

**RURAL MN ENERGY BOARD MEETING**  
**MONDAY January 23, 2017 1:00 p.m.**  
**CRD, Slayton, MN**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Blue Earth County.....	Will Purvis	Mower County.....	Tim Gabrielson
Brown County.....	Tony Berg	Murray County.....	Gerald Magnus
Cottonwood Co.....	Tom Appel	Nobles County .....	Gene Metz
Faribault County .....	excused	Pipestone County.....	excused
Freeborn County.....	Glen Mathiason	Redwood County .....	excused
Jackson County.....	Don Wachal	Renville County ... ..	Bob Fox
Lincoln County .....	Mic VanDeVere	Rock County.....	Gary Overgaard
Lyon County .....	Steve Ritter	Sibley County .....	Gary Kruggel
Martin County .....	Steve Flohrs	Watonwan County.....	Scott Sanders

**ALSO PRESENT:** Annette Fiedler and Robin Weis (SRDC – RMEB staff), Paul Pierson (USDA).

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman Mathiason.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chairman Mathiason led the Pledge.

Chairman Mathiason indicated that the Agenda order would be changed to hold the election of officers.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS.** The Nominating Committee was Warmka, Appel and Potter. Mathiason turned the meeting over to Appel to run the election. Appel presented the slate of officers: Chair Glen Mathiason, Vice chair Steve Flohrs, Secretary Dennis Potter, and Treasurer Gerald Magnus. Appel asked how the Board would like to conduct the election as individual officers.

**M/S/P** Sanders, Metz to approve the slate of officers as presented.

**AGENDA:**

**M/S/P** Gabrielson, Berg to approve the change to the Agenda.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Staff shared an ITC memo on the Minnesota, Iowa 345 kV Transmission line project information in Jackson, Martin, Faribault counties. Staff indicated for the benefit of the new members that when staff is notified of projects, such as solar, wind, transmission line, she sends the information via email to the respective RMEB members and to county staff (such as the Highway Engineers and Zoning Administrator)

**MINUTES:**

**M/S/P:** VanDeVere, Purvis to approve the minutes of November 28, 2016 as presented.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Staff was asked to review the Treasurers report. Staff reviewed the pending bills and indicated that we normally receive the Website maintenance bill from AMC in January or February for \$500, could we have permission to pay that also. After payment of bills pending and website maintenance, there will be \$117, 374.37 in funds available. There was also the statement of fiduciary net position of the RMEB funds from the SRDC Audit. Staff indicated that invoices for the dues have been sent out.

**M/S/P:** Purvis, Fox to approve payment of the pending bills and website maintenance: SRDC general and finance Nov & Dec \$960 and \$611; SRDC PACE Admin Nov & Dec \$562.58 & \$2,125.50; PACE outreach Nov & Dec \$1,582.23 & \$840; Fryberger Nov & Dec \$1,407; SRDC Audit costs \$300; AMC (website) \$500.

**M/S/P** Metz, Gabrielson to approve the Treasurers report.

### **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Executive Committee** – History of RMEB. Staff provided a power point presentation of the history of the RMEB, a handout was also provided. Staff then provided the approved policies and procedures of the RMEB with two suggestions for the Boards consideration.

**M/S/P** Purvis, VanDeVere to approve modifying the PACE policy to read: RMEB members may be permitted to access PACE funds when not restricted by funder, but must abstain from voting. (*modification is underlined*)

**M/S/P** Gabrielson, Kruggel to approve adding the annual review of the RMEB policies.

**Tour Committee** - Steve Ritter, Will Purvis - no report

**PACE** (Property Assessed Clean Energy) Robin Weis staff, Gerald Magnus, Gene Metz, Will Purvis, Scott Sanders, Bob Fox. Robin reported that the PACE subcommittee met prior to the RMEB meeting to discuss the future of PACE. PACE has been a pilot that began with about \$1.1 million in from DOC ARRA EECBG (about \$650,000, and East River USDA funds (\$300,000 REDG and \$150,000 REED). The USDA loans have monthly payments of \$2500 and \$1448 respectively. Staff will be connecting with East River to see if they will grant a grace period for the loan payoffs. A change in the agreement with the MN DOC now allows use of the program income to be used toward administration costs which has help reduce administration costs. Issues we do have is the requirements that all projects must have energy audits by CEM or CEA or TSP's; Davis Bacon with the ARRA funds, DOC requires retrofit only; if different funding sources were used, some of these restrictions could be relaxed. There is currently \$647,000 available for PACE loans. There have been 14 closed loans, and 14 energy audit assistance grants approved; property owners in 12 of the 18 counties have had either a loan and/or an energy audit assistance project.

**Legislative Committee** - Gene Metz (chair), Gerald Magnus, Tom Warmka, Steve Flohrs. Commissioner Metz reported that the Lobbyist has sent information on two bills, neither affect the Energy Board to any extent.

**Member Updates on Energy projects and issues** from respective counties:

- Lyon – the 62 MW solar farm east of Marshall will be operational soon.
- Sibley - Heartland Ethanol Plant has installed a co-generation unit. Enrich is looking at an alternative route through the county. The ethanol plant may be a tour option.
- Murray and Cottonwood counties – a wind project seems to be moving forward.
- Cottonwood, Jackson, Martin, Odell wind is up and running.
- Martin Co – ITC power line – as per the notice that was circulated.

- Renville – there is a solar garden application (by Novel) that has been submitted.
- Rock – A solar farm is being discussed. Questions were asked about lease amounts.
- Freeborn – the project was sold to Xcel, and it appears the foot print will be moving into Iowa.
- USDA discussed the Rural Business Development Grant – in LQP Redwood and Lower Sioux; 6 REAP projects were awarded; MVTV expansion of the internet – Rural Utility Broadband – Tom Jansen may be interested in speaking at an RMEB meeting.
- MISO Queue – as per November meeting request – Staff was directed clarify the meaning of the initials and the queue list for the March meeting.

#### SW CERT

- Staff provided an update on the seed grants from 2015-2016: City of Slayton solar powered entrance signs; City of Trimont LED Street Lights and Heating and cooling at the community building; SW MN Housing Partnership to work with interested communities to develop a community solar garden; Region 9 Development commission to hold a community solar garden workshop; Accelerator grants to nonprofits for energy audits were to: Jeffers United Methodist church, Alliance Church in Mtn Lake, Living Word church in Redwood Falls, Grace Lutheran church in Westbrook, and Trinity Lutheran in Slayton; one project to a community to labor to replace windows at the Avoca community center. There are currently \$2860 left in the Accelerator for energy audits or energy efficiency projects in the SW CERT area and must be spent by March. We anticipate that in 2017 each CERT groups will be allotted \$20,000 in Seed grant funds to fund projects. The RMEB Counties are located in 3 different CERT regions in the state. CERT Seed grants may only be spent on labor.
- RMEB members to replace CERT Steering Committee members Henkels and Hoime – Commissioners Don Wachal and Gary Overgaard volunteers to serve on the Steering Committee
- SW CERT Steering Committee meeting with U of MN SW SDP – report given.
- March 28-29, 2018 CERT Conference in St Cloud announcement.

**Other Business / New Business.** There was no other business or new business

**2017 Meeting Dates:** *March 27; May 22; July 24; September 25; November 27.*

#### Adjourn

M/S/P Ritter, Kruggel to adjourn at 2:25 pm

Minutes Prepared By Annette Fiedler, Staff.

Minutes Reviewed By

Energy Board Secretary

Minutes Approved By

Energy Board Chairperson