

AREA II

AREA II / RCRCA

**December 7, 2023 – Boards of Directors Meeting
Redwood Learning Center, Redwood Falls, MN and Virtual**

Roll Call Voting on all motions.

AREA II Members Present: Jeff Veerkamp, Larry Anderson, John Maatz*, Joe Drietz*, Luke Johnson, Rick Wakefield, and Glen Kack.

RCRCA Members Present: Jeff Veerkamp, Bill Eckstein, Larry Anderson, Clark Lingbeek*, Joe Drietz*, Mark Meulebroeck*, Luke Johnson, Rick Wakefield, and Glen Kack.

Others Present: Kerry Netzke – Executive Director, Joy Bruns – RCRCA Office Manager, John Shain & Duane Hansel – Bolton & Menk, Inc., and Jeanne Prescott – Redwood SWCD. **Zoom Attendance*

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 AM by RCRCA Chairman Johnson and Area II Chairman Anderson.

ADOPT AGENDA. Chairman Anderson asked for any additions or corrections to the agenda. **RCRCA** - Motion by Veerkamp, seconded by Wakefield, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously. **Area II** - Motion by Veerkamp, seconded by Wakefield, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

BOLTON & MENK, INC. – Presentation by John Shain, GIS Manager – Duane Hansel introduced John Shain whom he has worked with for 25 years at Bolton & Menk. Hansel added that despite his own upcoming retirement, and how this application would be beneficial to his replacement, the same can be said when Netzke and DeSchepper retire and the wealth of knowledge that they have in their memory versus what is in the project files. Shain presented a demonstration of a GIS-based inventory system for Area II Projects. He demonstrated using city-based systems to show how data is pulled from county parcel data and aerial photography which would be customized to the information that Area II would like to have quick access to on the projects, such as project location, landowner, plans, year of construction, contractor, specific notes, etc. ArcGIS is a subscription-based product which RCRCA already has 3 seats at the reduced government rate of \$100/seat. Area II could acquire its own license(s) at the same government rate. Information can be scanned into the system and edited by Area II staff. Following a few questions from the Board, the next steps will be for Netzke & staff to determine what information is desired and provide that list to Shain to estimate the cost to set up. Shain added that the nice part is that this can be done in phases. Bolton & Menk’s cost for a 5000-population community is \$20,000-\$25,000 depending on the desired information. If Area II staff can assist in the setup, especially the scanning of files, that cost will be much less. Hansel added that with frequent questions about cumulative impacts of our projects, this would be a great way to answer that question and the volume of water stored on the landscape.

AGENCY AND MEETING REPORTS.

AMC – Commissioner Johnson reported that the Annual Convention in Minneapolis was held December 4 - 6. Luke Johnson and Rick Anderson ran for Secretary/Treasurer of AMC; neither were elected.

MASWCD – Supervisor Lingbeek reported that the Annual Convention is December 11-13 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bloomington. The Area V meeting was held November 16 in Marshall. Speakers focused on climate smart agriculture.

RCRCA MINUTES of November 2023 Board Meeting. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Eckstein, to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

AREA II MINUTES of November 2023 Board Meeting. Motion by Johnson, seconded by Wakefield, to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

RCRCA TREASURER’S REPORT – November 2023. Financials were reviewed by the Board. Revenue received: \$1,637.60 Contract Services Income, \$22,798.69 Grant Reimbursement, \$1,334.99 Miscellaneous Income, and \$2,927.88 Interest Income. Bill for approval: \$5,810.75 Houston Engineering Inc. Motion by Veerkamp, seconded by Eckstein, to file the November 2023 Treasurer’s Report subject to audit and approve one bill for payment. Motion carried unanimously.

AREA II TREASURER’S REPORT – November 2023. Financials were reviewed by the Board. Revenue received: \$5,425.65 Contract Services Income, \$268.00 Other Revenue, and \$1,500.26 Interest Income. Bill for approval: \$5,239.00 Bolton & Menk Inc. Motion by Drietz, seconded by Kack, to file the November 2023 Treasurer’s Report subject to audit and to approve payment of one bill. Motion carried unanimously.

Revenue as recorded:

Contract Service Income (RCRCA)	\$ 5,425.65	Projects-Bonding	\$ 0.00
Interest Income	\$ 1,500.26	County Levy	\$ 0.00
State of MN-Administrative	\$ 0.00	SWCD Tech Assistance	\$ 0.00
Water Quality & Storage Grant	\$ 0.00	Miscellaneous Income	\$ 268.00

Paid bills are summarized below:

Administration	\$ 13,340.00	Office Supplies	\$ 15.70
Bonding Project Funds	\$ 0.00	Other Insurance	\$ 0.00
Capital Outlay	\$ 0.00	Postage	\$ 132.00
Contract Services - RCRCA	\$ 1,637.60	Professional Services	\$ 10,486.00
Directors’ Expense	\$ 0.00	Project Expenses Paid	\$ 0.00
Directors’ Insurance	\$ 0.00	Project Permit Fees	\$ 0.00
Employee Expense	\$ 222.05	Rent	\$ 837.00
Field Supplies	\$ 0.00	Telephone	\$ 150.12
Investigating & Testing	\$ 0.00	Utilities-Website	\$ 0.00
Maintenance & Repair	\$ 150.48	Vehicle Expense	\$ 283.34
Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 577.46	Continuing Education	\$ 0.00

