

AREA II

AREA II / RCRCA

March 7, 2024 - Board of Directors Meeting
Lyon County Government Center, Marshall, MN - Hybrid

NOTE: Roll Call Voting on all motions.

AREA II Members Present: Jeff Veerkamp, Larry Anderson, John Maatz (Zoom), Joe Drietz (Zoom), Gary Crowley, and Glen Kack.

RCRCA Members Present: Jeff Veerkamp, Bill Eckstein, Larry Anderson, Clark Lingbeek, Joe Drietz (Zoom), Ron Bunjer, Gary Crowley, Mark Meulebroeck, Brad Kruisselbrink, Ed Carter, and Glen Kack.

Others Present: Kerry Netzke – Executive Director and Joy Bruns – RCRCA Office Manager, Tom Andries – Lyon County Alternate.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by RCRCA Vice Chairman Lingbeek and Area II Chairman Anderson.

ADOPT AGENDA. Netzke requested an addition to the agenda for Area II: Johnsonville 34E Repair Funding. **RCRCA** - Motion by Meulebroeck, seconded by Carter, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously. **Area II** - Motion by Crowley, seconded by Veerkamp, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

AGENCY AND MEETING REPORTS.

MASWCD – Lingbeek reported that MASWCD Area V meeting in Marshall did not have enough SWCD Supervisors present for a quorum to conduct business. This is happening in other areas of the state as well. Discussions are being had on how to improve attendance, and the importance of attendance. A legislative update was provided by MASWCD Executive Director LeeAnn Buck.

APPROVE RCRCA MINUTES of February 2024 Board Meeting. Motion by Crowley, seconded by Anderson, to approve the February 2024 Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE AREA II MINUTES of February 2024 Board Meeting. Motion by Veerkamp, seconded by Kack, to approve the February 2024 Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

RCRCA TREASURER’S REPORT – February 2024. Financials were reviewed with the Board. Motion by Eckstein, seconded by Kruisselbrink, to file the February 2024 Treasurer’s Report subject to audit and approve payment of the bills. Motion carried unanimously.

AREA II TREASURER’S REPORT – February 2024. Financials were reviewed with the Board. Revenue received: \$5,503.41 Contract Services Income, \$16,755.60 Levy FY2024, \$56,085.60 Water Quality & Storage Grant-RWF 8/9, \$1,216.00 Other Revenue - Technical Assistance, \$22,797.75 Other Revenue - Project Reimbursements, and \$2,012.94 Interest. Bills for approval: \$6,583.50 Bolton & Menk, \$34,015.00 Soil Technologies, \$1,537.30 DTL Solutions and \$488.51 SW/WC Service Cooperative (estimate). Motion by Crowley, seconded by Veerkamp, to file the February 2024 Treasurer’s Report subject to audit and to approve payment of the bills. Motion carried unanimously.

Revenue as recorded:

Contract Service Income (RCRCA)	\$ 5,503.41	Projects-Bonding	\$ 0.00
Interest Income	\$ 2,012.94	County Levy	\$ 16,755.60
State of MN-Administrative	\$ 0.00	SWCD Tech Assistance	\$ 1,216.00
Water Quality Storage Grant	\$ 56,085.60	Miscellaneous Income	\$ 22,797.75

Paid bills are summarized below:

Administration	\$ 17,196.80	Office Supplies	\$ 129.49
Bonding Project Funds	\$ 0.00	Other Insurance	\$ 0.00
Capital Outlay	\$ 0.00	Postage	\$ 0.00
Contract Services - RCRCA	\$ 1,570.79	Professional Services	\$ 10,112.00
Directors' Expense	\$ 0.00	Project Expenses Paid	\$ 0.00
Directors' Insurance	\$ 0.00	Project Permit Fees	\$ 0.00
Employee Expense	\$ 46.74	Rent	\$ 837.00
Field Supplies	\$ 0.00	Telephone	\$ 89.87
Investigating & Testing	\$ 0.00	Utilities	\$ 46.34
Maintenance & Repair	\$ 327.86	Vehicle Expense	\$ 126.57
Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 5.79	Continuing Education	\$ 0.00
Insurance	\$ 0.00		

