

**MINUTES - MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2019 AT 1:00 P.M.  
RURAL MINNESOTA ENERGY BOARD  
CENTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, SLAYTON, MN**

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**COMMISSIONERS ATTENDANCE:**

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jordan Burmeister (Geronimo Energy); Jason Walker and Annette Fiedler (SRDC).

**CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Commissioner Gabrielson distributed an article from NPR regarding disposal of turbine blades.

**AGENDA:**

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

**MINUTES:**

M/S/P Purvis, VanDeVere to approve the minutes of July 22, 2019 as presented.

**FINANCIAL REORT:**

Treasurer Wildermuth presented the financial report and bills; following payment of bills there will be \$123,245.08.

M/S/P Wachal, Erickson to approve the Treasurers Report and payment of the bills: SRDC July and August in the amount of \$2002.22.

**SUBCOMMITTEE AND RMEB BUSINESS:**

**Executive Committee.** There has been no word from the attorney regarding the status of the Joint Powers Agreement revisions. The Executive Committee will be meeting in early November to review the 2020 budget for any revisions.

**Tour Committee** – no report

**PACE:** The PACE program has approximately \$425,400: New State Energy Funds (SEP) funds in the amount of \$325,000 plus \$100,400 of ARRA funds. There is no outreach funds and businesses requesting loans has reduced significantly. PACE Committee requested the Counties assist in getting the word out on the availability of PACE funding. Commissioners ideas for outreach included: County Board meetings, the county website, newsletters, Chambers, new business, old business, Economic Development staff, press

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release, etc). Fiedler was asked to provide the link to the PACE loan information in the notes that are sent out following the meeting to assist the counties in outreach <http://rmeb.org/pace.htm>.

**Legislative Committee:** The Legislative Committee presented a Legislative Representation Services for 2020 document from the Fryberger Law Firm that outlined the expectations and services that would be provided as well as a monthly list of costs draft. The Committee, as directed did research of legislative representation services and met with Walli who assisted with defining roles and expectations. Page 2 of the document identified an October 2019 through September 2020 billing with not to exceed amounts (unless there is additional activity beyond that identified in the agreement). The amount is \$15,800 and will need to be reflected in a 2019 budget revision as well as a revision to the 2020 budget.

**M/S/P** Purvis, Luepke to approve the Legislative Representation services for 2020 with the Fryberger Law Firm as outlined in the August 12, 2019 proposal for \$15, 800 as identified in the proposal and discussed during the meeting.

**GERONOMO ENERGY – Jordan Burmeister.** The presentation covered that National Grid has acquired Geronimo Energy, so they are now a company of National Grid, and Burmeister’s service area has expanded to several states. He discussed the Plum Creek Wind project (Redwood, Murray and Cottonwood) project as well as the Elk Creek solar project in Rock County. Questions and discussion involved: transmission, battery, recycling of the blades, community funds for Odell Wind and Prairie Rose Wind and how they are distributed; the community fund for solar farms go to schools. There is new technology for the batteries Li-ion (Lithium Ion) batteries are being used. There was discussion of reduced production tax since 2015 by about 15% – both wind speeds as well as wear and tear on the turbines affect performance.

**MEMBER UPDATES**

- Blue Earth – Looking at revisions to the solar ordinance; there has been some push back on the smaller solar arrays, perhaps screening would help.
- Renville – nothing more since last Mtg
- Rock -RES wind sold the project to NextEra who is looking at 111MW (this includes 7 of the MinnWind turbines); GEVO, their market is California, and they need to be green; the County is being threatened with a law suit regarding the issuance of the CUP for the two 2.45 MW turbines.
- Cottonwood: Jeffers in 2020, Apex in 2021-22, and Plum Creek project in 2022.
- Redwood – transmission line for the Plum Creek project
- Mower – western Mower and eastern Freeborn development occurring.
- Freeborn – next year Freeborn Wind will be under construction; Freeborn/Faribault wind farm proposed by S Power out of Colorado and Utah.
- Faribault 100 MW solar possibly coming.
- Nicollet County – there are a few solar farms, and there is a complaint regarding a small one near a housing development – Xcel Line and station.
- Brown – no report
- Nobles 2 – 1<sup>st</sup> stage of construction
- Jackson – Trimont repower – planned over the winter 2019-2020.

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- Pipestone - seeing small solar; the county has used production tax funds from wind to tear down the tax forfeit school property.
- Lincoln – moving forward with the 100 towers this year, and another 100 next year.
- Fiedler commented on the following: many of the 1 MW solar farms are in the Xcel Territory, she assisted Renville county regarding regulations for the developers that site the 1 MW facilities in Xcel Territory (community solar); she will be participating on a solar panel recycling / disposal work group; and discussion on connecting with the county engineers for interest in meeting to discuss the development agreements (there are several new county engineers). She was given the go ahead to connect with the engineers.

**SW CERT**

- Steering Committee – Presented thank you to Steve Flohrs for serving on the SW CERT Steering Committee, Steve Ritter's term has also expired.

**M/S/P** Warmka, Luepke to approve new CERT Steering Committee members: Dan Wildermuth, Jeffery VeerKamp, Rose Patzer (MNWEST), and Xander Carney.

- Netty reported on the solar panel workgroup, explained about the 1 MW solar in Xcel Energy territory only, the Redwood county dialog where Gene Metz presented, and asked if the county engineers should be asked if they would like to meet regarding what is working with the development agreement, what is not, etc – there are several new engineers.
- Seed Grant update – Jason reported on the Oct 11 deadline for the seed grants funds for Labor only. We need help getting the word out.
- GreenStep Cities – report on Vesta, Marshall, Sherborn, and St James; as well as the B3 database.

**OTHER BUSINESS AND REPORTS - none**

**NEW BUSINESS - none**

**NEXT MEETING** – November 25, 2019; the 2020 meeting dates for consideration at the November meeting are: January 27, March 23, June 1 (May 25 is Memorial Day), July 27, September 28, and November 23.

**FUTURE TOPICS / GUESTS:** NextEra, Tara Ritter

**ADJOURN**

**M/S/P** Erickson, Mathiason to adjourn the meeting at 3:11 PM

Minutes prepared by Annette Fiedler, SRDC Physical Development Director.

Reviewed by:

Secretary



Approved by:

Chairman

