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Whitewater Joint Powers Board
June 21, 2018
Winona County USDA Service Center – 400 Wilson St N, Lewiston MN

Minutes

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

Board Members Present: Chuck Fick, Matt Flynn, Rich Hall and Steve Jacob

Others Present: Daryl Buck, District Manager, Winona County SWCD; Sheila Harmes, Coordinator Whitewater Watershed; Jeff Hastings, Project Manager, Trout Unlimited; Justin Watkins, Watershed Project Manager, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency; and Barton Winter

Board Members Absent: Josh Elsing and Claron Krogness

2. **Approve Minutes of April 19, 2018 Meeting**

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

Voting: Yes – All.

3. **Approve Agenda**

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

Voting: Yes – All.

4. **Approve Consent Items**

Bills & Payroll

Sheila Harmes: For April 2018 and May 2018, there is a check payment to the County of Winona for Sheila Harmes' support. There also is a check payment to Jennifer Wahls for the Forest Action Plan Project for 2 months, payment for nitrate soil testing for the 319 grant and payment to the auditor. S. Jacob asked about assistance that Jen Wahls is providing to landowners. This led to a discussion about timber removal and forest stewardship plans. The Board has an interest in learning more about how much timber is harvested per year in the region and economic impacts.

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

Voting: Yes – All.

5. **Board Reports**

Chuck Fick (Wabasha County SWCD): No updates, business as usual with Wabasha SWCD

Steve Jacob (Winona County Board): Referred to an economic summit scheduled for Friday and related work force issues.

Rich Hall (Wabasha County Board): Wabasha County Board approved a resolution to support an application for One Watershed, One Plan for the Zumbro Watershed. It was a 3 – 2 vote by the County Board.

Matt Flynn (Olmsted County Board): There are 19 permits to get done with for Lake Zumbro dredging project. Rich Hall noted that it is a slow process.

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

56
57 **a. Financial Update – *Sheila Harmes***

58 Sheila Harmes: After subtracting out unearned income, the balance for accounts for both April
59 and May is at almost \$52,000.

60
61 **1) Audit Review**

62 The draft audit is ready for review. Contents of the audit are similar to the previous
63 year except overall year-end balance is lower. Once approved, the auditor will provide
64 the final audit for the next meeting.

65
66 On a motion by R. Hall and seconded by S. Jacob, the WWJPB voted to approve the
67 audit. Vote: Yes – All.

68
69 **2) Proposed 2019 Budget**

70 Wabasha and Winona Counties have sent budget request notifications to the
71 Whitewater JPB. Deadlines were in May and a proposed 2019 budget request was
72 sent by S. Harmes before each deadline (Winona County – May 18, 2018 and
73 Wabasha County – May 31, 2018). The proposed county allocation is the same as last
74 year. The request to Olmsted County will be sent after this Board approves the
75 budget. The proposed budget includes a grant for the Whitewater Farmer-Led Council.

76
77 On a motion by R. Hall and seconded by C. Fick, the WWJPB voted to approve the
78 2019 proposed budget.

79
80 **b. Stream Restoration in the Driftless and Available Funding – *Jeff Hastings, Trout***
81 ***Unlimited Project Manager***

82
83 Jeff Hastings works for Trout Unlimited in Wisconsin. He has had this position for eleven years
84 and previously worked for a conservation district in Wisconsin. The Driftless Area has 600 cold-
85 water streams and over 4000 miles of trout streams. There are 1200 easements with landowners
86 providing access for fishermen. A recent economic study showed that the fishing industry in the
87 Driftless Area brings \$1.6 billion each year to local economies.

88
89 Thirteen Trout Unlimited Chapters within the Driftless Area help with stream restoration efforts
90 including stream bank stabilization, removal of box elder and shallow rooted trees, and
91 establishment of nongame wildlife habitat. SE Minnesota projects completed in 2018 include
92 Trout Run, Rush Creek, Cedar River and Garvin Brook. Much of the funding comes from Lessard-
93 Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. In addition to these funds, Trout Unlimited was recently awarded
94 a \$9.2 million Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant for restoring cold-water
95 streams in the Driftless Area. In Minnesota, this will apply to designated trout streams. This grant
96 lasts five years and funding will be available this fall.

97
98 **c. Rental Agreement/Water Resource Planner office**

99 The rental agreement renewal with Winona County SWCD was tabled from the previous
100 Whitewater JPB meeting. Since that meeting, S. Jacob did communicate with Winona County
101 Administrator about the Whitewater office space. At this time, no alternative proposal is
102 presented from Winona County.

103
104 A motion was made by S. Jacob and seconded by R. Hall to approve the existing rental
105 agreement with Winona County SWCD for Whitewater office space and utilities.

106 Voting: Yes – All.

107
108 **d. 319 Nitrate Reduction Grant**

109
110 Both Olmsted SWCD and Winona County SWCD committed in-kind staff support for the
111 Whitewater 319 application. Moving forward with the cover crop incentives that are included in
112 the 319 grant, both SWCDs asked for a sub-agreement giving them approval authority for the
113 cover crop incentives. Once approved, the payments can be made by the Whitewater JPB with
114 319 grant funds.
115

116 **1) Winona County SWCD Cover Crop Sub-agreement**

117 A motion was made by S. Jacob and seconded by C. Fick to approve the Winona County
118 SWCD Cover Crop Sub-agreement.

119 Voting: Yes – All.
120

121 **2) Olmsted SWCD Cover Crop Sub-agreement**

122 A motion was made by C. Fick and seconded by R. Hall to approve the Olmsted SWCD
123 Cover Crop Sub-agreement.

124 Voting: Yes – All
125

126 **e. 319 Small Watershed Project**

127 The federal 319 program in Minnesota has changed. There will no longer be a competitive
128 grant application process. Instead, MPCA will select ten small watersheds and
129 comprehensively address all impairments for 16 years (four funding cycles). S. Harmes
130 provided a map showing the ten small watersheds for the Whitewater Watershed. Also
131 provided, was a letter of interest submitted by S. Harmes on behalf of the Whitewater JPB on
132 June 15, 2018.
133

134 **f. Forest Action Plan Update**

135 Progress continues on the Forest Action Plan project. In discussions with The Nature
136 Conservancy, the grant end date needs to be extended from December 31, 2018 until late
137 2019 in order to complete work under the project.
138

139 **7. Public Comments**

140 Barton Winter wanted to bring to the Board's attention his concerns about the Whitewater
141 River North Branch. This part of the Whitewater is more often turbid; this is impacting
142 fishing and recreation.
143

144 **8. Agency Reports**

145
146 Daryl Buck informed the Board that Winona County SWCD is celebrating its 80th Anniversary on
147 August 14th at Farmer's Park. The event includes a tour and dinner.
148

149 Justin Watkins commented on the benefits of the new 319 Small Watersheds program. He also
150 concurred that Barton Winter's observations are correct. More study is needed to determine
151 cause of high turbidity in this stream.
152

153 **9. Next Meeting:** The next scheduled meeting is August 16, 2018 at Whitewater State Park.
154

155 The Whitewater Joint Powers Board adjourned at 10:50 a.m. on a motion of R. Hall and seconded
156 by C. Fick. Vote: Yes - All
157

158 Respectfully submitted by:
159 Sheila Harmes, Whitewater Watershed Coordinator
160

161 Signed: *Chuck Fick*
162 WWJPB Secretary/Treasurer

8-16-18