Bills for approval:

Professional Services	\$ 5,239.00	Project Costs	\$ 0.00
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RCRCA – COST SHARE CONTRACTS FOR PAYMENT:

CWF-2022-09	*PELL CREEK*
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Dusty Vandewiele EST Cost: \$ 38,128.80 ACT Cost: \$ 40,370.28	North Hero 34 - Redwood EST Cost Share: \$28,596.60 (75%) ACT Cost Share: \$30,277.71 (75%) CWF C/S: \$ 9,941.20 (24.6%) EQIP Funds \$ 20,336.50 (50.4%)	638 WSCBs
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CWF-2021-17	*PLUM CREEK*
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Paul Plaetz EST Cost: \$ 79,446.90 ACT Cost: \$ 69,795.00	North Hero 10 - Redwood EST Cost Share: \$59,585.18 (75%) CWF C/S: \$ 11,917.04 (15%) 319 Funds \$ 47,668.14 (60%) ACT Cost Share: \$52,346.25 (75%) CWF C/S: \$ 5,225.25 (7.5%) EQIP Funds \$ 42,121.00 (60.3%) MAWQC Funds \$ 5,000.00 (7.2%)	638 WSCBs, Grade Stabilization
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Two cost share contracts were presented for payment: Pell Creek CWF Grant, North Hero 34 – Redwood, and Plum Creek CWF Grant, North Hero 10 – Redwood. Motion by Wakefield, seconded by Veerkamp, to approve the cost share contracts for payment contingent on obtaining landowner signatures prior to payment. Motion carried unanimously.

Netzke added that the Redwood Falls 8 Terraces project (Water Quality & Storage Grant) will be completed by the end of the year. Netzke will arrange a short Zoom meeting with both Executive Boards for the approval of the cost share payments. Area II will approve the Water Quality & Storage Grant payment; RCRCA will approve the 15% cost share payment stemming from the remaining City of Redwood Falls funds intended for Lake Redwood.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT.

AREA II

- **Hansel’s Replacement** Netzke and DeSchepper met Tyler Conley at Bolton & Menk’s Sleepy Eye office on November 16. Conley accompanied Hansel to Area II on November 29 to visit the office and meet the staff and will come weekly with Hansel throughout December. Conley is based out of Bolton & Menk’s Algona, IA office and is planning 2 days/month in Area II’s office and 2 days/month remotely. Despite the longer drive for Conley, Bolton & Menk will not charge Area II for the travel and will make it equal to Hansel’s travel.

- **Funding** Netzke received a blank General Fund Construction Grant agreement for the \$1.5M of bonding on November 28. The first step is to complete Attachment III which specifically details what the funds will be used for and the 25% match. After BWSR reviews/approves Attachment III, the rest of the agreement will be completed.

- **JPA** The Redwood County Attorney was acceptable to adding the self-renewal clause to the next JPA renewal; however, she did want to clarify the **XII. Duration** section by adding the language below:

*“Should a participating county elect to withdraw from Area II prior to dissolution or renewal of the joint powers agreement, **the withdrawing county must provide 90 days’ notice of its intent to withdraw.** A withdrawing county forfeits their share of divided property and collected levies upon their withdrawal. The withdrawing county also forfeits their contribution to special funds (i.e. sinking fund, etc.) as these accounts serve designated purposes. In the event of withdrawal by any county, this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect as to all remaining counties.”*

With this change being minor, it was not felt that the counties needed to reauthorize the signatures.

- **Lyon CD12** A public meeting was held on November 27 to discuss the results of ISG’s work to locate potential storage areas for the CD12 system that was built in 1912. Of the 11 potential storage areas, only 3 were removed due to infeasibility or no landowner support. ISG then ranked the remaining sites for best performance and will remodel the system using the top sites for storage. The intent is to utilize BWSR’s Water Quality & Storage grants to fund the storage projects which would eliminate further repair to the aging system. The system outlets into a DNR WMA and increasing the outlet size will very likely not be allowed.

RCRCA

- **Cottonwood-Middle MN 1W1P** The Advisory Committee met November 15 with great discussions held and pertinent input to the priority issues and subwatersheds. The Steering Team will meet virtually on December 20; the Policy Committee will not meet until January 17 when the draft Measurable Goals section will be available. Netzke attended a Civic Engagement training in New Ulm on November 14 by MPCA and BWSR. Good ideas were shared as to how to get the public to engage with water planning efforts.

- **Redwood 1W1P** A Kickoff Meeting is set for Friday, December 8 at 10:00 AM at the Lyon County Government Center. Invitation letters were sent to the participating counties and SWCDS, the cities within the watershed and Lower Sioux Tribal Nation. Marshall and Redwood Falls have indicated their intent to join the MOA. MOA members will be asked to appoint delegates and alternates at their January organizational meetings. Once a signed MOA, work plan and budget are completed, the planning grant agreement from BWSR can be executed. Planning will start early in 2024.

