

MINUTES
RURAL MN ENERGY BOARD MEETING
MONDAY May23, 2011, 9:30 A.M.
CRD, SLAYTON, MN

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Blue Earth County.....	Will Purvis	Murray County.....	Kevin Vickerman
Cottonwood County	John Oletjenbruns	Nobles County	David Benson, Diane Thier
Faribault County	Tom Warmka	Pipestone County	Marv Tinklenberg
Jackson County.	Roger Ringkob	Redwood County.....	John Schueller
Lincoln County	Larry Hansen	Renville County	Bob Fox
Lyon	Steve Ritter	Rock County	Ken Hoime
Martin County	Jack Potter	Watonwan County	Excused
Mower County	Absent	Yellow Medicine Co ...	Greg Renneke

ALSO PRESENT: David Kolsrud, Jeff Vetsch (CERT), Dennis Timmerman (AURI), Annette Bair (staff).

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The Executive committee met prior to the RMEB meeting and will be reporting on its recommendations.

INTRODUCTIONS: Everyone present was asked to introduce themselves.

AGENDA: Dennis Timmerman requested to be given time on the agenda to report on AURI.

M/S/P Ritter, Benson to approve the amended agenda.

MINUTES

M/S/P Vickerman, Ritter to approve the minutes of March 28, 2011 as written.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Treasurer Hansen reviewed the RMEB general operating financial report and the two bills submitted for payment. Bills are: SRDC for March staff time, \$1370; SRDC April staff time, \$490.

M/S/P Hansen, Tinklenberg to approve the financial report and payment of bills identified above.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee. The Executive Committee discussed several items prior to the Board meeting that the recommend RMEB Action on:

- Items occasionally come up that require payment before the Energy Board meets every two months. Would the RMEB give authority to either the Chairman or Executive committee to approve bills if payment is needed before the next RMEB meeting?

M/S/P Thier, Schueller to approve the Executive Committee approving bill payment as necessary prior to an REB meeting, provided the bill be presented to the RMEB at the next meeting for public record.

- Lobbyist. Policy for more timely reaction to legislative activity. There were a couple of bills moving through the legislature that would have been appropriate if the RMEB provide input (wind setback, net metering, etc). The RMEB was asked to consider policy for a more timely reaction to Legislative issues. In addition, it is difficult to have a presence at the legislature that is looking out for the RMEB interests. The RMEB discussed the merits of employing a lobbyist for the special session to address the production tax and levy limits. Currently, the RMEB has a slow reaction time and noted it is difficult to change language, once it on the floor; it is paramount that the RMEB have the ability to be more effective than it currently is.

M/S/P Benson, Hansen for RMEB Legislative Committee Chairman to contact Kevin Walli, to obtain an estimate of the cost to serve as RMEB Lobbyist for the 2011 Special Legislative Session to address the wind production tax and levy limit issue.

Discussion. Bair was instructed to send the information regarding the Lobbyist to the RMEB primary members.

M/S/P Schueller, Ritter to approve policy for a more timely impact on legislatives issues – the process shall be Legislative Committee to provide recommendation on a legislative issue to the Executive Committee who has authority to act on the issue.

- Dues discussion. In January, Commissioner Ritter requested the RMEB consider the reserves and dues, and consider returning funds and fewer dues in 2012. Discussion involved the potential need for a Lobbyist for the legislative issues as expenses not originally considered for the 2011 budget. Following the discussion, it was decided to lower the dues from \$2500 to \$2000 in 2012. The amount of dues will be revisited in November 2011. Members also indicated that there was in interest in increasing the membership of the RMEB.

M/S/P Hoime, Ritter to set the dues at \$2000 for CY 2012 and revisit the dues amount in November.

Legislative Committee. Benson reported on the April 28th Legislative breakfast with the SRDC Commissioner and legislators. Three senators were present, the representatives were in meetings. Discussed was the trouble with levy limits and the wind production tax. Also issues are the net metering (appears to have been generated from the Electric Coop in Watonwan County), CERT Funding and increased wind setbacks being advocated by Goodhue county area.

SPEAKER DAVID KOLSRUD. Agri-Energy to GEVO, the conversion from ethanol to isobutonal. The Luverne plant will be the first commercial size isobutonal plant in the world. The 22 million gallon ethanol facility will be converted to an 18 million gall facility (isobutonal is heavier than ethanol). Mixed with gasoline, there is not reduction in mileage; it can also be mixed / used with gasoline, diesel and aviation fuel. July 2012 will be on-line. MN Legislative language needs to be revised to allow the isobutonal, the other 49 state already have “other renewables”. The cost is \$17 million to retrofit. by products the same as ethanol (DDGs have to be called something else – animal feed). Information about the facility will be posted on the RMEB site.

JUNE 6TH TOUR INFORMATION. There is still room on the coach for more people to ride. The morning tour will be of Poet – Project Liberty in Emmetsburg, Iowa and Easy energy in the afternoon. Coordinate with Bair on names of people who plan to come and where they will be catching the bus.

DENNIS TIMMERMAN – AURI. Reported on three projects they have been working with: Eagle Bluffs school – anaerobic digester; concept was to use switch grass, the concept worked, but the capital costs were \$2 million. Las qui Parle School district - use of wind and gen set. 225 KW using a biofuels generator. They ran into difficulties with the rate structure. Recently the PUC revised the schedule which allows the pairing on wind and biodiesel generator during peak periods. Warroad MN – ground sources heat – in reverse which produces electricity 125 kW for the school. Reports on these will be available in July.

MEMBER UPDATES ON ENERGY PROJECTS AND ISSUES

- Murray County 2 MW solar farm CUP was approved
- Lyon County has an RFP to sell carbon credits.
- Warmka reported on a documentary regarding the Ford Plant in Detroit investing in solar panels to run the assembly plant which needed 500kW, and on a cloudy day produced 419 kW. Solar is the new technology.

SW CERT UPDATE

Steering Committee – Warmka requested another ERMEB member take his place on the SW CERT – he is physically located in the SE CERT. Commissioner Vickerman indicated he would be willing to be a member of the Steering Committee.

New initiative: **Make a splash** <http://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/community-projects/campaigns/sprayvalve> Jeff Vetch reported on the new campaign where the reduced cost of the spray valves are available – saving hot water saves on energy. In June there is a solar workshop in Dassel. Benson indicated that he would have liked to have gone to the biogas workshop, is there on scheduled for the Worthington Area?

NEW BUSINESS – none

MEETING DATES – 2011 meeting dates (4th Mondays of odd months): tour June 6th, July 25, September 26, and November 28

ADJOURN:

M/S/P: Ritter, Potter to adjourn the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

Minutes Prepared By Annette Bair, Staff.



Minutes Reviewed By:

Minutes Approved By:

Energy Board Secretary

Energy Board Chairperson

