

RURAL MN ENERGY BOARD MEETING
MONDAY February 11, 2019
CRD Office, Slayton, MN

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Blue Earth County	Will Purvis	Mower County.....	Tim Gabrielson
Brown County	Jeff VeerKamp	Murray County.....	Dennis Welgraven
Cottonwood Co	Tom Appel	Nobles County	Gene Metz
Faribault County	Tom Warmka	Pipestone County	Dan Wildermuth
Freeborn County	Glen Mathiason	Redwood County	Dennis Groebner
Jackson County.....	Don Wachal	Renville County	Doug Erickson
Lincoln County.....	Mic VanDeVere	Rock County.....	Gary Overgaard
Lyon County	Steve Ritter	Sibley County	absent
Martin County	Steve Flohrs	Watonwan County.....	absent

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Colwill, RUTE Foundations; Annette Fiedler, SRDC – RMEB Staff

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: All stood as Chairman Flohrs led the Pledge.

INTRODUCTIONS: All present were asked to introduce themselves.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

AGENDA:

M/S/P Mathiason, Ritter to approve the agenda as modified from the January 28, 2019 meeting.

MINUTES:

M/S/P: Mathiason, Potter to approve the minutes of September 24, 2018 as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Fiedler referred the Board to the financial handout with all bills due and reviewed the overview of 2018 bills pending and reference the copies of all bills due in the packet. The pending for CY 2018 were \$9809.20; end of CY 2018 total funds after pending 2018 bills are paid is \$92,012.48.

M/S/P: VanDeVere, Wachal to accept the financial report.

Discussion. It was noted that the Lobbyist was over by 109.98 %; and had been over in previous year. Metz will follow up.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Committee Chair Warmka reported that the nominating committee’s slate of officers for 2019 is Flohrs (chair), Metz (vice chair), Wildermuth (Treasurer), VanDeVere (Secretary). Committee Chair Warmka held the election of officers by opening the floor for nomination for chair.

M/S/P Wildermuth, Metz to nominate Steve Flohrs as Chair and to cast a unanimous ballot.

Warmka opened the floor for nominations for vice chair.

M/S/ Wildermuth, Overgaard to nominate Gene Metz as vice chair

M/S/P Ritter, Wildermuth to cast a unanimous ballot for Gene Metz to serve as Vice chair

Warmka opened the floor for nominations for Treasurer.

M/S/P Metz, Purvis to nominate Dan Wildermuth as Treasurer, cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot.

Warmka opened the floor for nominations for Secretary.

M/S/P Appel, Purvis nominate Mic VanDeVere as Secretary, cease nominations and cast a unanimous ballot.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS: The Board reviewed the 2019 committee memberships and asked if anyone wished to join any of the committees. There were no additions to the committees, however Commissioner Mathiason indicated if assistance was needed, he would be willing to step in.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The Executive Committee will be reviewing the JPA for any updating needed. Staff has noticed that there are some inconsistencies between the policies and procedures and the JPA.

TOUR COMMITTEE: Fiedler reported that Tracy Haberman from Nobles Cooperative indicated that there was a dairy in their area that has installed new robotics and a state of the art dairy cooler. Board members discussed that a tour of ag facilities with improvements may be a good tour. Members are to get back to Tour committee members or Fiedler with locations of facilities.

PACE COMMITTEE: Metz reported that PACE met via phone last week and approved the 26th PACE loan, this one in Lyon County. There is about \$100,000 in funds available for loan. The Department of Commerce has invited a 5 year extension for the use of the ARRA funds. PACE Program Administrator Weis will not be doing any outreach. Fiedler reported that whenever Weis receives requests for PACE financing, she sends an email to the RMEB members of that respective county. There have been 6 RETAP referrals in January/February – which when the assessment is completed, would be in the position to apply for PACE financing if they wanted.

