

AREA II

AREA II / RCRCA

May 2, 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, Kevin Stevens, John Maatz (Zoom), Joe Drietz (Zoom), Gary Crowley, Luke Johnson, Rick Wakefield, and Glen Kack.

RCRCA Members Present: Jeff Veerkamp, Bill Eckstein, Kevin Stevens, Clark Lingbeek (Zoom), Joe Drietz (Zoom), Gary Crowley, Mark Meulebroeck, Paul Posthuma, Luke Johnson, Brad Kruisselbrink, Rick Wakefield, Ed Carter, and Glen Kack.

Others Present: Kerry Netzke – Executive Director and Joy Bruns – RCRCA Office Manager.

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

ADOPT AGENDA. There were no additions or corrections to the agenda. **RCRCA** - Motion by Posthuma, seconded by Veerkamp, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously. **Area II** - Motion by Crowley, seconded by Wakefield, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

AGENCY AND MEETING REPORTS.

MASWCD – Supervisor Lingbeek reported that the Cottonwood SWCD will host the Area V MASWCD meeting on Friday, June 14 in Windom with a tour of the Jeffers Petroglyphs in the afternoon. MASWCD is focusing on worker shortage concerns that continue with SWCDs. Tyler Knutson of the YM SWCD accepted a new position with BWSR as a training specialist.

AMC – Chairman Johnson reported that the AMC District Meeting is June 13 in Jackson. AMC staff commented that this has been the most frustrating session ever. The Clean Water Council has an opening for a county position and would be a good opportunity for someone to represent the southwest corner of the state.

APPROVE RCRCA MINUTES of April 2024 Board Meeting. Motion by Meulebroeck, seconded by Carter, to approve the April 2024 Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE AREA II MINUTES of April 2024 Board Meeting. Motion by Crowley, seconded by Stevens, to approve the April 2024 Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

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

AREA II TREASURER’S REPORT – April 2024. Financials were reviewed by the Board. Revenue received: \$5,107.74 Contract Services Income, \$26,311.00 FY24 Levy, \$5,779.50 Miscellaneous Revenue (Soil boring reimbursement) and \$2,038.84 Interest. Bill for approval: \$8,293.50 Bolton & Menk. Motion by Veerkamp, seconded by Drietz, to file the April 2024 Treasurer’s Report subject to audit and to approve payment of the bill. Motion carried unanimously.

Revenue as recorded:

Contract Service Income (RCRCA)	\$ 5,107.74	Projects-Bonding	\$ 0.00
Interest Income	\$ 2,038.84	County Levy	\$ 26,311.00
State of MN-Administrative	\$ 0.00	SWCD Tech Assistance	\$ 0.00
Water Quality Storage Grant	\$ 0.00	Miscellaneous Income	\$ 5,779.50

Paid bills are summarized below:

Administration	\$ 17,196.79	Office Supplies	\$ 0.00
Bonding Project Funds	\$ 0.00	Other Insurance	\$ 0.00
Capital Outlay	\$ 0.00	Postage	\$ 0.00
Contract Services - RCRCA	\$ 1,607.32	Professional Services	\$ 5,472.00
Directors' Expense	\$ 0.00	Project Expenses Paid	\$ 12,645.00
Directors' Insurance	\$ 0.00	Project Permit Fees	\$ 0.00
Employee Expense	\$ 42.88	Rent	\$ 837.00
Field Supplies	\$ 0.00	Telephone	\$ 69.67
Investigating & Testing	\$ 0.00	Utilities	\$ 0.00
Maintenance & Repair	\$ 539.45	Vehicle Expense	\$ 71.50
Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 12.00	Continuing Education	\$ 0.00
Insurance	\$ 0.00		

Bills for approval:

Professional Services	\$ 8,293.50	Investigation/Testing Exp.	\$ 0.00
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RCRCA – NEW COST SHARE CONTRACTS:

Netzke presented a cost share contract for the Pell Creek Grant, Ann 20 – Cottonwood 638 WSCBs project. Motion by Meulebroeck, seconded by Drietz, to approve the Ann 20 - Cottonwood 638 WSCBs project. Motion carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

• **Physical Server Disconnect.** On April 19, the physical server was disconnected, and the firewall installed. All computers had to be reconfigured for printing and Microsoft One Drive connections. While doing this, it was discovered that one desktop computer (Bill Moldestad's computer from the Redwood Falls office) was completely dead. Although there is an older laptop in storage for emergencies, it does not have the RAM necessary to run the ArcGIS applications. A request to replace this desktop with a laptop/docking station will be on the agenda.

AREA II

• **Yellow Medicine Watershed Pilot Water Storage Project.** The 3rd meeting was held virtually on April 5. The existing retention structures of Area II and Lyon County have been removed from the model to prevent duplication. A Data Viewer was provided so users could view and comment on the identified storage locations including natural depression areas, restorable wetlands, and road retentions. Many of the projects were too large or involved too many landowners. This information will be incorporated into the model and another meeting scheduled.

