

MINNESOTA RIVER BOARD
Full Board Meeting

Unapproved Minutes: February 24, 2014
Best Western Hotel and Restaurant, North Mankato, MN

PRESENT – BOARD MEMEBERS: Drew Campbell, Blue Earth; James Ische, Carver; Dave Nordaune, Chippewa; Bill Groskreutz, Jr., Faribault; Glen Mathiason, Freeborn; Doug Reese, Kandiyohi; Steve Rohlfing, Le Sueur; Bruce Beatty, Nicollet; Joy Cohrs, Sibley.

Shannon Fisher, Executive Director.

PRESENT – AGENCY, CITIZEN, COUNTY, WATERSHEDS: Kerry Netzke, Area II; Rick Moore and Ben Von Korff, Minnesota State University, Mankato – WRC; Joe Lewis and Zach Herrmann, Houston Engineering; Jeff Nielson, BWSR; Cathi Fouchi, MN DNR; Les Everett, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities – WRC; Brooke Hacker, MN DNR; Scott Sparlin, CCMR; Larry Gunderson, MPCA; Julie Conrad, Blue Earth County.

Call to Order: Second vice-Chair Bill Groskreutz, Jr. called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

Roll Call: Nine (9) counties were present; a quorum was not reached.

Approval of Agenda: Agenda could not be voted upon as a quorum was not reached.

Agency, Citizen, County and Watershed Updates:

Jeff Nielson, BWSR – No news. Jeff did answer questions regarding shifting positions in BWSR due to Steve Woods leaving the organization. Jeff summarized people who are still in their current positions and who is filling others. Later in the meeting Jeff also spoke on behalf of BWSR to plead with county commissioners to support their local watershed organizations (e.g. Area II, GBERBA, Chippewa Watershed Project, etc.). Jeff stated “To make a difference we need to support them and build them stronger than ever...the stronger the watershed entities are – [the stronger] the voice.”

Doug Reese, Kandiyohi County – Doug gave a brief summary of the Grass Lake Project in Kandiyohi County. This project would further restore the 1,200-acre Grass Lake prairie wetland which is next to the city of Willmar. This project has been in the preliminary stages for 20 years and now it’s becoming a reality. The restoration not only will improve wildlife habitat, but also serve as a stormwater runoff management system for the city of Willmar.

Scott Sparlin, CCMR – Scott gave an update on the Minnesota River Blueways initiative. Although, the Blueways program was dissolved on January 3rd, 2014, citizens and agency staff supporting the program will be continuing the initiative to see what can be done in the future. A meeting is scheduled for March 4th. Scott also described another

project, which is in the very early planning stages, to apply for a 'Minnesota River Congress'. This application has very much to do with the apparent demise of the Minnesota River Board. Scott described that the citizen movement isn't standing still in light of what is happening. He also reinforced that this movement is in the initial planning stages and there may be an event coming in June.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the meeting on December 16, 2013 were available, but unable to be approved.

Approval of Financials: Treasurer Drew Campbell went over the current budget that was handed out at the meeting. He described that MCIT insurance required full payment for the year, but there should be a refund when/if board is terminated. Drew mentioned that the Southwest Cohort has been moved to the WRC so that will be taken out of the budget. Also, Drew went over the closing expenses for the board and that legal expenses were not included in the budget – but the dues from the 5 counties that have yet to pay should cover legal expenses. According to projections, the board may be a couple thousand dollars short. Drew also discussed that monies from the Mount Simon project will be transferred over to the Water Resources Center and kept for up to a year for any future legal expenses that may arise.

Drew asked for a friendly consideration from the counties for the Executive Board to continue work without a full board meeting to take care of closing duties. Although the vote wasn't binding, 10 of the members present voted in favor for the Executive Board to continue work to terminate without a full board meeting.

Executive Updates:

Director Fisher gave an update on the Southern Regional Science and Engineering Fair and informed the board that the Minnesota River Board awarded 4 projects. He did not have a description of the projects that were awarded at the time, but information would be included in future mailing. He hopes to give out a few awards at the Elementary Science Fair, scheduled for April 26th, 2014.

Director Fisher gave a status update regarding the termination of the board. Director Fisher gave a recap of the motion passed at the December meeting and described the conditions to terminate. In order to officially terminate the board, there has to be a majority of resolutions passed by the counties that are members, and in good standing. "In good standing" means that the county is required to have all past dues paid. Director Fisher has received 15 resolutions – which are enough to terminate – but is short by one county that is in good standing. Director Fisher informed the board that once termination is made formal a notification and all reports, minutes, and testimonies will be put together and sent to basin legislatures, agency leadership, etc. There will be no advocacy from the board itself, but possibly from individual members.

Minnesota River Board projects have mostly been transferred to the Water Resources Center and Minnesota State University, Mankato. The only project left is the Nutrient Tracking Tool (NTT) which Rick Moore and others are trying to determine if moving ahead with the project would be beneficial, or if we should just 'scrap-it'. The Water Resources Center (WRC) is working with National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to calibrate the tool for Minnesota, as right now it's calibrated for Texas.

Director Fisher also gave an update on the Progress Report. This report is the final piece that is required by BWSR. Fisher described that it won't be as substantial as the 2010 report, but we will provide one.

The meeting came to a close with Bill Groskreutz, Jr. thanking Shannon Fisher, Christina Stueber, Karnell Johnson, Diane Wiley, Brook Hacker, and the Water Resources Center for all their work in day-to-day activities keeping the Minnesota River Board functioning.

Adjourn: Vice-Chair Bill Groskreutz, Jr. closed the meeting at 9:53 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:
Christina Stueber
MRB Staff

**MINNESOTA RIVER BOARD
Executive Board Meeting**

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Best Western Hotel and Restaurant, North Mankato, MN

PRESENT: Bill Groskreutz, Jr., Drew Campbell, and Paul Setzepfandt.

Shannon Fisher, Executive Director

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m.

Agenda: The agenda for the full board meeting was discussed. The Executive Board added informing the full board of the Executive Board had a previous phone discussion regarding financials. Copies were made of the most current financials to give to board members. A time frame for the meeting was also discussed so the conference could start at a reasonable time following the meeting.

Minutes:

Financials: Director Fisher discussed the financials and the current budget and where the board stands. The Executive Board discussed monies left from the Mount Simon project and what that money can be used for and was decided to be used for residual board expenses and future repair costs for well monitoring systems (as part of the project). New written agreements have been made to transfer project to the Water Resources Center, Minnesota State University, Mankato. **WAS THERE A MOTION TO APPROVE?**

Resolutions: Director Fisher discussed with the Executive Board that 15 county resolutions have been received, but 6 of the counties are not in good standing. Nine resolutions are not enough to officially terminate the board. Director Fisher announced if we reach quorum a resolution can be passed to terminate, on the pretense that once enough resolutions (in good standing) are received.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:56 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:
Christina Stueber
MRB Staff