

RURAL MN ENERGY BOARD MEETING
MONDAY September 25, 2017
CRD Office, Slayton, MN

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Blue Earth County	Will Purvis	Mower County	Tim Gabrielson
Brown County.....	Dennis Potter	Murray County.....	Gerald Magnus
Cottonwood Co	Tom Appel	Nobles County.....	Gene Metz
Faribault County	Tom Warmka	Pipestone County.....	Dan Wildermuth
Freeborn County	Glen Mathiason	Redwood County	Dennis Groebner
Jackson County.....	Don Wachal	Renville County	Bob Fox
Lincoln County.....	Mic VanDeVere	Rock County.....	Gary Overgaard
Lyon County	Steve Ritter	Sibley County	Gary Kruggel
Martin County	Steve Flohrs	Watsonwan County.....	Scott Sanders

ALSO PRESENT: Annette Fiedler & Robin Weis (SRDC – RMEB Staff), Cheryl Glaeser (WoW – Achieve TFC) and Adam Trombly (Noble Cooperative Electric).

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairman Mathiason.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Chairman Mathiason led the Pledge.

INTRODUCTIONS: All were asked to introduce themselves.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Fiedler referred commissioners to page 12 and 13 of the **Minnesota Clean Energy: Economic Impacts and Policy Drivers** document and passed around the full copy of said document. Download of the document is available at:

<http://energytransition.umn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/ITC-PTC-Report-FINAL-11.14.pdf>

AGENDA: Chairman Mathiason asked for any additions or corrections to the agenda.

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

MINUTES:

M/S/P: Ritter, Gabrielson to approve the minutes of July 31, 2017 as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Treasurer Magnus reported on the financial status of the Rural Minnesota Energy Board. July and August pending bills \$2,447.99, SRDC general; PACE Administration \$140.00, PACE Outreach \$2,643.23, Lobbyist \$286.05; RMEB Wind/Solar Decommissioning Project April – August 2017 \$1,181.91. The balance after payment of pending dues will be \$102,086.07.

M/S/P: Purvis, Wachal to except the financial report and payment of bills as presented.

SUBCOMMITTEES & RMEB BUSINESS:

Executive Committee – No Report

Tour Committee: Committee Members Ritter and Purvis commented on the tour this year and asked for idea for the tour next year. Tour ideas: CRC – Coop Research Center near Austin on I90, solar farm in Lyon Co, Red Pine in Lincoln Co, Winthrop Co Gen, MISO in Cities, POET biomass in Estherville IA, OATI building – a micro grid building, tour Target Field.

PACE Committee: Weis reported that there is approximately \$416,000 for lending. Dept. of Commerce has okayed RETAP for energy audits if they meet the education and experience requirements. Also are working on the extension of the ARRA funds past June 30, 2019 to continue to use as a revolving loan fund. \$15,000 planning grant for residential solar (not PACE). She will be working the Renville and Murray Co auditors for information. Between now and December 1 two surveys will be going out: one to the utilities regarding rebates, loans, etc. for customers regarding residential solar; 2nd survey is a residential solar survey. There have been 18 approved PACE loans, of which 17 have closed; 18 approved energy audits. One loan was approved in Lincoln County for lighting and a boiler was approved prior to the RMEB meeting in the amount of \$42,844. Outreach continues. Next PACE meeting is November 27.

Legislative Committee: Metz lead the discussion of Energy Issues to be considered and prioritized by the RMEB for the Legislative Session was discussed. The RMEB reviewed the Fryberger letter (handout). RMEB discussed the RDF fund, now controlled by Legislature; is there a potential use for residential solar? Net metering bill passed last year. Trombly explained the local democracy bill where complaint process stays local instead of going to PUC. He also explained the grid access fee to recover line costs and maintenance. Nobles Coop would be willing to review solar proposals (residential solar) to see if they sound realistic. Ie 30% solar is not realistic, 13-15% is. Net metering was discussed as well as size the solar array to the load. Iowa uses a different approach – they use the credits idea. Production tax coming up at the 2018 Legislature is not likely because they passed a tax bill last year.

WoW Rural Outreach Coordinator, Chris Kunkle and Cheryl Glaeser: Conversation about local energy siting issues Activists are using plug and play materials, social media. Commissioners discussed several issues (myth or real) that have arisen: TV reception (perhaps – in spot areas); aerial application (Iowa farmers that custom farm suggest it affects them on when and how they apply); interferes with GPS (John Deere has not heard of this); use of 2009 health study against wind farms because of inconclusive information; property tax values went down (a doctor could not sell his property); crop dusting needs more study; landscape. The Development Agreement was discussed – Fiedler will send the most recent Jackson County to Glaeser. RMEB members suggested that Testimonials from wind farms that are positive would be a good resource. Tile impacts were discussed. Keep the levy down, how do the counties use the production tax. Fiedler will survey the counties.

Member Updates on Energy Projects and Issues from Respective Counties:

- Lincoln County – Red Pine, all tower pads have been poured, project is moving along.
- Murray County, may have more solar soon.
- Faribault County – ITC is finishing up their 345kV Transmission line. Big Blue developer sold to Fagan.
- Cottonwood County – 2 wind farms NW – Westbrook and Murray Co and NE in the Comfrey area – APEX is the developer.
- Mower County– open for more development.
- Nobles County – PRC wind Tanaska looking at 250 MW in 2018.
- Blue Earth County – transmission line from Wilmouth, and several smaller solar CUPS
- Redwood County– some small solar
- Pipestone County - StoneRay – Amendment to the PUC agreement has been requested to include a larger footprint of land leased.
- Martin County - 100 towers down to 42, since they have moved into Iowa.
- Sibley County – Enbridge Pipeline, is one of the routes coming south into the RMEB area?

SW CERT: Fiedler reviewed a handout of who the CERT Steering Committee members are and where they are in their terms of serving on the Steering Committee. The Steering committee will be meeting on November 27 at 11:30 – 12:45 to review the seed grant applications. The Seed Grant application period has begun, please let people know about it and access to it is on the website. Reminder that the conference is scheduled for March 28-29, 2018 in St Cloud.

2017 MEETING DATES: November 27, 2017.

ADJOURN: Chairman Mathiason to adjourn the meeting at 2:52 p.m.

Minutes Prepared By Annette Fiedler, Staff.



Minutes Reviewed By
Energy Board Secretary

Minutes Approved By
Energy Board Chairperson

