

Whitewater Joint Powers Board Minutes
June 20, 2024
Whitewater State Park Visitor's Center

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

6 Board Members Present: Josh Elsing, Ross Greden, Brian Mueller, James Rentz, Bob Walkes and
7 Lynn Zabel

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9 Board Members Absent: None

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11 Others Present: Sheila Harmes, Coordinator Whitewater Watershed; Dale Hadler, Public Observer

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13 **2. Public Comments**

14 No comments.

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16 **3. Approve Minutes of April 18, 2024, Meeting**

17 A motion was made by Bob Walkes and seconded by James Rentz to approve the minutes.

18 Vote: Yes – All.

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20 **4. Approve Agenda**

21 On motion by Ross Greden and seconded by Brian Mueller, the WWJPB voted to approve the agenda.

22 Vote: Yes – All.

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24 **5. Approve Consent Items**

25 Sheila Harmes explained the bills payable, amended to include the cost of Sheila Harmes' time for April
26 and May. Winona County is still working on the allocation percentage of Sheila's time to ensure it is being
27 calculated accurately. A motion was made by Ross Greden and seconded by Bob Walkes to approve the
28 consent items. Vote: Yes – All.

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30 **6. Board Reports**

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32 James Rentz – Business as usual with grass waterways, well sealings and they extended a contract for
33 locational grazing fencing.

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35 Brian Mueller – Olmsted County Administrator Heidi Welsch applied for a job in Dakota County and she is
36 a finalist.

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38 Lynn Zabel – Explained the Gorman Creek Channel Restoration project. Also attended a meeting in
39 Stewartville for Soil and Water.

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41 Ross Greden – Attended the WinLaC meeting a week earlier, which featured a video regarding the
42 Gorman Creek Channel Restoration project. Winona County SWCD led BALMM (Basin
43 Alliance of Lower Mississippi in Minnesota) Trout Stream Field Day on June 18, 2024.

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45 Bob Walkes – Some higher-level administrative positions have turned over at Wabasha County within the
46 last few months. The Board of Equalization meeting was recently with one party
47 challenging the classification.

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49 Josh Elsing – Discussions regarding the Law Enforcement Center continue. He believes in education
50 over regulation, and he feels others are starting to realize that. He shared some insight into
51 crop planting and the role nitrogen plays in that process. Attended the Commissioner Road
52 and Bridge Tour recently and he shared some larger projects slated to be completed. He
53 was able to share insight on agricultural community to some who attended the Road and
54 Bridge Tour.

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59 **7. Board Discussion and Action Items**

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**a. Financial Update – Sheila Harmes
Management Representation Letter (Auditor)
2023 Draft Audit**

Sheila Harmes gave an update on the checking and money market accounts. The WWJPB discussed the audit company and the 2023 draft audit.

On motion by Bob Walkes and seconded by Brian Mueller, the WWJPB voted to approve 7a. Financials, the Management Representation Letter and the 2023 Draft Audit. Vote: Yes – All.

b. Whitewater Drinking Protection Grant Projects

1) Septic System Upgrade – Payment for Behrens

On motion by Brian Mueller and seconded by Ross Greden, the WWJPB voted to approve the septic system upgrade – payment for Behrens. Vote: Yes – All.

2) Conservation Field Day Update

Pairing with SWCD's, Sheila Harmes explained the upcoming educational field day for farmers slated for August 1st. Ross Greden shared some planned farming educational activities for the day.

c. Clean Water Fund Competitive Grant Discussion

Every year, BWSR accepts applications for the Clean Water Fund Grant, which should be coming out shortly per BWSR Conservationist Dave Copeland. Sheila Harmes stated the format will be different this year to include accelerated implementation funding. Applications should be due later August, likely after the August WWJPB meeting. Sheila Harmes was looking for ideas from the committee members for projects to submit an application for. Discussion ensued about educational regulation and about possible projects, including well inventory.

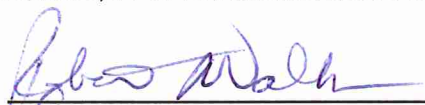
8. Agency Reports

None.

9. Adjourn; Next meeting August 15, 2024

On motion by Ross Greden and seconded by Bob Walkes, the WWJPB voted to adjourn at 9:23 a.m. Vote: Yes – All.

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

Signed: 

WWJPB Secretary/Treasurer