

**MINUTES
RURAL MN ENERGY BOARD MEETING
MONDAY November 23, 2009
CRD, SLAYTON, MN**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Blue Earth County	Will Purvis	Murray County.....	Kevin Vickerman
Chippewa County	Absent	Nobles County.....	Excused
Cottonwood County ...	John Oletjenbruns
Faribault County	Tom Warmka	Pipestone County ...	Marv Tinklenberg
Jackson County.	Roger Ringkob	Redwood County.....	Absent
Lincoln County	Larry Hansen	Renville County	Robert Fox
Lyon	Steve Ritter	Rock County	Ken Hoime
Martin County	Excused	Watowan County ...	Scott Sanders
Mower County.....	Absent	Yellow Medicine Co ...	Jane Remiger

ALSO PRESENT: Randy Fordice (GRE, CAPX2020), Yvonne Simon (Center for Rural Policy & Development), Paul Pierson (USDA - RD) and Annette Bair (Staff).

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Fox called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: There were no announcements

INTRODUCTIONS:

AGENDA: Chairman Fox added Nominating Committee to New Business.

M/S/P: Hoime, Tinklenberg to approve the revised Agenda.

MINUTES:

M/S/P: Warmka, Vickerman to approve the Minutes of September 28, 2009 as written.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Treasurer Hansen reviewed the financial report, MCIT Dividend of \$479, invoices for bills (\$1935 - HGA Professional services for period ending October 23, 2009; \$1294 - Stoel Rives for Services through 9-30-2009; \$350 and \$1300 - SRDC for services September and October staff services), and the audit report.

M/S/P: Hansen, Warmka to approve the financial report and the payment of the bills from HGA, Stoel Rives, and SRDC.

M/S/P Vickerman, Warmka to accept the Audit report.

Discussion: Commissioners commented on how good job done by the SRDC Finance Department did for the RMEB Audit.

Contract for Staff Services. The contract for staff services from the SRDC was reviewed. There were no changes from the CY 2009 (except for the dates).

M/S/P Oletjenbruns, Warmka to approve the 2010 contract for SRDC staff services.

Executive Committee. Chairman Fox asked the Executive Committee to meet following the meeting to identify a time to meet to develop the draft 2010 budget.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES: There was no detailed report. Vickerman will be researching the Wind Production Tax and Levy limit. Last year, the metro Counties were supporting the bonding. The RMEB members will be in contact with the MEPC regarding their legislative agenda.

CENTER FOR RURAL POLICY & DEVELOPMENT: Yvonne Simon gave a presentation on the Regional Competitiveness Project. The project researched six areas of competitive strength in the area which were separated in to two main areas: Core Strengths (Ag and Food, Manufacturing, Health Care) and New Development Strengths (High Technology, Bioscience, Renewable Energy). The Key development actions to strengthen competitiveness were separated into two areas: Regional Capital and Debt (Regional equity fund - seed to late stage, recruited venture capital, debt capital network for high risk/return starts up ventures) and Replicated Business Accelerator (business development, leadership, planning and expertise). The plan has 5 goals to work toward in the 38 county area:

- Implementing region-wide venture capital opportunities that will result in access to new venture capital; and creating a new database system to provide easy identification and connection efforts
- Develop Debt Capital Opportunities by establishing a rural capital seed fund network to work with new high risk projects.
- Designing and implementing a business accelerator program to support commercialization opportunities (i.e. -southern Minnesota Innovation Institute in the Rochester area).
- Design and implement regional “celebration” opportunities which will include multi-county attendance.
- Identify, support and convene “network” opportunities.

MEMBER UPDATES:

- Renville County - Resolution on a 40 MW C-BED project about 2 to 7 miles southwest of Bird Island. Also they have visited a biomass plant in Iowa that converts corn cobs to anhydrous.
- Faribault County - Talk of a 100 MW wind project (not Big Blue). The developer has been in regarding a CUP process for a substation.
- Yellow Medicine Co - inquired about recent brown outs. Some of the commissioner reported that the lines have been arcing (heavy use by dryers). There is a 138 Wind Project in the permitting process in Yellow medicine and Lincoln Counties.
- Jackson County reported the Elm Creek project is moving forward, and the Lakefield project is moving toward a 2010 construction.

SW CERT update

- Report on CERT Seed grant applications - 10 applications were outlined, the Steering committee will be meeting December 2 to review and make recommendations for funding.
- PBEEEP - http://www.admin.state.mn.us/documents/pbeep_fact_sheet.pdf
- Other initiatives -
 - ARRA funding programs: <http://www.state.mn.us/portal/mn/jsp/content.do?subchannel=-536895393&programid=536917843&id=-536893811&agency=Energy&sp2=y>
 - Refrigerator Harvest/roundup,

- X-Mas light recycling (CERT and RAM) - RMEB members please find out if there are businesses that are interested in customers dropping off the old lights / electrical cord. Arrangements will be made for pickup.
- ARCA - pairing up with utilities for refrigerator round up - to get the old (fish bait) appliances out of homes to reduce energy usage.
- SW/WC CERT Coordinator - 28 applications - review of the application next week.

Smart Grid and E3 2009 report. A report was provided to the Board on the two events. Bair thanked the RMEB for contributing \$500 toward her time while attending the conferences

OTHER BUSINESS AND REPORTS

- **Randy Fordice** - hand out of the public hearing schedule (Nov 30 to Dec 11th) for the CAPX2020 project - this is where the ALJ will be at the hearings and where people will have the opportunity to give testimony. The ALJ will make his recommendations in the April to May time frame to the PUC
- **Paul Pierson** -USDA - RD. REAP provides for a 25% grant for an energy efficiency project. An energy audit is required - they normally run between \$600 to \$1000. There is also the guaranteed loan program which could be combined with custom energy efficiency rebates from the utility. There have been some geothermal grants for farm shops. The application has to be filed before any project costs are incurred.
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mn/RBS/Section%209006%20Renewable%20Energy%20Program.htm>
RBEG Grant (Rural Business Energy Grant) - grants have been made to Watonwan Co, Renville Co, Lower Sioux Community (restricted to Tribal Members for businesses on or off the reservation), Nobles Co WREC) and there has been some interest from Murray County.

NEW BUSINESS.

Nominating Committee. Chairman Fox appointed Potter, Tinklenberg, and Purvis to the Nominating Committee.


MEETING DATES - others on call by Chair - Note the River Board also scheduled their meeting for January 25th. Some commissioners are on both. In order to ensure a quorum at both please coordinate with your alternates.

- **2010 meeting dates:** Jan 25, March 22, May24, July 26, Sept 27, Nov 22.
- **Potential topics for 2010:** Cellulosic - corn cobs, Xcel - MinWind Battery project (summer?), Bio products - AURI - January, Senate Staff - **Cap and Trade** - Jan / March

ADJOURN Chairman Fox adjourned the meeting at 11:20 am

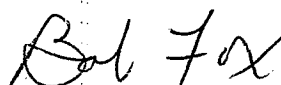
Minutes Prepared By Annette Bair, Staff 

Minutes Reviewed By:



Energy Board Secretary

Minutes Approved By:



Energy Board Chairperson