

Minutes
Southeast Minnesota Water Resources Board Meeting
March 14, 2011

Present: Matt Flynn (Olmsted County), Justin Zmyewski (Houston County), Marcia Ward (Winona County), Duane Bakke (Fillmore County), Tim Gablielson (Mower County), Dave Harms (Wabasha County), Dave Hansen (Dodge County), Jake Gillen (Rice), Bruce Kubicek (Steele County), Judy Ohly (Olmsted County),

Others: Linda Dahl (SEMNRWB), Dave Peterson (BWSR), Donna Rassmussen (Fillmore SWCD), Natalie Sideruis (Winona County), Mark Gamm (Dodge County)

The meeting was called to order by **Chair Matt Flynn at 9:04 a.m.**

Item 1: Approve March 14, 2011 Agenda: A motion was made by Bruce Kubicek and seconded by Jake Gillen to approve the agenda: **Motion** passed unanimously.

Item 2: Approve Minutes of January 10, 2011 Board Meeting: Motion by Marcia Ward to approve minutes and was seconded by Dave Hanson. **Motion** passed unanimously.

Item 3: Approve January 2011 Budget vs. Actual: Linda Dahl explained the new layout of the budget vs. actual report. Judy Ohly made a motion to approve the Budget vs. Actual and 2nd by Duane Bakke. **Motion** passed unanimously.

Item 4: Executive Director's Report: Linda Dahl provided the members a summary of information about the organization which included the mission, strategies, membership, history, Joint Powers Board agreement, and status of grants. There were 17 fixes completed under Feedlot IV and 18 under Feedlot V. Lake Zumbro Inventory work has been completed and an extension to use the remaining funds was denied so remaining funding was returned to the Board of Water and Soil resources.

Marcia Ward expressed her support for the work that Sheila Craig is doing under the Wastewater grants in Dakota and Dresbach. However she noted that the State's density criteria for prioritizing wastewater projects for funding works against sites along the Mississippi River such as Dresbach-Dakota site which have a more linear shape because they're sandwiched between the bluffs and the river. While Winona County has requested a change in the State policy so that shapes other than perfect circles can be used for calculating density, no changes are expected.

Bruce Kubicek noted how well the Wastewater initiatives have worked in getting sewer systems installed in Hope and Merridan and that they expect a system to be constructed in Bixby this year.

Item 5: 2009 Audit Update/Recommendation for 2010 Audit: Linda Dahl told the Board that the 2009 audit was now three months overdue and she had again recently contacted the contractor to confirm that all of the needed information had been provided. The contractor promised to deliver the audit soon.

Matt Flynn suggested that Linda Dahl get a list of qualified auditors or the required criteria from the Olmsted or Winona County Finance Directors. Marcia Ward requested that a copy of the list be sent to her.

Bruce Kubicek made a motion and Jake Gillen seconded, to request proposals for the 2010 audit. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 6: SE SWCD JPB Report and Invoice: the SE MN Engineering Joint Powers Board has submitted an invoice and report for their 2nd payment of \$110,000. An initial payment of \$55,000 has been previously made. The three engineering staff have completed 42 site reviews, 12 site surveys, with designs (25), drafting (19) and cost estimates (33) also completed. Construction was completed on 13 feedlot projects including 9 runoff control systems, 3 waste storage facilities and 1 milkhouse waste treatment.

Duane Bakke made a motion to approve the expenditure and Tim Gablielson seconded it. Motion passed unanimously.

Item 7: Motion to Adjourn: Motion made by Dave Hanson and second by Jake Gillen to adjourn the meeting. **Motion** passed: Meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Following the Board meeting, Duane Bakke provided a summary of the recommendations of the Local Government Roundtable. Commissioner Bakke represents the Association of Minnesota Counties on the Roundtable. The two other organizations participating in the Roundtable are the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts. The Roundtable recommendations regarding the Clean Water Fund include support for:

1. Programmatic funding strategy rather than project specific funding whenever possible.
2. Coordinated relationship between local water plans and the use of Clean Water Funds.
3. Getting the job done on the ground is critical to meeting our goals.

Bakke also provided a summary of the Roundtable's recommendations to the legislature on local water management. These include:

- The recommended scale for watershed management should be on the basis of 81 major watershed boundaries, except for areas subject to the Metropolitan Surface Water Management Act (MSWM).
- Change the water management and planning programs under 103b and 103d to the 81 major watershed boundaries, except for areas subject to MSWM Act.
- Use performance based criteria to allocate Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) implementation funding based on what is identified and prioritized in the major watershed plan.
- Provide incentives and remove barriers to Local Government Units (LGUs) to share services or consolidate in order to achieve greater efficiencies in service delivery.

Bakke noted that it is important that Counties be given greater latitude in how they organize local water management services. He used southeast Minnesota as an example of the success that regional collaboration has provided but cautioned that the current system of grant funded projects favors counties with staff that are grant writers and leaves other counties lacking for funds.

Bruce Kubicek noted that the focus on funding “shovel ready” projects overlooks the need to provide funding for project design and engineering.

Bakke provided maps showing county, watershed, watershed district, and basin boundaries. Because county and watershed boundaries don’t align, there will be challenges in organizing local water management services by watershed. The Roundtable considered what might be the appropriate scale for levy authority.

Dave Peterson provided a historical perspective on local water planning and the progress that has been made – particularly in this region of the state.

Several people spoke to the challenge of relying on competitive grants and the administrative costs of that approach to distributing state funds to local units of government. Donna Rasmussen reminded the Board that they had developed a model for funding local water management with the SERG proposal that was aimed at reducing bacterial impairments. That proposal was only partially funded at the time it was proposed.

Commissioner Bakke agreed to stay and answer questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Lee
County Water Plan Coordinator
Olmsted County

Approved: _____
Commissioner Matt Flynn, Chairperson

Date: _____

Attested: _____

Date: _____