

MINUTES
RURAL MN ENERGY BOARD MEETING
MONDAY March 23, 2009, 9:00 A.M.
Highwater Ethanol, Lamberton MN.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

ALSO PRESENT: Randy Fordice (CAPX2020), Paul Pierson (USDA), Annette Bair (Staff).

Tour of the Highwater Ethanol Facility: 9:00 am to 10:15 am. Tour was lead by Highwater Ethanol CEO Brian Kletscher.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 10:22 AM by Vice Chairman Fox

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: There were no changes to the agenda.

M/S/P Warmka, Potter to approve the agenda as presented.

MINUTES:

M/S/P Sanders, Benson to approve the minutes of January 26, 2009 as presented.

TREASURERS REPORT: The Treasurers report and bill for payment were reviewed. The following bills were presented for payment: Executive Committee expenses: Fox \$157.90; Hansen \$99.60; Hoime \$93.00; HGA for the LCCMR project \$5375.00; SRDC for January and February staff time \$800 and \$2180; AMC – for website hosting \$500.

M/S/P Warmka, Benson to approve the Treasurer's Report and authorize payment of the bills as presented.

JOINT POWERS BOARD OPERATIONAL BUSINESS & SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee Report: The Executive Committee met on February 23rd to develop the proposed budget. Committee members reviewed the general operating Rural Metro LCCMR categories.

Discussion: Commission members indicated that they believe that the budget is on line. In May the 2010 dues will be addressed and then finalized in July.

M/S/P Hanson, Purvis to approve the proposed budget as presented.

New RMEB Member Inquiry: Following the budget discussion, the Board was informed that the Lower Sioux Community has expressed an interest in partnering with the RMEB. The RMEB Attorney has been asked for an opinion on whether there would be any potential issues with joining the joint powers – or if another method or partnering would be advisable. The RMEB Attorney has indicated that joining the Joint Powers may conflict for the Tribe regarding Tribal Sovereignty and the RMEB regarding insurance.

USDA REAP Program Review and Support: The USDA REAP program, formerly the 9006 program, now the 9007 program has had 185 awards in Minnesota (methane digesters, grain dryers, large and small WECS as well as geothermal grants). USDA has approached state agencies and they will not endorse the review process for MN applicants. This review is worth 10 points for grant applicants and will help them compete nationwide.

M/S/P Warmka, Tinklenberg to approve the RMEB reviewing REAP proposals with the appropriate review letter, for applicants within the member county area.

Discussion: Fox reported that NACo has indicated that this is where the stimulus money is going to come from. Pierson added that the Rural Business Enterprise grant has helped establish RLFs in small communities.

New Website Address: In the near future the RMEB website will have a different address. Bair was instructed to send the new address out when it is established.

LCCMR Project Status: Fox reported a meeting has been scheduled for April 1st at 11 am. The Methane study at the Lyon Co Landfill has not yet been completed.

Legislative: The Board reviewed & discussed the following bills:

- SF1555 Energy and energy generation projects county joint purchasing authority and financing. (Kubly, Dibble, Anderson, Vickerman, Rosen).
- HF 79 and SF 205 – Wind Energy Production Tax removed from county apportionment deduction for school districts
- HF 566 and SF 429 Wind Energy Production Tax inclusion removed.
- HF 708 and SF 1215 CERT funding from the Xcel RDF fund at \$625,000 each year 2010 and 2011.

M/S/P Oletjenbruns, Hansen to approve letter of support of core CERT funding over the next two years from the Xcel RDF fund.

- HF 690 – California Clean Air bill – Fox reported that this legislation is of concern. It appears to be tailored after CA which is not friendly to corn ethanol.

Subcommittee Appointments:

- Executive: Commissioners Fox, Warmka, Hansen, Hoime
- Legislative: Commissioners Warmka (chair), Benson, Vickerman, Hansen, Antony, Sanders, and Fox
- LCMR: Commissioners Fox, Warmka, and Benson (same as 2008)
- Rural/Metro: Commissioners Warmka, Hansen, Potter, Ritter, and Fox

Other Reports:

- Warmka reported Region 9 is funding some wind activity and will report on more at a later date.
- Kato Engineering – Vestas - is going to begin making wind generators
- Jackson Co has several developers looking at 10-14 wind farms. Bair recommended making sure the County Highway Engineers and Zoning Administrators are aware of the activity – there is a concern regarding the damage to roads with the legal roads – life of the road is reduced. Vickerman indicated that that’s why it was important to have the wind production tax – for repair of infrastructure. Ritter reported that their (Lyon Co) Zoning Ordinance requires addressing the road – weight – for two years after the project.
- Hydrogen buses – a March 2009 report – based on a worldwide study. Two copies were passed around the table.
- Lakefield Wind Forum - Over 100 people were at the forum, pictures of the forum were passed around the table. Commissioner Warmka has also expressed an interest in a similar forum in his area.
- GAO office is working with NACo – regarding climate change studies. If interested in taking the survey: Julie Ufoer 202.942.4269 or jufoer@naco.org
- Fordice reported on the public notices to address environmental impacts of the 345 kV transmission line. The ALJ has approved all three of the 345 kV lines. Fordice also reported that there will be a news release on March 27 of a study – part of the Next Gen act of 2007.


Next Meeting: May 18 in Faribault Co – geothermal tour. Start time 9:30 am.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 11:29 am

Minutes Prepared By Annette Bair, Staff.

Minutes Reviewed By:

Minutes Approved By:


Energy Board Secretary


Energy Board Chairperson