Fiedler reviewed the benefits of both the RMEB PACE loan program as well as the MinnPACE Program; as well as the original source of funds for the pilot PACE program. The \$6336 is to pay off one of the loans and will be returned to the counties over time.

LEGISLATIVE: Committee Chair Metz reviewed the material in the handout provided to members. HF 700 (Zero emissions – remove waste burners from renewable energy and increase the amount of renewable energy); SF 848 wind setbacks that would eliminate wind development; and emerald ash borer. Board members discussed these issues and indicated that recent experiences with the cold weather and need for solar and wind; recent problems with natural gas should help with the need for renewable energy development. Meetings are being set up for Thursday at the Capital, members are welcome to join.

RUTE FOUNDATION: Jeff Colwill RUTE Operations VP from Rochester was present to present. A pilot turbine was constructed near Granite Falls with the precast made in Marshall. This turbine came on-line in December 2018. RUTE Foundation is looking for a developer to incorporate 5 foundations for a limited field trial. Fiedler was directed to send the presentation to the County Engineers. If a plant were located, the delivery distance would be about 300 miles.

MEMBER UPDATES ON ENERGY PROJECTS AND ISSUES

- Rock – Walleye Wind has been quiet with the location modification. The solar project is moving forward.
- Lyon – NR
- Lincoln - Red Pine Substation is up, maintenance building is by Hendricks. Will find out in March how much production tax; it is estimated that it will be \$1.1 million; plan to use some to finance broadband for the county.

- Murray – solar near Chandler, Fenton (Nobles/Murray), and Plum Creek
- Jackson – Scout Clean Energy, office in Jackson. \$1 million in production tax, \$800,000 revenue for land owners; 300 construction jobs; community fund.
- Renville – a tower on NE side of county; concern for aerial spraying; Danube REA 2 MW along 212.
- Faribault – Huntly to Willmar transmission line (ITC and Xcel Energy); still at three routes – weather has delayed meetings to determine the route. Jan 11, Steve and Tom attended the legislative forum in Mankato and spoke with 4 legislators and they now understand production tax and levy limits.
- Freeborn windfarm. PUC has passed the transmission lines, not sure of the status of the permitting.
- Mower – welcome more wind development.
- Blue Earth – NR
- Nobles – Nobles 2 – the PUC said they need to have ADLS unless denied by the FAA. Scott from Tenaska will be speaker at next meeting. Seeing solar alongside wind
- Redwood – Plum Creek and seeing 10-40 acre solar farms looking to locate.
- Cottonwood – Jeffers will be repowering this summer; Plum Creek a Geronimo project is looking at two different routes to connect to CAPX2020; APEX with Big Bend North of Mountain Lake has an office in town. The energy generated from this project would go to Jackson county and over to Martin County.

SW CERT: Fiedler referred the Board to the list of names of prospective Steering committee members. She indicated that this week the SRDC will review the committee structure changes that would allow for up to 17 members on the Steering Committee. Appointed are: Harold Stanislawski (replacing Nan Larson (AURI); Jon Beckman (Federated Electric); Jim Haler, South Central Electric; and Al Kruse, member at large.

Current work in the SW CERT Region: seed grants – United has completed their project; Windom solar entry way signs has experienced some delays and the educational component will not be completed until June; southwest Minnesota Housing partnership experienced project delays due to staffing changes and a modified work program has been approved. Utility visits – New Ulm so far; utility survey began in December and has identified Electric vehicles as one area of interest; Staff has reached out to Xcel Energy communities with information about CEE and business lighting and HVAC audits.

2018 MEETING DATES: Meeting dates for 2019 are: March 25, June 3, July 22, September 23 and November 25.

FUTURE MEETING TOPICS OR GUESTS: Fiedler was asked to look into developers who are doing repower projects.

ADJOURN The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Minutes Prepared By Annette Fiedler, Staff. 



Minutes Reviewed By
Energy Board Secretary



Minutes Approved By
Energy Board Chairperson