- **Minnesota River – Mankato (Middle MN Round 2)** A virtual meeting was held on November 28 to answer any questions pertaining to the Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG) work plan and budget for the 3 sites to be sampled by RCRCA (Spring Creek, Crow Creek, and Wabasha Creek) over the 2024-2025 timeframe. A cost estimate of \$19,940.34 will be submitted on December 1 for consideration by MPCA. Budgets may be negotiable once MPCA receives all the SWAG proposals from other parties within the watershed boundary.

AREA II – ENGINEERS REPORT. *Springdale 24 Dam, Redwood County and Holly 10 Small Dam, Murray County.* The Corps has determined that they still have jurisdiction over these projects despite the WOTUS changes. We are working on responses to their latest series of questions. *Lake Shaokatan Dam, Lincoln County.* This project has been completed. We are assembling the As-Built drawings and will forward them to the DNR and Lincoln County. *Lake Shaokatan 31 Dam Repair, Lincoln County.* The contractor has finished the punch list items for this project. Final payment paperwork is being sent to the Yellow Medicine One Watershed, One Plan. *CSAH 20 Road Retentions, Redwood County.* A report of our findings has been sent to the County Engineer. Of the three potential sites along this road for retention projects, two show good promise. The County Engineer has mentioned that he may have a fourth site for evaluation. *Redwood Falls 8/9 Dam, Redwood County.* The grade stabilization portion of this project is

completed. The terraces are underway and taking longer as there are too many rocks to plow in the tile. Final payment and As-Builts have been prepared for the grade stabilization. **Holly 20 Small Dam, Murray County.** We are in the early design stages for this project. The dam seems to have good storage characteristics, but the watershed is relatively small. The landowner wants to proceed with the project. We have asked Soil Technologies to provide a proposal for soil borings to be collected in December along with three other sites. **Rock Lake 2 Dam Repair, Lyon County.** We have completed the preliminary design. Two alternatives have been considered with prices between \$115,000 and \$150,000. We plan to meet with the landowner to discuss these options. **Delton 3 Road Retention, Cottonwood County.** At the request of the County Engineer, we analyzed a crossing of CSAH 10 over the Little Cottonwood River as a potential road retention. The bridge is scheduled to be replaced between 2026 and 2030. The study found that there is insufficient storage at the site to significantly reduce the downstream flows, that an adjacent township road will be flooded, that the DNR may have concerns over reducing the floodplain on this major stream and possibility of trees and debris blocking any intake structures. Replacing the bridge has been recommended. **Nordland 23 Small Dam, Lyon County.** We met with the landowners and DNR to discuss this dam on a DNR protected stream. The current meandering stream has a large oxbow which could be used for storage. It was still unclear at the end of the meeting the exact expectations of the landowners and to what extent the DNR will allow altering the stream. We will design an intermediate-sized dam for future discussion.

AREA II – HOLLY 20 DAM SOIL BORING RFP. Netzke presented the estimated cost of \$12,025 for the soil borings and analysis report by Soil Technologies, Inc. This cost is comparable with the three other scheduled projects. Motion by Johnson, seconded by Wakefield, to approve the proposal and schedule the soil borings. Motion carried unanimously.

AREA II – JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT RENEWAL. The Redwood County attorney had proposed to make the agreement self-renew like RCRCA's JPA and was acceptable to wait until the next renewal to do that. She did require adding one sentence to the Duration section (*the withdrawing county must provide 90 days' notice of its intent to withdraw*) before granting approval to Redwood County to sign. The Board was acceptable to this additional statement as it was minor and would not require reauthorization of signatures. Redwood County will authorize signature at their December 12 meeting.

AREA II – DRAFT FY'23 Audit. The draft audit is done and provided for review. Netzke & Bruns compiled a list of minor edits and questions to the auditor and are awaiting a response. The auditor is planning to present the audit to the board at the January 2024 meeting.

RCRCA – DRAFT FY'24 BUDGET – APPROVAL. Netzke presented an updated FY'24 draft budget with expenditures through November 30. The budget includes a 2% COLA raise and 1% merit raise for employees. The monitoring equipment budgeted will be reimbursed by the Minnesota River-Mankato SWAG grant. Discussion followed. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Eckstein, to approve the RCRCA FY24 budget. Motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS. A reception for Duane Hansel's retirement is planned for Thursday, December 21, 2023 – 1:00 to 3:00 PM at the Area II office. Cake and refreshments will be provided. Netzke will email the announcement to the county engineers, SWCDs, local contractors, DNR staff and others who have worked with Hansel over the 23 years that he has been with Area II.

ADJOURNMENT.

With no other business, Chair Johnson and Chairman Anderson adjourned the meeting at 10:41 AM. The next meeting will be on January 4, 2024, at Lyon County Government Center, Marshall, MN.

UPCOMING MEETINGS.

January Board Meeting	Thursday, Jan. 4, 2024	Lyon County Government Center, Marshall
February Board Meeting	Thursday, Feb. 1, 2024	Redwood Co Govt. Center, Redwood Falls

Larry Anderson, Area II Chairman _____
Date