

**MINUTES - MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2021 AT 1:00 P.M.
RURAL MINNESOTA ENERGY BOARD
CENTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, SLAYTON, MN**

COMMISSIONERS ATTENDANCE:

Blue Earth County Kevin Paap	Mower County..... Polly Glynn
Brown County..... Jeff Veerkamp	Murray CountyDennis Welgraven
Cottonwood County... Tom Appel	Nicollet CountyJohn Luepke
Faribault CountyJohn Roper	Nobles CountyGene Metz
Freeborn County Brad Edwin	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 CountyAbsent
Martin County Steve Flohrs	Watsonwan County.....Absent

OTHERS PRESENT: Jason Walker, Vince Robinson, and John Mueller and Molly Malone (alternates)

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 Luepke/Welgraven to approve the agenda with voting on Bylaws added to the Executive Committee Section and a correction that the upcoming proposed meeting dates were for 2022 and not 2021.

MINUTES:

M/S/P Luepke/Flohrs to approve the minutes from July 26, 2021 as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Treasurer Wildermuth presented the financial report and bills.

M/S/P VanDeVere/Brown to approve the Treasurer's report as presented.

M/S/P Wachal/Welgraven to approve the payment of the bills pending from the months of July and August totaling \$4,765 which included \$1,800 (Fryberger); \$2,565 (SRDC General);and \$400 (SRDC Finance).

Executive Committee: Chair Metz gave the board a progress report on the ratification of the Joint Powers Agreement. As of September 27, 2021 the board has received signed copies from 13 of the 18 member counties. Nicollet had a request to correct typos/grammar errors before they would bring it to the board. The other four counties are: Murray, Jackson, Faribault and Brown.

M/S/P VanDeVere/ Welgraven to approve the latest revision of the Bylaws.

M/S/P Wachal/Luepke to keep the budget the same in 2022 as in 2021.

PACE: This committee did not have much to report, but Robin is always willing to report if needed.

Legislative Committee: Chair Metz notified the board that Fryberger will present at the November meeting. He also brought up the issue that Stearns county presented at AMC that they have many solar

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projects that are less than 1 MW. These projects do not any additional tax revenue to the county, which is their concern. They would like the property to be taxed at the commercial rate. At the November meeting, the board will discuss this issue in more detail.

Member Updates:

- *Blue Earth* – They have had discussion about decommissioning and recycling of solar panels and wind turbines
- *Brown* – No updates
- *Cottonwood* – The Big Bend Project is now moving forward after removing a few turbines and shuffling others around to address particular objections
- *Faribault* – A lot solar going in; four turbines not working
- *Freeborn* – 150 MW Solar – Haywood project beginning in 2022 with completion date in 2023
- *Jackson* – NextEra is projecting 2023 for the start date on their project
- *Lincoln* – No updates
- *Lyon* – No updates
- *Martin* – No updates
- *Mower* – Work on agreements between road officials and the wind companies
- *Murray* – A repower project with 63 towers coming down and 45 towers replacing them; two solar garden projects; Plum Creek still moving forward and three telecom towers going up
- *Nicollet* – An owner upset that he needs to mow around his solar panels; farmland prices going up
- *Nobles* – No updates
- *Pipestone* – No updates
- *Redwood* – No updates.
- *Renville* – Small solar garden planned
- *Rock* – No updates.
- *Wantonwan* – They now have new solar ordinances in place.

SW CERT: Also, CERTs is seeking applications for the latest round of Seed Grants. Organizations have until October 8 to apply. To get more information and/or to apply, people can visit

<https://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/seedgrants>

Also, there is \$16 million allocated for Solar on Schools - \$8 million in Xcel territory and \$8 million to the rest. The rules are still being written, but the Xcel projects can be for up to 1 MW, while the other projects will be up to 40 KW with the requirement that solar be implemented in the curriculum and that a monitor with real-time reporting be visible inside the school.

OTHER BUSINESS AND REPORTS: Vince Robinson brought up proposed federal legislation that would provide incentives to building renewable energy that would include giving 85% as direct payments at the LLC level instead of as tax credits. He said this change would bring a lot more players to the renewables market.

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NEW BUSINESS: No new business. Members discussed a group called Summit Carbon Solutions that is going to different counties in the area about putting in a carbon pipeline to store carbon in North Dakota. Commissioners were wondering about the legitimacy and strategies of the group.

NEXT MEETING – November 22 -- will be in-person at the SRDC conference room. A Zoom link will be available for any persons unable to make it in-person.

FUTURE MEETINGS in 2022 – January 24, March 28, May 30, July 25, September 26, November 28

FUTURE TOPICS / GUESTS: Fryberger legislative report and discussion on taxing less than 1 MW solar projects.

ADJOURN

Chair Metz adjourned the meeting at 1:50 PM

Minutes prepared by Jason Walker, Development Planner at SRDC

Reviewed by:

Secretary

Approved by:

Chairman