

MINUTES

RURAL MN ENERGY BOARD MEETING

May 18, 2009

Faribault County LEC 9:30 am geothermal tour

Blue Earth City Police and Fire Department 10:30 am

Blue Earth, MN

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Blue Earth County	Will Purvis	Mower County	Absent
Chippewa County	Absent	Murray County	Kevin Vickerman
Cottonwood County....	John Oletjenbruns	Nobles County	David Benson
Faribault County	Tom Warmka	Pipestone County	Jim Keyes
.....	Butch Erichsrud	Redwood County	Absent
Jackson County.....	Roger Ringkob	Renville County.....	Robert Fox
Lincoln County	Larry Hansen	Rock County	Excused
Lyon County	Steve Ritter	Watonwan County....	Absent
Martin County	Excused	Yellow Medicine Co ...	Ron Antony

ALSO PRESENT: John Roper (Faribault Co), Jay Trusty (Staff) and Annette Bair (Staff).

9:30 am. Tour of the Faribault County LEC and the geothermal installation for the facility.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Fox called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

INTRODUCTION: Chairman Fox asked those present to introduce themselves.

ANNOUCEMENTS: none

AGENDA CHANGES: addition of dues

M/S/P Warmka, Ritter to approve the agenda with changes identified.

MINUTES:

M/S/P Warmka, Benson to approve the Minutes of April 8, 2009 and April 29, 2009 as written.

LCCMR PROJECT: Trusty reviewed the counties that have reported in on willing to discuss participation in the joint wind project. Counties that are:

- Willing to continue to meet regarding the joint concept include: Renville, Redwood, Yellow Medicine, Pipestone, Murray, Cottonwood, Chippewa;
- Not interested in pursuing the project: Rock, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, Faribault, Blue Earth; and
- Counties that have not been heard from: Mower, Nobles, Watonwan

Trusty further reported that the application to the Federal Transit Administration by the Met Council was rejected, so the project is back to the public/private model. The consultants are currently developing a Performa based on a public/private ownership model. The WAPA application related to the project has been submitted.

Legislative:

- Article 5, in the public finance bill identifies that counties may use revenue bonds or CREB, and may own energy projects. Fox reported that the RMEB should thank our legislators in support of the language, especially Koenen who carried the language.
- Production Tax - don't know where that stands.
- CBED - believe that the standardized PPA contract language was approved for the under 5MW projects.

TREASURERS REPORT. Chairman Fox indicated that due to an oversight in the agenda, the Treasurers Report was inadvertently omitted. Treasurer Hansen gave the treasurers report and outlined the bills presented for payment.

M/S/P Warmka, Purvis to accept the Treasures Report and approve payment of the following bills: SRDC March \$1325.10 and April \$6785.05, Campbell - Knutson = \$45, Benson \$304.52, LCCMR Project consultants \$6440.

Discussion. Staff reported that the LCCMR project consultant bill needs to be itemized to identify what can be paid through the grant and what must be used by the funds identified for non eligible LCCMR funds.

USDA REAP SUPPORT LETTERS: Bair and Fox reported that they attended a meeting last month regarding USDA funding with Congressman Petersons staff and the topic of the letters of support for REAP projects came up.. Congressman Peterson staff was concerned that projects from the rest of the state would not have the letters of support (as would the 17 RMEB counties). Since that time, we have heard that a one of the state agencies in Minnesota is willing to take on that role.

DUES. Board members discussed dues for calendar year 2010 and the Executive Committee's January meeting discussion regarding the reduction of dues for CY2010.

M/S/P Antony, Warmka to set the Calendar Year 2010 dues at \$2500 per Member County.

Discussion. Members asked if other counties wanted to join, what was the amount: reply the yearly amount plus a \$1000 entry fee. Members were reminded that the Joint Powers Agreement set the process to leave the RMEB. Bair was asked to notify each of the Counties regarding the 2010 dues amount for County budgeting purposes.

CERT UPDATE: Bair referenced the agenda where it identified that CERT funding was approved and signed by the governor for the next biennium at \$1.25 million. This will cover CERT core funding as well as some mini grant activity. The exact amounts will need to be determined. CERT has also submitted to LCCMR a funding request to work with 14 communities statewide to do community energy projects.

Other initiatives include CERT working with utilities regarding refrigerator harvesting. The concept is for a statewide program that would remove from use and recycle working non-efficient refrigerators and freezers. ARCA, based in the metro is a company that has approached utilities regarding this concept and program. Bair has asked the Solid Waste Administrators in SW Minnesota if they have heard of ARCA - and

so far none have. Unique to this concept is the company proposes to collect the working appliance, cut the cord, and provide all documentation of removal and recycling for green credits to the utility.

UPDATES:

- Commissioner Vickerman reported that the lawsuit on the conditional use permit for the wind project in Murray County has been dropped. The financing for the project dropped out because of the lawsuit. The project has been resubmitted using instead of four 1.5 MW turbines will be installing eleven .9 MW machines.
- Trusty reported that SRDC Chairman Gary Sorenson has reported to the SRDC Board that the blades are coming down again from the 20 Clipper machines near Jeffers.
- Commissioner Fox reported on the Minnesota Prairieline Railroad has approached regarding an entity looking to install underground DC current (like a pipestone) to the Twin cities.
- Bair reported that the Lower Sioux Community Attorney had contacted her regarding partnering with the RMEB and she referred her to the RMEB attorney.
- Discussion on RMEB looks at more than just wind. Today's tour was an example of that. Members indicated that they would also be interested in solar applications. Asked if it would be appropriate to survey the member counties to identify what renewable energy projects they have in place or are planned and what their impacts have been. She was asked to go ahead and survey the counties.

NEXT MEETING: Chairmen Fox reported the next RMEB meeting is scheduled for July 27th in Slayton.

Discussion. The 27th meeting conflicts with a NACo meeting. Staff will look at bringing in speakers / expertise on renewable energy technologies, ie solar, etc. Look at the potential of touring the University of Morris project in 2010, perhaps jointly with the Metro Counties.

Chairman Fox thanked Commissioner Warmka for arranging the tour of the LEC and for hosting the meeting in the City of Blue Earth.

ADJOURN: Chairman Fox adjourned the meeting at 11:38 a.m. and thanked everyone for coming.

Minutes Prepared By Annette Bair, Staff.

Minutes Reviewed By:


Energy Board Secretary

Minutes Approved By:


Energy Board Chairperson