• **Water Quality & Storage Grants.** Applications were due April 11 for the \$2.5 million in funding, providing 90% cost-share. Applications were submitted for: Redwood Falls 5/8/9 Grade Stabilizations (\$466,957.17), North Hero 34 Road Retention (\$867,549.51), Lynd 31 Road Retention (\$559,444.05), Holly 22 Road Retention (\$555,770.38), and Ann 17 Grade Stabilization (\$206,664.12) – total of requests was \$2,656,385.23. A second RFP is expected by October 2024 and any unfunded applications can be revised and resubmitted for consideration.

• **Corps of Engineers.** With the grant application deadline of April 11 taking top priority, this has been delayed a bit. Once the provided information is reviewed, an estimate of stream impacts will be provided to the Corps.

- **Springdale 30 (CSAH 20) Redwood County.** This 10' x 10' wood bridge replacement was placed on the 'fast track' as it is eligible for federal funding and will be a stand-alone project from the rest of the CSAH 20 potential retention projects. DNR has been consulted to see if any red flags exist for the site aside from the usual concerns. American Engineering Testing from Marshall should be able to collect borings with their truck-mounted rig, and Kim Stoecker, PE from Soil Technologies can have a report completed 2 weeks after receiving the borings/permeability test results.

- **Yellow Medicine Watershed Trends and Updates.** A virtual meeting held on April 22 reviewed the assessment findings from 2021 and 2022. Fewer lakes and streams were sampled in Cycle 2 to determine if the quality has changed in the past 10 years. A few additional fish impairments were added, but no delistings are supported. It was agreed that it took more than 10 years to degrade the conditions, and it will certainly take more than 10 years to realize the improvements.

RCRCA

- **Cottonwood-Middle MN 1W1P.** The Advisory Committee and Policy Committee met in person on April 17 at the Springfield Area Community Center. The attendance was great due to the rain just prior to the meeting date. The feedback from both committees on the Measurable Goals and Implementation/Action Tables was great. The Steering Team and Policy Committee will meet on May 15 to review the draft of the full plan. It was decided that implementation will be administered by a Joint Powers Agreement which is being drafted using the Des Moines agreement as a template. The group is looking to hire a coordinator paid by the Watershed Based Implementation Funds (WBIF) which would be an RCRCA employee and housed in the RCRCA office. This person could potentially handle the administration of both the Cottonwood-Middle MN and Redwood River plans.

- **Redwood 1W1P.** The first Policy Committee meeting was held on April 8. Election of officers was held with Chairman Luke Johnson, Vice Chairman Tom Andries, and Secretary Jackie Meier being selected. The standing meeting date will be the 2nd Monday of the month at 1:00 PM at the Lyon County Government Center. The 60-Day Notice of Planning was approved and will go through June 14. Houston Engineering with Rachel Olm as Project Manager was hired as the plan consultant/facilitator. Public Information Kick-off meetings will be held on June 25 at Lake Benton (5-7 PM), and June 26 in Marshall (10 AM-12 PM) and Redwood Falls (5-7 PM). The Policy Committee will meet again May 13 to approve the bylaws, consultant agreement, and plans for the kick-off meetings.

- **Lake Redwood.** Senator Dahms and Representative Torkelson consulted the House and Senate counsels and did determine that bonding proceeds cannot be used for agricultural use, meaning that the CDF property cannot be placed back into agricultural production for monetary gain. Any income would belong to the State of MN. Senator Dahms consulted with MMB and explained that the 140-acre CDF property has to be maintained and kept weed free. Seeding it down into a perennial crop would be the most effective way to prevent erosion, promote pollinators and provide weed control. Dahms suggested grazing the property in a similar fashion to grazing of DNR properties by private parties. MMB was warm to this idea. Senator Dahms also suggested that income from the grazing should be placed into a designated fund at the City of Redwood Falls for the ongoing maintenance of the CDF property, as well as any improvements needed by the lake. A meeting with MMB is being scheduled which likely will not happen until after the legislative session. If legislative language is needed to allow for CDF usage, that cannot happen until 2025.

- **Quarterly Invoicing.** 1st Quarter invoices were prepared for: Watershed Pollutant Load Monitoring Network (WPLMN); Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG) for the Middle Minnesota sites; and Discovery Farms. The current WPLMN grant has been extended one year to June 30, 2025, and staff wage rates adjusted. A new contract is anticipated July/August of 2024 depending on the precipitation events over the next few months.

MN Department of Ag provided a new purchase order for 2024 sampling of Three Mile Creek, Redwood River upstream from Redwood Falls, Sleepy Eye Creek at Cobden, and Cottonwood River at New Ulm. North Double Lake will be sampled 3 times during the month of August.

AREA II ENGINEER'S REPORT.

