

Whitewater Joint Powers Board Minutes
April 21, 2022
Whitewater State Park Visitor's Center

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7 **1. Call to Order:** Josh Elsing called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

8 Board Members Present: Josh Elsing, Lynn Zabel, Bob Walkes, James Rentz and Steve Jacob

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0 Others Present: Sheila Harmes, Coordinator Whitewater Watershed

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2 Board Members Absent: Matt Flynn

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4 **2. Public Comments**

5 None

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7 **3. Approve Minutes of February 17, 2022 Meeting**

8 A motion was made by Steve Jacob and seconded by Bob Walkes to approve the minutes.

9 Vote: Yes – All.

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1 **4. Approve Agenda**

2 On motion by Bob Walkes and seconded by Lynn Zabel, the WWJPB voted to approve the agenda.

3 Vote: Yes – All.

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5 **5. Approve Consent Items**

6 Sheila Harmes explained the bills payable, as included in the agenda packet.

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8 A motion was made by Steve Jacob and seconded by James Rentz to approve the consent items.

9 Vote: Yes – All.

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1 **6. Board Reports**

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3 **James Rentz** – SWCD has been involved with new contracts, mostly involving grass and waterways. He
4 attended the St Charles waterside chat, which was interesting and provided some
5 comments from the public. Per Sheila Harmes, all the comments from the waterside chats
6 will be incorporated into a report.

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8 **Bob Walkes** – He attended the Wabasha waterside chat.

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0 **Steve Jacob** – No report.

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2 **Lynn Zabel** – He also attended the waterside chat and found the conversations to be interesting.

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4 **Josh Elsing** – No report as he was not able to attend the last SWCD meeting. Sheila Harmes shared at
5 the last SWCD meeting, it was decided to make the offer of the District Manager position to
6 Wanda Anderson. Josh Elsing discussed how farmers have been adapting to alternative
7 practices, fertilizer management and nitrogen management.

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9 **7. Board Discussion and Action Items**

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1 **a. Financial Update – Sheila Harmes**
2 **2023 Proposed Budget**

3 Sheila Harmes gave an update on the Whitewater Joint Powers Board checking and money market
4 accounts. Additionally, Sheila Harmes received a 2023 budget request from Winona County, which is
5 due by April 29, 2022. She has not received a request from Olmsted County or Wabasha County.

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7 On motion by Bob Walkes and seconded by Lynn Zabel, the WWJPB voted to approve the 2023
8 proposed budget. Vote: Yes – All.

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0 **b. 319 Small Watersheds Focus Program Update**

1 Sheila Harmes provided an update, including a letter submitted the previous year to Greg Johnson of
2 the MPCA. The state is transitioning away from the competitive 319 grants. Alternatively, they are trying
3 to identify small watersheds that are small enough to do a lot of work in a small area and to be able to
4 see results, i.e. being able to remove streams from impaired waters list. They will focus on everything
5 that is impacting that small watershed, which is different from the current program that focuses on a
6 particular issue. For example, focusing on nitrogen reduction only. Currently there are 30 watersheds in
7 the state in the program and 10 more are to be selected. No more watersheds will be selected until the
8 work is done in those 40 watersheds. Approximate timeframe for the work is up to 16 years. There is
9 not an application process, just a letter of interest. Sheila Harmes had sent a letter of interest last year
0 and an interview is set for Monday May 9, 2022. For this program, data sets will need to be provided
1 and a focused and detailed small watershed plan will need to be put together. WWJPB discussed their
2 role and responsibilities in the collaborative partnership with the MPCA. Sheila Harmes will give an
3 update the June 2022 WWJPB meeting.

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5 **c. Local Advisory Team (MDA) grant update**

6 Altura area team is on hold until the Department of Health finalizes the expanded boundary of the
7 Drinking Water Supply Management System for Altura.

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9 Utica – there are 70 unique landowners. Elgin – has 28 unique landowners. The first meeting for these
0 two Local Advisory Teams are planned after harvest.

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2 **d. 319 Nitrogen Reduction grant update**

3 Sheila Harmes shared that everything is done for the 319 Nitrogen Reduction grant except the farm
4 economics. It is being proposed to have virtual meetings for convenience. She is working on the final
5 report for the grant.

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7 **8. Agency Reports**

8 No agency reports.

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0 Josh Elsing posed a question to the WWJPB if it would be appropriate for the WWJPB to meet quarterly or
1 would it be better to continue to meet bi-monthly. The WWJPB decided to add that as an agenda item for
2 the June WWJPB meeting. The WWJPB discussed their responsibilities as a board.

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4 **9. Adjourn; Next meeting June 16, 2022**

5 On motion by Steve Jacob and seconded by Bob Walkes, the WWJPB voted to adjourn at 9:45am.
6 Vote: Yes – All.

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9 Respectfully submitted by:
0 Anne Schwertel, PL&ES Administrative Specialist

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3 Signed: 
4 WWJPB Secretary/Treasurer