

100 101 **d. 319 Nitrate Reduction Grant Update**

102 S. Harmes completed a semi-annual report and some funds to be reimbursed to the WWJPB.
103 She shared handouts provided at the Olmsted SWCD Soil Health Field Day in regards to
104 nitrogen testing results.

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e. Possible presentation on forest industry

At the last meeting, it was discussed how the Forest Action Plan was going. The discussion led towards timber harvesting and the impact. S. Harmes sought out clarification from the board regarding what information they were interested in receiving a presentation on.

7. Public Comments

Matt Flynn – He received an email from Dylan Wohlenhaus, a communications specialist for Land O'Lakes, requesting the names of farmers in the Farmer Led Council in the Whitewater area for a marketing project. The WWJPB discussed the intent of the use of the names and data privacy. S. Harmes will contact D. Wohlenhaus to find out more information regarding the request and report back to the board at their next meeting.

Emily Bartusek – Introduced herself and explained her role for the MPCA. She will be working with S. Harmes on the Mississippi-Winona watershed and she is also in charge of 3 other watersheds in SE MN, Mississippi River-Lake Pepin Watershed, the La Crescent Watershed and the Winnebago River Watershed. She welcomed any communications if the board had questions regarding the watersheds or MPCA.

8. Agency Reports

None

9. Next Meeting: The next scheduled meeting is October 18, 2018, at the St Charles Community Room (830 Whitewater Ave, St Charles, MN).

The Whitewater Joint Powers Board adjourned at 9:40 a.m. on a motion of C. Fick and seconded by R. Hall. Vote: Yes - All

Respectfully submitted by:
Anne Schwertel, Administrative Specialist

Signed: Chuck Fick 10/18/18
WWJPB Secretary/Treasurer

