

RURAL MN ENERGY BOARD MEETING
MONDAY May 22, 2017 1:00 p.m.
CRD, Slayton, MN

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Blue Earth County	Will Purvis	Mower County	Tim Gabrielson
Brown County.....	Dennis Potter	Murray County.....	Gerald Magnus
Cottonwood Co	Tom Appel	Nobles County.....	Gene Metz
Faribault County	Tom Warmka	Pipestone County.....	Dan Wildermuth
Freeborn County	Glen Mathiason	Redwood County	absent
Jackson County.....	Don Wachal	Renville County	Bob Fox
Lincoln County.....	Mic VanDeVere	Rock County.....	Gary Overgaard
Lyon County	Gary Crowley	Sibley County	excused
Martin County	excused	Watonwan County	Scott Sanders

ALSO PRESENT: Annette Fiedler and Robin Weis (SRDC – RMEB staff)

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.

INTRODUCTIONS: All were asked to introduce themselves.

AGENDA: Chair Mathiason amended the agenda by moving the PACE report to the first item under Subcommittee Reports.

MINUTES:

M/S/P: VanDeVere, Gabrielson to approve the minutes of March 27th as written.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Treasurer Magnus reported on the financial statue of the Rural Minnesota Energy Board. Pending are bills for March and April: from the SRDC under the general category is \$1,215; for PACE Outreach \$400; for fiscal management \$490; from the Lobbyist Fryberger \$3,794.5; for a total expenditures of \$5,899.50. Funds available after pending bills are paid are \$117,538.62.

M/S/P: Wachal, Warmka to approve the Financial Report and approve payment of bills.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy): There is about \$401,000 in the PACE balance for lending purposes; and there are 16 loans. Weis requested the Commissioners to let her know if there are groups in their counties that would like to have her meet to help them learn the PACE program and then to assist in outreach. Also, the Commissioners were asked to send staff names of people who may be interested in becoming energy assessors – RETAP is looking for people in the southern area of the state. Weis updated the RMEB on her activity with working with the Department of Commerce to amend the payback of the ARRA dollars (the principal

needs to be returned beginning June 30, 2019). Weis is also working with McKnight in the research of beginning a revolving loan for a residential solar, this would not be PACE.

Executive Committee: Chairman Mathiason reported that the Executive committee met via phone call on May 18th to review a draft budget for 2018 and to identify dues for CY 2018 for County budgeting purpose. Fiedler reviewed a history of dues and influencers on annual dues ranging from \$3,000 to \$1000 since 2005 included. Major influences on the dues included: Intervener Status, Metro – Rural Counties Project, Legislative activity, implementation of a \$150,000 maximum reserve balance, and the implementation of PACE with no increase of dues. The committee recommended setting the dues at \$2500, which showed a small decrease in reserves as they worked with a preliminary budget.

M/S/P Purvis, Gabrielson to set the dues for calendar year 2018 at \$2,500 for county budgeting purposes, to be revisited in November 2017.

Tour Committee: Fiedler reported that the Deer Creek Station does have July 31st available. An initial inquiry into the bus company has identified that they will have a bus available for the 31st. Fiedler distributed a sheet that helped identify which commissioners were looking at joining the tour and where they were joining the tour. It was identified that it would be good to keep the Springfield stop as a pickup.

Changes from the previous tour to Deer Creek Station is after leaving Tyler and going to Deer Creek, the bus will return to Tyler at the Kronborg Inn for lunch and a short meeting. After that meeting, there will be a short tour of the PACE project in downtown Tyler at which that time the bus will begin its return route.

Discussed was if other commissioners and staff from other counties would like to join the tour. It was determined that there should be enough room for at least 3 people per county to join the tour, perhaps more if some counties have less people joining.

Legislative Committee: Gene Metz reported that he had been in communications with Sam at Fryberger's office and there had been nothing really to report on the developments at the legislature. Commissioners discussed the need for a lobbyist. It was determined that having someone at the capitol to be able to help keep an eye on bills and go to the correct committees was indeed valuable. Metz will be connecting with the lobbyist to make sure they are aware of the Rural Minnesota Energy Board budget for lobbying activities.

Wind and Solar Permitting - Just Some Basics: Fiedler reviewed a Power Point presentation that had been modified from a previous presentation done a few years back as well as some information from Geronimo Energy. They information reviewed the state permitting process for large wind energy production systems. The information also provided several web links to resources that the commissioners may be able to use when they are speaking with their peer commissioners as well as constitutes. Fiedler also opened up the website for the wind energy just to show where some of these resources are that they could easily access. This information was requested to be sent back out to the commissioners with the meeting notes.

Member Updates on Energy Projects and Issues from Respective Counties:

- Pipestone – unknown status of sun ray and west ridge
- Cottonwood – Apex – NE part of the county (comfrey area) – plan to connect to transmission line along I-90. New county engineer begins July 14th.
- Faribault / Martin County – ITC line – bases poured from I-90 south. Issues with people not in agreement with wind development in the county, coming from outside the county. They want the county to implement 3500' setbacks. Complaints that wind power disrupts GPS, in the way of crop dusting and are noisy machines. A 65 decibels is the max allowed during the day and 55 decibels at night from the setbacks. A speaking voice is 65 decibels.
- Mower – Mower received about \$3.5 million from the production tax of wind, it is used to keep the tax rate down to 6.5%. as well as employment for maintenance of the wind turbines (economic development)
- Lincoln – PUC for Red Pine in June or July. There are some turbines (first ones) being removed and others will be put up. The bases are being taken down the 4 feet.
- Freeborn – Freeborn wind proposal to the PUC is expected soon.

Wind and Solar Decommissioning Workgroup: Fiedler reported that she and Kyle from Pipestone County attended the first meeting where people were getting to know each other and identified different issues. – The decommissioning perhaps should also be dealing with repowering.

SW CERT. SW CERT Steering Committee: The SW Cert Steering Committee met with U of MN SW SDP for Strategic Planning Session. Commissioner Wachal reported that there was a diverse group of people there and the topics that came up included the need for land owner education. There had been guidance documents 8 – 10 years ago for land owners regarding land leases that help them ask the right questions. There is a new generation of people and a new wind regime and people are confused with the contracts that they are being asked to review and sign.

2017 Meeting Dates: July 31 - Tour; September 25; November 27.

ADJOURN: Chairman Mathiason adjourn the meeting at 2:26 p.m. The next thing to keep an eye on will be the Omnibus Energy Bill.

Minutes Prepared By Annette Fiedler, Staff



Minutes Reviewed By
Energy Board Secretary



Minutes Approved By
Energy Board Chairperson