Bills for approval:

Professional Services	\$ 6,583.50	Investigation/Testing Exp.	\$34,015.00
Maintenance & Repairs	\$ 488.51		

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES. Commissioner Drietz is the last board member needing to sign the disclosures. He will stop by the office when in Marshall.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

AREA II

- **Yellow Medicine Watershed Pilot Water Storage Project.** The 2nd meeting was held February 29. The modelers were surprised with the number of storage locations found, especially along the mainstem rivers and ditch systems. Their storage areas include natural depression areas, restorable wetlands, and road retentions. With further guidance provided as to how to rank/score the potential storage sites, the model will be rerun to identify the top 50 sites that will meet the 48-hour retention time for a 10-year storm event. Netzke asked if the road retention areas could be refined to include the 3' freeboard required to prevent road overtopping; that answer was 'yes'. Netzke submitted a GIS layer of retention sites that Area II has installed within the watershed boundary to eliminate identifying projects in the model that are already completed. YMRWD will assist the project leaders in identifying existing drainage tiles from their permit files.
- **General Fund Construction Grants.** Netzke requested MMB to consider a condensed version of the 44-page grant agreement to be used for EACH project funded with this appropriation. MMB denied the request stating that the condensed version was "*old and outdated and lacking critical information needed for Capital Construction funding. The 44-page agreement has been approved by the Attorney General's Office and needs to be used for these types of fund agreements.*" It is hoped that county attorneys are not alarmed with the length of these agreements as the funding will likely be routed through the counties.
- **Website Reporting.** Annual grant reports are to be posted to websites by March 15. Area II reports consisted of: FY23 Admin grant, FY24 Admin grant, and the 3 Water Quality & Storage grants (Custer 10, Redwood Falls 8/9, and Alta Vista 27).
- **Water Quality & Storage Grants.** BWSR changed the policy to provide 90% cost-share, which is a game changer. Area II has had several projects in the files as the 25% local match was always the problem. Now those townships and landowners can afford the required match of 10%. Applications are due April 11. At this time, Area II may be submitting up to 6 applications for the \$2.5 million in funding. \$500,000 is also available for engineering/project development.

RCRCA

- **Cottonwood-Middle MN 1W1P.** The Steering Team met virtually on February 21 to review implementation tables and compare them with the Measurable Goals section. The Steering Team was not comfortable sending this to the Advisory Committee in March without further review and discussion. The Steering Team will meet in person

on March 20; however the Advisory Committee and Policy Committee will not meet until April 17 at the Springfield Area Community Center. It is hoped that we do not lose many attendees to Spring planting.

- **Redwood 1W1P.** The MOA was signed on 2/23/2024 and submitted to BWSR along with the Budget, Timeline and Work Plan. Netzke signed the grant agreement on 3/6/2024 and entered the Work Plan into eLINK. Once BWSR signs the grant agreement, expenses can be incurred to the grant. The first Policy Committee will be scheduled for late March/early April by a Doodle Poll sent to the delegates.
- **Website Reporting.** Annual progress reports are to be posted to websites by March 15 and will consist of: WPLMN, Pell Creek CWF and Plum Creek CWF grants, and Cottonwood-Middle MN 1W1P.
- **Lake Redwood.** Netzke authorized attorney Frank Munshower to begin the transfer of ownership of the CDF property to the City of Redwood Falls. Attorney Blake Helgeson is assisting and caught some fine print where MMB must approve the transfer of property. Helgeson contacted MMB with this request only to receive a laundry list of questions including whether RCRCRA had the authority to transfer the property, and if the property will continue to be used for the purpose that the appropriation stated. We continue to work with MMB to resolve the issue. The Pioneer Public TV “Prairie Sportsman” program about the Lake Redwood Restoration has aired. The full video is on their website at the following link: video.pioneer.org/video/hunting-trails-and-lake-ales-3ejk8l/
- **Comment Letter to Proposed Xcel Energy Blue Line Route.** Netzke was informed that the proposed Blue Line powerline route crosses the Redwood River twice, and the Cottonwood River 5 times. Upon closer review, the powerline also parallels the rivers at some locations and crosses over lands held in Conservation Easement along the mainstem corridors. On behalf of RCRCRA, a comment letter was submitted pointing out these facts and asking to limit the crossing of each river to only one time, to utilize more existing ROW paths as Xcel intended, and to respect the Conservation Easement properties, especially within the floodplain areas, as they were intended to protect the natural and scenic areas that have diverse species of aquatics, wildlife, and vegetation.
- **Hwy 14 Soil Health Tour.** With cover crops growing momentum and receiving more attention and cost-share funding, Netzke attended the session in Lake Benton on February 20. The meeting was well attended by the public and covered very relevant topics including lower-carbon or carbon-free corn for biofuel production (with federal tax credits to biofuel processors), a Lyon County farmer’s research/experimentation with cover crops, and lastly a farmer panel discussing manure use with cover crops and grazing.
- **Marshall Sunrise Rotary.** The City Engineer for Marshall asked Netzke to speak to the rotary club on February 8 to recap the history of RCRCRA, our work, our successes, and current projects. Most questions asked pertained to the Lake Redwood Dredging project.

