

**RURAL MN ENERGY BOARD MEETING  
MONDAY November 23, 2015, 1:00 p.m.  
CRD Office, Slayton, MN**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Blue Earth County .....	Will Purvis	Mower County .....	Tim Gabrielson
Brown County .....	Excused	Murray County .....	Gerald Magnus
Cottonwood County...	Tom Appel	Nobles County .....	Gene Metz
Faribault County .....	Tom Warmka	Pipestone County .....	excused
Freeborn County .....	Glen Mathiason	Redwood County .....	Sharon Hollatz
Jackson County.....	David Henkels	Renville County .....	Bob Fox
Lincoln County .....	Mic VanDeVere	Rock County.....	Ken Hoime
Lyon County .....	Steve Ritter	Sibley County.....	Gary Kruggel
Martin County .....	Steve Flohrs	Watsonwan County ...	Scott Sanders

**ALSO PRESENT:** Josh Fiala (Line Loss Pro), Jordan Burmeister (Geronimo energy), Mengjie Song (SRDC), Annette Fiedler (SRDC – RMEB staff)

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chairman Purvis asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** none

**INTRODUCTIONS:** Chairman Purvis asked everyone present to introduce themselves.

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:** The contract for services was moved to the PACE Committee report; Geronimo was added as item # 9 and the remaining items moved down.

**M/S/P:** Hoime, Warmka to approve the agenda as amended.

**MINUTES:**

**M/S/P:** Mathiason, Metz to approve the Minutes of September 28, 2015

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Treasurer Henkels gave the financial report and presented the following bills: \$100 Board per diem (PACE committee commissioner expense), \$2,200 SRDC Contracted services, \$2582 PACE Contracted services, \$5373.30 contracted services PACE Outreach, \$957.61 Lobbyist, \$255 SRDC Fiscal management. The total funds after payment of pending bills are \$159,350.81.

**M/S/P:** Appel, Warmka to approve the payment of bills and the financial report.

**RMEB SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Executive Committee:** RMEB Budget. Treasurer Henkels reported that the Executive Committee met on November 13 to develop and draft budget for the RMEB CY 2016. Henkels reviewed each line item and indicated that there are some unknowns, such as with the PACE expansion opportunity. The budget can be reviewed mid-year to address changes.

**M/S/P** Gabrielson, Fox to approve the CY 2016 budget.

**PACE:** Robin Weis reported that there have been a total of 7 PACE loans: one in Jackson County, four in Nobles, one in Lincoln, and one in cottonwood county; there is \$723,000 in funds available. A reminder that nonprofits are also eligible for the PACE funding.

Renewable energy funding for PACE. The PACE committee and staff are working on details; a preliminary information document has been submitted along with the RMEB Joint Powers Agreement and contract with the SRDC and RMEB. This is a public / private partnership, where the funder is interested in energy credits. The application is being framed into quarterly applications, to take in 2-3 larger projects and several smaller ones.

DOC conducted a site visit; they are required to have at least one site visit during the 5 year agreement. They requested an amortization schedule for each loan. Trusty will be working with the DOC to amend the contract to allow the interest in the loans to go toward administration and to broaden projects from retrofits to stand alone projects.

Staff has been working with USDA staff regarding any opportunity to apply for USDA funds to assist in offsetting energy audit costs. The USDA funds would cover 75% of the cost and the PACE Loan recipient would cover 25% of the energy audit costs.

**M/S/P** To apply to USDA for funds help offset PACE Loan Energy Audits.

Contract of Services. The PACE committee reviewed the annual contract between the SRDC and the RMEB because the changes to the contract were in relation to PACE. These changes spelled out ore information in relation to PACE. There is a possibility that a contract amendment may be needed as this PACE financing opportunity moves forward.

**M/S/P** Henkels, Flohrs to approve the CY 2016 contract between the RMEB and SRDC.

**Tour Committee:** *(no report)*

**Legislative Committee:** Metz reported on Legislative issues and requested direction for the 2015-2016 session.

Metz reviewed the 2015 Legislative history on the Production Tax. Based on several conversations – the feeling is that there will be a tax bill this session. The dilemma is does the RMEB work on the removal of levy limits or protect the production tax. AMC is recommending dropping levy limit language and to protect the production tax. RMEB consensus, based on discussion is to protect the production tax on wind and solar. AMC staff recommend the following language: “AMC opposes changes to the wind and solar production tax which would negatively affect a county’s tax base, create confusion in the assessment process, or place undue burdens on host communities.”

EPA Clean Energy Plan where wind will be at 40% was discussed. Nobles County is considering a resolution. Is there information about MN? Fiedler was asked to send the document to the coops and MEPC to see their opinion of it.

**Nominating Committee.** The election of officers is scheduled for the January meeting. Tom Warmka, Bob Fox, Gary Kruggel were appointed to the nominating committee.

**Geronimo Energy – Jordan Burmeister** reported on projects they are developing for wind and solar development. He reported on the Blade and Star farm in Lincoln County (200 MW) for 2018-19; and explained about community solar gardens and the Xcel Energy Community Solar Program. He was asked what land leases average for solar farms (\$650-700 / acre); it takes about 5-6 acres per MW, 50 acres is large; usually they work with work with one land owner.

#### **Member Updates on Energy projects and issues**

- Nobles County: Wind project of 250 – 300 MW
- Freeborn County: 2016 construction for a wind farm mostly in the county about 30-40,000 acres
- Sibley County: Heartland Corn is looking at co-generation to reduce their electric bill; Novel Energy has done two projects for farmers in the county

#### **SW CERT**

- Fiedler reported on the SW CERT Seed grants. There were 4 applications: city of Slayton, city of Trimont, SW Minnesota Housing Partnership, and Region 9 RDC; there will be funds unallocated to projects and it is proposed a rapid assistance fund be created for these funds.

- **OTHER BUSINESS AND REPORTS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:** Josh Fiala of Line Loss Pro described a patented energy reduction system that saves 15-20% in energy; primary targets are businesses with \$1000 monthly electric bills. In July, the Murray county medical Center installed the line loss pro hardware and they are experiencing 20% reduction in costs.

**MEETING DATES:** January 25, March 28, May 23, July 25, September 26, November 28.

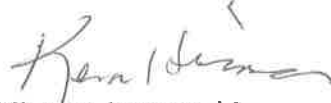
**ADJOURN:**

**M/S/P:** Kruggel, Gabrielson to adjourn the meeting at 2:45 pm.

Minutes Prepared By Annette Fiedler, Staff.



Minutes Reviewed By  
Energy Board Secretary



Minutes Approved By  
Energy Board Chairperson