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Whitewater Joint Powers Board Minutes
June 16, 2022
Whitewater State Park Visitor's Center

1. **Call to Order:** Josh Elsing called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Board Members Present: Josh Elsing, Matt Flynn, James Rentz and Lynn Zabel

Others Present: Sheila Harmes, Coordinator Whitewater Watershed; Tim Ahrens, resident; Richard Ahrens, resident and Shaina Keseley, BWSR

Board Members Absent: Steve Jacob and Bob Walkes

2. **Public Comments**

Tim Ahrens: Attending today to provide public input on the proposed change to the meeting schedule (item 7b of agenda). Ask that the board consider input from watershed residents before changes made.

3. **Approve Minutes of April 21, 2022 Meeting**

A motion was made by James Rentz and seconded by Matt Flynn to approve the minutes.

Vote: Yes – All.

4. **Approve Agenda**

On motion by Lynn Zabel and seconded by Matt Flynn, the WWJPB voted to approve the agenda.

Vote: Yes – All.

5. **Approve Consent Items**

Sheila Harmes explained the bills payable, as included in the agenda packet.

A motion was made by Matt Flynn and seconded by Lynn Zabel to approve the consent items.

Vote: Yes – All.

6. **Board Reports**

James Rentz – SWCD has been involved with new contracts, mostly involving grassed waterways.

Lynn Zabel – Discussed a meeting with Lakeside regarding cover crops, also tree planting program in West Indian Creek.

Josh Elsing – Leo Speltz and Jerry Mueller are stepping down from SWCD Board, and new candidates are on the ballots to replace them. The SWCD is looking at new staff hires. Ag industry is shifting with technical-biological focus.

Matt Flynn - No report

7. **Board Discussion and Action Items**

a. **Financial Update – Sheila Harmes**

Sheila Harmes gave an update on the Whitewater Joint Powers Board checking and money market accounts.

b. **Discussion Regarding meeting schedule**

The Board discussed the possibility of meeting less frequently, such as a quarterly meeting schedule. Meeting less frequently may complicate cost share contracts and applying for grants. The Board decided that every other month is still a good meeting schedule at this time.

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c. 319 Small Watersheds Focus Program Update

Sheila Harmes provided an update. Whitewater, Wabasha SWCD and Olmsted SWCD staff were involved in an interview with MPCA staff. Our application was advanced into final round of interviews. Yesterday learned that MPCA is still reviewing final interviewees; we should find out the last week of June or first week of July. MPCA will select more than five and less than ten small watersheds. The Program provides four cycles of funding (16 years).

d. Update on WinLaC Planning process

Sheila Harmes provided an update on the One Watershed One Plan process for the WinLaC planning area. She also summarized how other Joint Powers Boards have been involved in other 1W1P implementation grants in the State. For the WinLaC, the Whitewater JPB provided a response letter to notifications. Information from this letter and well as other data was used to develop the prioritized list of issues for the Plan. Also, waterside chats included Whitewater citizen involvement, as specific areas within the watershed were identified for various practices.

When the WinLaC planning process started, Whitewater JPB could not participate on the Policy Committee as an entity, as some of its members were already serving on the WinLaC Policy Committee. As the planning process is moving forward, the consultant has identified that the Whitewater watershed area has proportionally more priorities than the other planning regions; to reach goals, more of the available funds need to be directed to the Whitewater Watershed.

e. Local Advisory Team (MDA) grant update

Maps of the Elgin and Utica DWSMAs and efforts to contact shared. Josh Elsing noted that he has a land within Utica DWSMA and is willing to be on Local Advisory Team. The first meeting for these two Local Advisory Teams are planned after harvest.

8. Agency Reports


Shaina Keseley. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, noted that the competitive Clean Water Funds RFP will be open at the end of this month.

Sheila Harmes noted that an email was received from Vaughn Snook Department of Natural Resources. He is available to come to a future meeting to present, as needed.

9. Adjourn; Next meeting August 18, 2022

On motion by Matt Flynn and seconded by James Rentz, the WWJPB voted to adjourn at 10:05 am. Vote: Yes – All.

Respectfully submitted by:
Anne Schwertel, PL&ES Administrative Specialist

Signed: 
WWJPB Secretary/Treasurer