RCRCRA – EARNED SICK AND SAFE TIME (ESST) POLICY LANGUAGE. New policy language, which has been reviewed by the Lyon County Attorney, was presented for the board to review and approve. The policy states that the first 48 hours of earned sick leave must be ESST; the earned hours over 48 will be regular sick leave. Two separate sick leave accounts will be managed. While reviewing the policy, Wohnoutka discovered that stepchildren were omitted from the *Family* definition, even in the template language. Stepchildren has been added to the definition. Motion by Meulebroeck, seconded by Carter, to approve the Earned Sick and Safe Time Policy as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

AREA II – EARNED SICK AND SAFE TIME (ESST) POLICY LANGUAGE. Motion by Veerkamp, seconded by Drietz, to approve the Earned Sick and Safe Time Policy as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

AREA II ENGINEER’S REPORT.

Springdale 24 Small Dam, Redwood County. The Corps of Engineers assigned a new project manager, Raelene Hegge, to our projects. Her review has spurred several emails inquiring on the status of the DNR Dam Safety permit and the MPCA 401 Certification. The DNR is waiting on the Corps to see if any changes are made, and MPCA is waiting on DNR to issue their permit. ***Holly 10 Small Dam, Murray County.*** The Corps of Engineers is reviewing the revised Alternatives Analysis. The DNR Dam Safety permit and MPCA 401 Certification have already been issued. ***CSAH 20 Road Retentions, Redwood County.*** Field surveys have been started on two of the sites identified in this study for road retention. ***Holly 20 Small Dam, Murray County.*** American Engineering Technologies (AET) has bored the site as a subcontractor to Soil Technologies Inc (STI). STI has submitted a Soil Exploration Report that concludes the site contains generally good soils for the construction of a small dam. ***Rock Lake 2 Dam Repair, Lyon County.*** We have completed the preliminary design for this project. Two alternatives have been considered with prices between \$115,000 and \$150,000. We plan to meet with the landowner to discuss

these options. ***Custer 11 Dam Repair, Lyon County.*** This is an existing small dam in Garvin Park. The site survey has been completed and processed. Preliminary design is in process. A cultural resources site review will be conducted in the spring, and until that report is received, further design work will be on hold. ***Lynd 31 Road Retention, Lyon County.*** This is a road retention project that has much of the preliminary design completed. American Engineering has bored the site as a subcontractor to STI, who has submitted a Soil Exploration Report and found that the site contains weak organic material that is recommended for removal and replacement with engineered clay material to support the proposed weight. Once the design is revised with this change, a new cost estimate will be computed, and the project submitted for the BWSR Water Quality & Storage grant program. ***Marble 23 Dam (Traen), Lincoln County.*** AET has bored the site as a subcontractor to STI. The submitted Soil Exploration Report outlines a potential hazard of underlying sand material at the proposed project location. ***Alta Vista 27 Road Retention, Lincoln County.*** This is a road retention project that has most of the preliminary design completed. AET has bored the site as a subcontractor to STI, who is currently working on the permeability tests. ***Storden 10 Dam Repair (Anderson) Cottonwood County.*** Field survey has been completed and a preliminary design, plan set, and preliminary cost estimate have nearly been completed. This project would restore a berm that has been compromised. ***Florida 15 Grade Stabilization Repair, Lyon County.*** Bids were received on February 7, 2024. The low bidder was Ground Works with a bid of \$52,415.02. The Engineer's Estimate was \$53,640.40. ***Island Lake 27 Grade Stabilization Repair, Lyon County.*** Bids were received on February 7, 2024/ The low bidder was Ground Works with a bid of \$81,092.12. The Engineer's Estimate was \$91,846.70. ***Fortier 8 Grade Stabilization Repair, Yellow Medicine County.*** Bids were received on February 7, 2024. The low bidder was Ryan West Excavating with a bid of \$70,501.60. The Engineer's Estimate was \$74,063.00.

