

The Pine River Watershed Alliance
Board Meeting Minutes May 21, 2019
Ideal Community Center
4:00 – 6:00 pm

Board Member Attendees: Gordy Reller, Sheila Boldt, Barb Courmeya, Jodi Billy, Jodi Ederhardt, Jim Chamberlin, Jim Brandt, Clay Shulte & Steve Roe.

Visitor: Jane G.

(1) There was a motion by Barbara Courmeya seconded by Jodi Eberhardt , to approve the 5/21/2019 agenda. Motion carried.

(2) There was a motion by Barbara Courmeya seconded by Jodi Eberhardt , to approve the 4/16/2019 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

(3) Committee Reports

- Finance

A. Steve reviewed the financial report and there was more discussion about increasing the membership dues.

There was a motion by Barbara Courmeya seconded by Jodi Eberhardt , to approve the 5/21/2019 financial report as provided.

- Membership: Nothing to report

- Land and Waters: Nothing to report

- Website/Facebook: Nothing to report

- Conservation/Enbridge

A. Barb gave an update on Enbridge Line 3: Waltz is supporting the suit that the Department of Commerce Certificate of Need brought forward. There was talk of a court cases taking place, potentially moving forward this summer. Enbridge has officially delayed their forecast of when the pipeline should go in. EIS is insufficient is one of the lawsuits (summer decision). There is also a route lawsuit that has not been heard yet.

B. The MPCA are reviewing the Enbridge documents, DNR and then Corp. Of Engineers.

C. Northern Wates Land Trust – Reports done on the primary cisco lakes Barb can share).

D. Another point brought up was the 1855 Treaty Authority gives Wild Rive rights.

E. Communication of data shared from The LLAWF that was done by Mitch Brinks (SWCD district shared employee)

- Land and Ag

A. August 24 – Ag Day

D. Clay brought up an article in the Brainerd dispatch from April and asked if Conservation Easements are the answer to this region. See Sheila's Board Report below for a summary of the type of conservation easements we perform.

(4) Loon Center Update, Nothing to report

(5) Grazing Management Project

B. Ron has been working with John T. to have a café chat speaker event at his Farm. NRCS staff and potentially more producers that are implementing soil health practices. They are not sure if this is a public event or invite-only.

A. John has done work to perform rotational grazing, fencing the cattle out of the stream and other conservation practices with his cattle. He deserves much credit for improving the water quality in that region of the watershed.

C. Funding through The Land & Waters and The 1W1P is going to be submitting a request to survey landowners in the south fork of the pine river to find out what they need to accelerate their operation and develop adaptive grazing. This would include walking the property with the landowners. 90% of the landowners that are adjacent to streams and 50% of the farmers that are within the watershed. Farmers talking to farmers is the key to success with that program.

(6) Civic Governance

A. The Next Meeting is May 29th.

(7) Upper Whitefish Project

A. This would be a meeting regarding the water quality and develop a plan or share information amongst each other. "Set for a date in June".

B. Northern Water Milfoil (The native species) and Coontail (native species) were found in a large floating mat by Clay Shulte. He is hoping this is not a sign of things to come. The plants were dead but in a huge, thick mat along shore.

(8) Harvest Dinner – August 17 at Sun-up Ranch

(9) Driftwood Lodge Development

A. There are letters present from John Foney (e-mail) and Tony Coffey (WAPOA President) that are not for the development.

B. Jane (visitor) opposes the development, non-conforming use (10 year rule). Jane described the CWC Planning Commission meeting as horrible; they were asked not to discuss anything that

anyone has written-in regarding. The docks have been taken out of the bay but are being placed in the channel and that area is not wide-enough and will have to be dredged out. The area becomes thick with lily-pads, brown-floating masses and thick plants. Any large-motored boats will not be able to natural pass through the channel. All the variances have been officially approved by The CWC Planning Commission. Tuesday 9:00am May 28th at The historic courthouse, The Crow Wing County board needs to approve this and they will have to have the property zoning changed from waterfront to commercial). There is an official appeal (currently looking for a good land lawyer)

C. There was a motion by Steve Roe seconded by Clay Shulte , to draft a letter to be sent to the crow wing county board of adjustment and the crow wing county board of commissioners against the current proposed driftwood lodge project.

(10) Stationary & Brochurs

A. Ron would like to know if anyone has copies of the brochures or stationery. Steve said he has the digital copy of the stationary.