Sodus 9 Water & Sediment Control Basins, Lyon County. This project involves three WSCBs with an underlying proposed tile system that would serve as the outlet system. Quotes were received on April 17, 2024. The low bid was received from Ryan West Excavation for \$129,298.24. The engineer's estimate was \$113,505.70. NRCS is seeking additional cost share funding as the low bid was over the estimate. ***Springdale 28 (CSAH 20 Road Retentions – Site #4), Redwood County.*** This is an additional road retention project that is being proposed in a series of retention structures associated with a road replacement project. A preliminary design was completed by Area II years ago. A field survey is being conducted to determine the topographic changes since the completion of the preliminary design and change the datum to the county coordinate system. Soil boring and favorable geotechnical reports were completed years ago. ***Springdale 30 (CSAH 20 Road Retentions – Site #3), Redwood County.*** Of the potential projects along this section of highway, this bridge replacement is the only one that Redwood County is seeking federal funding assistance. Netzke has conferred with DNR to see if there are any obvious red flags with the proposal. The usual questions are being asked: purpose, outlet velocity and impacts to fish passage. There is a road retention upstream and a small dam downstream (Tracy Golf Course) upon this same unnamed tributary. The highway came very close to being overtopped in 2018 with the July 3 flood event, and photos have been obtained. This project has been placed on a 'fast track'. Area II staff have requested soil borings from American Engineering Testing (Marshall) using their truck-mounted drill rig and Soil Technologies Inc. can provide a report within 2 weeks of receiving the soil logs and permeability test results. The preliminary design can be finalized and provided to Widseth, Smith & Nolting who are working with Redwood County for the federal funding application. ***North Hero 26 Dam, Redwood County.*** This is a grade stabilization structure that is in the process of preliminary design. A field survey has been completed, and a review of the hydraulic conditions is being processed. The project will be funded through the existing Plum Creek Clean Water Fund grant.

The following five projects were submitted for BWSR Water Quality & Storage Grant funding:

Ann 17 Grade Stabilization, Cottonwood County. This is a dam creation project that has a working preliminary design. It is about 5 miles south of Walnut Grove and would serve a watershed of 1276 acres in the Pell Creek watershed. A feasibility report has been completed as a required part of the grant application. ***Holly 22 Road Retention Project, Murray County.*** This road retention project has most of the preliminary design completed located 5 miles south and 2 miles west of Walnut Grove and drains into Plum Creek. The proposed service watershed is 1196 acres. A feasibility report has been completed as required for the grant application. ***Lynd 31 Road Retention, Lyon County.*** This road retention project has the majority of preliminary design completed. It is 3 miles west and 1 mile south of Lynd with a service area of 299 acres. A feasibility report has been completed for the grant application. ***North Hero 34 Road Retention, Cottonwood County.*** This road retention project has a working preliminary design completed. It is near Walnut Grove with a drainage area of 6.874 acres and drains into the Pell Creek and the Cottonwood River downstream. A feasibility report has been completed as a required part of the grant application. ***Redwood Falls 5/8/9 Grade Stabilizations, Redwood County.*** This is a proposed impoundment area that would work in conjunction with a series of 29 proposed WSCBs that drain directly into the Redwood River about 2.25 miles upstream of Lake Redwood. These projects are adjacent to the Redwood Falls 8/9 Terraces and Grade Stabilization project that was funded by a BWSR Water Quality & Storage Grant and completed in December 2023. A grant application is being prepared for this combination of 1 Grade Stabilization, 29 WSCBs and 4 landowners. A preliminary design, plan set and cost estimate, as part of the Feasibility Report, were prepared and submitted with the grant application.

AREA II – Draft FY2025 Budget Options. Netzke presented the board with a FY2025 Draft Budget, with options for a 2% COLA + 1% merit raise and a 3% COLA + 1% merit raise. She noted that the 2% COLA has not changed for at least 10 years in order to keep the budget manageable. Discussion followed. Consensus of the Board was to use the 3% COLA option plus merit. Netzke will bring the FY2025 budget back to the board in June for approval. The FY2025 budget numbers will be inserted into the Area II Draft Biennial Plan for FY2025.

AREA II – Draft Biennial Plan FY2025. Netzke presented the board with a draft of the Biennial Plan FY2025. She has updated the narrative and completed projects. When the FY2025 Budget is approved, those numbers will be inserted into the Plan, along with the current FY2024 Administrative Services grant summary.

RCRCA – Approve Purchase of Laptop/Docking Station/Monitor. Netzke reported that during the removal of the server, it was determined that the last desktop computer (over 10 years old) has died. She presented the board with a quote of \$1,459.29 from SW/WC Service Cooperative to replace it with a laptop, monitor and docking station. Motion by Crowley, seconded by Kruisselbrink, to approve the laptop purchase as quoted. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT.

RCRCA Chairman Johnson and Area II Vice-Chairman Kack adjourned the meeting at 10:11 AM.

UPCOMING MEETINGS.

June Board Meeting	Thursday, June 6, 2024	Redwood County Learning Center
July Board Meeting	Tuesday, July 9, 2024	Lyon County Government Center – 2 PM
August Board Meeting	Thursday, August 1, 2024	Redwood County Learning Center

Larry Anderson, Area II Chairman

Date