

1 **Whitewater Joint Powers Board Minutes**
2 **June 15, 2023**
3 **Whitewater State Park Visitor's Center**
4

- 5 **1. Call to Order:** Chair Josh Elsing called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

6 Board Members Present: Josh Elsing, James Rentz, Mark Thein, Bob Walkes, Lynn Zabel and
7 Marcia Ward
8

9 Board Members Absent: None
10

11 Others Present: Sheila Harmes, Coordinator Whitewater Watershed
12

- 13 **2. Public Comments**

14 None
15

- 16 **3. Approve Minutes of April 20, 2023, Meeting**

17 A motion was made by Mark Thein and seconded by Lynn Zabel to approve the minutes.

18 Vote: Yes – All.
19

- 20 **4. Approve Agenda**

21 On motion by Bob Walkes and seconded by Mark Thein, the WWJPB voted to approve the amended
22 agenda, to include *Septic System Contract – Behrens* and *Well Sealing Contract - Christie*.

23 Vote: Yes – All.
24

- 25 **5. Approve Consent Items**

26 Sheila Harmes explained the bills payable, including two checks to approve. A motion was made by
27 Marcia Ward and seconded by Mark Thein to approve the consent items. Vote: Yes – All.
28

- 29 **6. Board Reports**

30
31 Lynn Zabel – Wabasha SWCD is working on hiring another staff member.

32
33 James Rentz – Had some new staff introductions at the last Olmsted SWCD meeting. One new cost
34 share for prescribed grazing was brought before the board.
35

36 Marcia Ward – She was a part of a site visit to Crooked Creek, near Caledonia. The water flow
37 project was started almost 20 years ago, estimated to cost around \$100,000. After it
38 was all done, the cost was close to \$700,000. Additionally, she shared the WinLaC
39 brochure.
40

41 Bob Walkes – Board of Adjustment and Equalization meeting made some adjustments to 6-7 parcels.
42 Property values continue to rise.
43

44 Josh Elsing – Noted differences in crops throughout the MidWest. SWCD District Manager will give a
45 presentation to the Winona County Board (August 8th) on behalf of the SWCD
46 regarding funding.
47

- 48 **7. Board Discussion and Action Items**

- 49
50 **a. Financial Update – Sheila Harmes**
51 **Management Representation Letter**
52 **Draft 2022 Audit**

53 Sheila Harmes went over the representation letter, as presented in the agenda packet. She
54 pointed out that, due to the size of the organization, it was recommended that management
55 establish effective review policies and procedures including but not limited to the following:

56 reconciling general ledger amounts to the draft financial statements; review of all supporting
57 documentation and explanations for journal entries proposed by us; complete the disclosure
58 checklist; review and approval of schedules and calculations supporting the amounts include in
59 the notes to the financial statements; apply analytic procedures to the draft financial statements;
60 and perform other procedures considered necessary by management. A second recommendation
61 was to be aware of all procedures and processes involved in recording transactions, accruals,
62 and reclassifications and develop internal control policies to ensure proper recording of these
63 items. The WWJPB discussed ways to satisfy the recommendations.
64

65 Sheila Harmes explained the money market and checking account balances. Funds were shifted
66 from the checking account to the money market account, as suggested by Marcia Ward, to
67 accrue higher interest rates.
68

69 On motion by Mark Thein and seconded by Bob Walkes, the WWJPB voted to approve the 2022
70 draft audit. Vote: Yes – All.
71

72 **b. Local Advisory Team Grant**

73 **1) Approve Nitrogen Fertilizer Management Plan Agreement**
74

75 This grant assists Altura, Utica and Elgin Local Advisory Teams. For now, meetings with the local
76 LAT for Utica are on pause while a new well is being drilled, since a new well may change the
77 DWSMA boundaries. The grant currently ends at the end of this month. The MDA put together a
78 new grant agreement to extend until June 2025, which includes coverage of expenses for Sheila
79 Harmes' time to facilitate 17 local advisory team meetings with follow-ups. Also, to include 5 field
80 days with landowners. The agreement is set up in DocuSign so will be finalized through that
81 program and it was already reviewed as to form by Assistant County Attorney Stephanie Nuttall.
82 The WWJPB discussed best management practice determinations and how that may affect
83 farming in the future.
84

85 On motion by Bob Walkes and seconded by Mark Thein, the WWJPB voted to approve the
86 agreement and utilize the DocuSign program. Vote: Yes – All.
87

88 **c. Whitewater Drinking Water Protection Grant**

89 **1) Whitewater Drinking Water Protection Grant Amendment**

90 Sheila Harmes shared BWSR's document to extend the grant through 2024. On motion by
91 Marcia Ward and seconded by James Rentz, the WWJPB voted to approve the grant
92 amendment and utilize the DocuSign program. Vote: Yes – All.
93

94 **2) Wabasha County SWCD Sub-Agreement**

95 Sheila Harmes presented an amendment to the sub-agreement, extended through 2024,
96 to provide technical assistance with cover crops. Can have up to two 1-year contracts
97 under this agreement. On motion by Mark Thein and seconded by Bob Walkes, the
98 WWJPB voted to approve the amendment to the sub-agreement. Vote: Yes – All.
99

100 **3) Winona County SWCD Sub-Agreement**

101 Sheila Harmes presented an amendment to the sub-agreement, extended through 2024.
102 On motion by Marcia Ward and seconded by Bob Walkes, the WWJPB voted to approve
103 the amendment to the sub-agreement. Vote: Yes – All.
104

105 **d. Whitewater Drinking Water Protection Grant Projects**

106 **1) Septic System Contract Amendment – Burke**

107 Sheila Harmes explained the amendment request, to extend the contract until October
108 2023, as the work could not be completed by end of June 2023 due to weather. On motion
109 by Bob Walkes and seconded by Mark Thein, the WWJPB voted to approve the Burke
110 contract amendment. Vote: Yes – All.

2) Septic System Contract – Behrens

111 Sheila Harmes provided some septic system upgrade costs from past years with various
112 types of septic systems. On motion by Mark Thein and seconded by Bob Walkes, the
113 WWJPB voted to approve the Behrens contract. Vote: Yes – All.
114

115 **e. Whitewater Well Sealing Grant**

116 **1) Well Sealing Contract – Christie**

117 On motion by Marcia Ward and seconded by Bob Walkes, the WWJPB voted to approve a
118 \$3000 cap well sealing contract; the landowner to decide which company. Vote: Yes – 5;
119 Abstain – 1 (MT). Motion passed.
120

121 **8. Agency Reports**

122 None
123

124 **9. Adjourn; Next meeting August 17, 2023**

125 On motion by Mark Thein and seconded by James Rentz, the WWJPB voted to adjourn at 9:55 a.m.
126 Vote: Yes – All.
127

128 Respectfully submitted by:

129 Anne Schwertel, PL&ES Administrative Specialist
130
131

132 Signed:

133 *Leyon Jalal vice chair*
134 WWJPB Secretary/Treasurer