Area II – Request for Local Match Assistance – Fortier 8 Small Dam Repair (Yellow Medicine).

This project began in 2020-2021 when Area II did not have cost-share funding and no other funding was available. At that time, the cost estimate for construction was \$52,870.68 with local match of \$13,217.67. Now that cost-share is available, a revised cost estimate was prepared, and bids let. Prices have increased greatly over the past 3-4 years. With the accepted bid of \$70,501.60, the local match is now \$17,625.40. The LQP-YB WB will pay 50% of the local match, lowering the landowner's share to \$8,812.70. This amount is too high for the landowners who are retired and with a medical burden. They can afford \$4,000.00 and asked if other assistance was available. If additional funding is not provided, the project will not be completed. And if conditions worsen at the project site, the cost could increase if the embankment fails completely and additional borrow is needed. The project is not in a high priority area for the LQP-YB 1W1P and BWSR Water Quality & Storage grants do not fund repairs/reinstallation. The Yellow Medicine SWCD declined the request for assistance as the project is not linked to a grant and it feels landowner buy-in is needed. Netzke recommends providing \$4,812.70 of assistance using the County Project Fund (current balance is \$22,744.48).

Motion by Crowley, seconded by Kack to approve local match assistance from the Area II County Project Fund in the amount of \$4,812.70. Motion carried unanimously.

Area II – Request for Funding – Johnsonville 34E Project Repair (Redwood). This project was designed by Area II a few years ago and was funded by the Redwood SWCD using a Flood Disaster Recovery grant. Within the first year, the landowner notified the SWCD that animals were burrowing at the outlet. Thompson Excavating was notified to do the repair work under warranty. Troy Thompson was reminded frequently of this outstanding issue; however, he passed away unexpectedly last year before completing it. A quote from Ryan West Excavating was received as he will be in that area working on another project this summer. Motion by Veerkamp, seconded by Anderson, to approve covering the cost of the repairs in the amount of \$2,550.00 from the Area II County Project fund. Motion carried unanimously.

RCRCA – Designate Different Alternate for Redwood 1W1P Policy Committee. Kruisselbrink is the appointed delegate for the Pipestone SWCD and cannot hold the RCRCA alternate position at the same

time. Motion by Carter, seconded by Kruisselbrink, to appoint Larry Anderson as the RCRCA alternate member for the Redwood River 1W1P. Motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS AND ANNOUCEMENTS:

RCRCA is starting to plan the annual canoe trips on the Redwood and Cottonwood Rivers. The Redwood trip will be on Tuesday, June 18 and Cottonwood River trip on Thursday, June 20. Currently we are planning to launch at Essig to get off at Adams Park instead of Flandreau State Park. Veerkamp suggested launching at Springfield campgrounds and getting off at Essig. Netzke and Wohnoutka will investigate possible options for Cottonwood River as there is some concern of accessibility at the new Essig launch which is steeper than the previous site.

ADJOURNMENT.

Vice-Chairman Lingbeek and Chairman Anderson adjourned the meeting at 10:19 AM.

UPCOMING MEETINGS.

April Board Meeting	Thursday, April 4, 2024	Redwood County Learning Center
May Board Meeting	Thursday, May 2, 2024	Lyon County Government Center
June Board Meeting	Thursday, June 6, 2024	Redwood County Learning Center

_____ Larry Anderson, Area II Chairman	_____ Date
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