(11) 1W1P



Committee/Thank You Advisory Committee

Created by: Melissa Barrick

Time

10:30am - 1:30pm (Central Time - Chicago)

Date

Wed Jun 26, 2019

Where

Ideal Township Town Hall, 3643, 35458
Butternut Point Rd, Pequot Lakes, MN
56472, USA

Description

Draft Outline for the meeting:10:30-11:30-Review comments from state agency's and public
11:30-12:30-Lunch and Thank you to Advisory Committee Members
12:30-Public Hearing
12:45- Modifications to plan and other business

Guests

- ✓ bill.brekken@crowwing.us
- ✓ bob@blackpinebeach.com
- ✓ chris.pence@state.mn.us
- ✓ george.minerich@state.mn.us
- ✓ heidi.lindgren@state.mn.us
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- pdsohn@tds.net
- scott.lucas@state.mn.us

(12) Tables at Walker & WAPOA Annual Mtg. (See attached)

A. June 29th is The WAPOA Annual Meeting (Same day as Pelican Annual Meeting).

(13) Board Comments

***Next PRWA Board meeting 6/18/19 is in two parts:**

3:00 PM Annual Board Meeting

4:00 PM Monthly Board Meeting

Jodi Eberhardt – Just installed a new type of filter that removes manganese (smell of hard water). In the last week of their house building, have installed an orchard, solar panels. Would welcome people for a tour of the property. They hope to lead by example by building a 650 square foot place with only two bedrooms rather than a larger cabin that is typical.

Clay – will work on the letter

Barb – Hand lake approved their membership to The PRWA again. Upcoming events on topics such as Climate Change, and other conservation-oriented landowner education. Distributed trees around their lake again (150 trees).

Jim - Variances, if there are conditions put on, are generally not followed or enforced. Put in a new chicken-yard pasture. 150 hybrid hazelnuts (American and filbert cross) and juneberries. Chickens were a forest species. 3 paddocks and the trees are planted in a half-circle.

Jodi Billy - Pelican and LARA are concerned about Air Bnbs (water quality impact). They plan to have more discussion with commissioners in setting ordinances. Septic Systems, salt? Breezy Point and Pequot Lakes have ordinances but don't enforce it.

Gordy – Gordy – I get discouraged by seeing the lakes degrade over the years. The majority of the lakes are in a slow, steady decline. Quite frankly I don't think the government has shown it is up to solving the problem(s). Enforcement is spotty and do not always show results. Politics interfere with enforcement.

Sheila – Currently working part-time from home and attending outreach events.

4/7/19 Headwaters of The Mississippi article (<https://www.brainerddispatch.com/news/science-and-nature/4595620-nonprofit-coalition-advocates-initiative-preserve-mississippi>) – The only portion of this article that I can comment on from my experience and work with The SWCD is mentioned in this paragraph:

“Projects associated with this initiative include the Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscapes program, the Crow Wing River Healthy Watershed program, the *Pine River Healthy Watershed program, the Headwaters Board program,* Holman said”.

I help to promote, and process Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) Conservation Easements. The Board of Water & Soil Resources is the agency that “holds” or oversees the easements. The easement process with landowners can last 6-18 months on average and requires that the landowner designates all or a

portion of their property to never be developed, cultivated, become storage grounds or anything else that would destroy permanent vegetation. There are a few exceptions such as a maximum sized deep food plot, minimal haying and cattle grazing if there is a grazing plan (we do not currently offer grazing option here based on a lack of local grazing resources/official expertise).

The current easement programs that I work on and the agency who is the fiscal agent/holds the grant:

- 1) The Pine River (CW SWCD)
- 2) The Mississippi River (MHB)
- 3) Protecting North Central Lakes in CW & Aiktin Counties (CW SWCD)
- 4) Wild Rice (BWSR, currently awaiting more funding July 2019)

These programs are very specific geographically and therefore we perform direct mailing and invite-only to informational events for promotion. Some landowners have been informed via word of mouth, attending events where we (all agencies involved in the program) have done outreach or via foresters that are writing plans for private landowners. We have had success with this approach for conservation easements thus far and in-the-end direct mailing with a map of their property, 60% payment estimate and a description of the program have worked the best. We've (CW SWCD) found that if we educate in too broad of a spectrum of landowners, landowners end up requesting more information but do not always meet the geographical boundaries.

I am very thankful for these grants for easements because it keeps my position funded at The CW SWCD and offer a permanent protection option for landowners along important waterways. As always – we remind ourselves that it comes down to the landowner's decision on what type of conservation is right for them. Conservation Easements are not right for everyone. Some landowners don't like the fact that they still have to own and pay taxes on the property if they cannot build or farm on it. At the end of the day we strive for a trusting relationship with landowners of all types and to see how conservation practices can fit with their mission. Here is a tool box showing examples of the choices landowners make:

Private Forest Landowner Implementation Toolbox

