

**MINUTES - MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2020 AT 1:00 P.M.
RURAL MINNESOTA ENERGY BOARD
CENTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, SLAYTON, MN**

COMMISSIONERS ATTENDANCE:

Blue Earth County Will Purvis	Mower County Tim Gabrielson
Brown County Jeff VeerKamp	Murray County Dennis Welgraven
Cottonwood County . Tom Appel	Nicollet County John Luepke
Faribault County Tom Warmka	Nobles County Gene Metz
Freeborn County Absent	Pipestone County Dan Wildermuth
Jackson County Don Wachal	Redwood County Dennis Groebner
Lincoln County Mic VanDeVere	Renville County Doug Erickson
Lyon County Steve Ritter	Rock County Absent
Martin County Steve Flohrs	Watsonwan County..... Absent

OTHERS PRESENT: Rose Patzer (Energy Center), Laura Malwitz (Siemens), Vince Robinson; Jason Walker (SRDC), Robin Weis (SRDC), Brook Swart (SRDC), Harold Stanislawski, Eric L'Abbe, Lisa Graphenteen

CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chair Metz called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Introductions.

AGENDA:

M/S/P Ritter/Wildermuth to approve the agenda as presented.

MINUTES:

M/S/P VanDeVere/Wachal to approve the minutes from July 27, 2020 as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Treasurer Wildermuth presented the financial report and bills.

M/S/P Purvis/Welgraven to approve the Treasurer's Report and payment of the bills pending totaling \$3,640.61 which included \$900 (Fryberger); \$1822.50 (SRDC General); \$718.11 (SRDC PACE Outreach); \$200 (SRDC Finance).

SUBCOMMITTEE AND RMEB BUSINESS:

Executive Committee: Nothing new to report

PACE: Wachal reported that the PACE Committee met on September 15, 2020 at 2pm via Zoom. All members were present. At present there is \$118,700 in ARRA funds and \$326,900 in other funds available. They recently closed on a PACE loan for \$61,900 for an apartment building in Worthington. They continue to talk about outreach efforts. At future meetings they will discuss interest rates.

Robin presented on PACE legislation and an overview of the purpose, requirements, financing terms, and eligibility of PACE. She included the SRDC's portfolio of loans and examples of the different projects they did. She encouraged all board members to spread the word about PACE in their respective counties. For full details, please refer to her presentation that will be sent out with the minutes and they will eventually be uploaded to the website.

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Legislative Committee: Nothing to report.

Public/Private Investments in Energy in Minnesota: Laura Malwitz, with Energy and Performance Services at Siemens, presented on how local units of government can partner with private companies using different financing models to get energy projects built. As the grid becomes more decentralized, everyone needs to think about energy resiliency. She listed several types of agreements ranging from most operational risk to the LUG to the least. Business is able to leverage certain tax credits and programs that the public sector cannot access.

She paid particular attention to the Design, Build, Own, Operate, Maintain (DBOOM) model. Under this model a “third party collaborates with you to *Design* the energy solution, they *Build* and commission the energy solution and validate performance, they will *Own* title to the asset, you contract for output from asset. Long-term, they *Operate* and have responsibility for performance metrics and the third party *Maintains* asset(s), ensuring a high level of performance.”

She ended her presentation with examples of different types of projects including a Solar Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with a water treatment plant in Atwater, CA.; a Holland Co-Generation gas plant with the largest snowmelt system in North America that melts the snow off the sidewalks; and she shared a video about the Blue Lake Rancheria Low-Carbon Microgrid.

She invited everyone to participate in a free webinar about the Santa Fe Community College microgrid on October 28 at 1pm. (see slides from her presentation for details).

For full details, please refer to her presentation that will be sent out with the minutes and they will eventually be uploaded to the website.

Transmission Summit Update: Jason informed the board that the invitations have been sent out and that participants will need to register 2x—one time for the October 14th educational session and the October 16th networking/empowerment session. The summit is still looking for funding from sponsors beyond the \$1,000 that the PUC is contributing. Rose Patzer has asked all the big energy players, but she has not heard word yet either way. All the other organizational aspects of the summit have been going well.

Member Updates:

- *Blue Earth* – Construction on Wilmont to Huntley Power line. Everything is on schedule. Also meeting with a group interested in an electric project with the dam.
- *Brown* – None
- *Cottonwood* – Working on power lines for Big Bend Wind project north of Mountain Lake. Changed footprint to 50-55 turbines with an output is 275-300 mW. Scheduled for late 2021 to 2022. Working on the transmission line at the moment.
- *Faribault* – Large solar project is in the works in NW part of county – would cover approximately 5,000 acres -- may stretch into Blue Earth county
- *Freeborn* – None
- *Jackson* – Still in the land acquisition and permitting stage of the Three Waters Wind 200mW wind project

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- *Lincoln* – 2nd 100 turbines of Buffalo Ridge towers being built -- going well, some are already operational. For the repower near Lake Benton they are recycling all of the old blades. Mic will investigate more about how that is being done and report back to this group.
- *Lyon* – CUP in the NE part of the county for a small solar farm
- *Martin* – None
- *Mower* – Pleasant valley repower and permitting for another wind farm.
- *Murray* – Next year one of the wind farms is going to repower.
- *Nicollet* – More public opposition to solar farms
- *Nobles* – Chair Metz described how one of their large 3.5 mW towers was hit by lightning and destroyed a blade. Looking at repowering Nobles 1. Incentive money from feds is creating a large demand for repowers.
- *Pipestone* – Repower project is going well; transmission is full so no ability to expand
- *Redwood* – None
- *Renville* – Another request for a 1 mw solar project to go in at a farm site
- *Rock* – None
- *Wantonwan* - None

Rose Patzer invited board members to attend the Center of Energy's bi-annual meeting October 21 from 1-3 pm where they will have continued discussions about transmission.

SW CERT: Jason Walker updated the board on National Drive Electric Week. Get details from Drive Electric MN. He went over how the Solar in Schools project has been going in Pipestone. He also covered how CERTs has been working across multiple sectors in regards to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts. Lissa Pawlisch added that on Sept 29th there would be a CERT Steering Committee webinar from Noon – 12:30 on a new effort to reduce everyone's energy burden to be below 5%. Some people spend as much as 30% of their income on energy.

OTHER BUSINESS AND REPORTS – None

NEW BUSINESS – None

NEXT MEETING – November 23rd @ 1pm

FUTURE MEETINGS – January 25, March 22, May 24, July 26, September 27, November 22.

FUTURE TOPICS / GUESTS: None recommended at this meeting

ADJOURN

Chair Metz adjourned the meeting at 2:33PM

Minutes prepared by Jason Walker, Development Planner at SRDC

Reviewed by:

Secretary

Approved by:

Chairman