

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes



April 13th, 2022

10:00am

Wausaukee Ranger Station
1025 Hwy C
Wausaukee, WI 54177
*Conference Call-In option

Members Present: Bill Rice (Dickinson Conservation District, on phone), Steve Kircher (Forest County Conservation Dept.), Scott Goodwin (Florence County LCD), Dick Peterson (Lake Township, Menominee Co), Aaron McCullough (WDNR-Marquette), Tracy Beckman (Lumberjack RC&D, on phone), Amber Butterfield (Dickinson Conservation District), J. Bournoville (USFS, on phone)

Members Absent: Larry Sommer (Town of Lincoln, Forest CO.)

Guests: Karl Morrin (Florence School District Superintendent), Kayla Littleton (Forest Co), Sheri Denowski (Marquette Co)

Staff: Lindsay Peterson (Coordinator), Katherine Mentel (Project Manager)

Meeting called to order at 10:00 am by S. Goodwin.

Board of Directors Meeting

1. **Approval of Agenda** – Motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by S. Kircher/ D. Peterson. **Motion carried.**
2. **Approval of Minutes** – Minutes from the February 2nd, 2022, meeting were presented. S. Kircher/ A. McCullough moved to accept the minutes as presented. **Motion carried.**
3. **Grants & Treasurer's Report** – A. Butterfield led this portion of the meeting. Since the last BOD meeting, WRISC has submitted all grant requests, and we are waiting on \$27,000 in reimbursements. Besides that, WRISC is waiting to report on the EPA grant, the MISGP Core grant from 2021 was extended, and we are working on the budget for the GLRI CWMA grant. The WRISC undesignated funds have not changed since the last BOD meeting and remain at \$5,131.85. Motion to put the grant report on file made by D. Peterson/ A. McCullough **Motion carried.**
4. **Project Updates/Reports**
 - a. **Events:**
 - i. Since the last BOD meeting, WRISC hosted the Landowner Invasive Species Training at Bay College. Overall, the event was received well by those in attendance, but the event had low participation. WRISC is planning to host another Landowner Invasive Species Training in Marinette soon and is also looking to have one in northern Dickinson County over the summer to address Wild Parsnip and woody invasives. This last month, L. Peterson presented to the KHS Environmental Science class and said it was one of the most engaged group of kids she had ever talked to. L. Peterson also attended the Michigan CISMA Coordinator meetings to help some of the newer CISMA coordinators with operational items. In mid-March, L. Peterson and K. Mentel attended the NMU Summer Job Fair and made many good connections with students and other employment groups. Near the end of March L. Peterson attended the WI Train the Trainer event and had good conversations with the owner of Lyme Timber. WRISC was also present at the Marinette Home and Garden Show for the third year in a row and had some great conversations with people in attendance. WRISC was also able to set up the tent and other new event materials. During the first week in April, L. Peterson presented at both the Sustainable Forestry

Conference in Florence County and the WI Lakes and Rivers Convention, where she focused conversation on Yellow Floating Heart and Graceful Cattail.

- ii. For upcoming events, WRISC will be helping the DCD at their annual tree sale, which helps secure operational funding for the year. During the second week in May, WRISC is also set to host another Invasive Trade-Up Days in Marinette. Based on feedback from the previous year, the suggestion was to hold the event earlier in the year when people do most of their yard work. Lastly, WRISC will be schedule some volunteer workdays to pull Garlic Mustard in late May/early June and is open to suggestions and other event ideas.

b. Projects:

- i. WRISC is in the final year for the WE Energies MEF Pathways grant. The final deliverables for this grant include lake monitoring for 10 lakes, 1-2 more Invasive Trade-Up Days, and some Strike Team work
- ii. The Loose the Loosestrife grant is heading into year 3 of 5 for the project. From the beginning, this grant was likely going to be extended do to Covid restrictions the first year. Looking at the next two months, L. Peterson will be holding a pre-season meeting with Lake to Lake and WePIC CISMAS to discuss project plans
- iii. The GLRI EPA grant is finished, and final reporting is due in June.
- iv. WRISC has a few CBCW grants. The CBCW19 grant closed out in December and while there was a small amount of funds left, WRISC and the grantors decided to move on. This summer, WRISC will be operating the CBCW20 grant. Luckily, all the watercraft inspectors have been hired for the season, which should help streamline boatwash operations for the year and increase our numbers. As for the boatwash units, L. Peterson said the goal is to fully repair the 2016 boatwash, bring the other three in to find out what is wrong with them, and then sell the three and use those profits to buy a new one. WRISC is unable to use parts from the old ones to fix the others as they are different models. Furthermore, based on staffing, it is only feasible for WRISC to operate 1-2 at a time, so there is no need to have four. D. Peterson suggested that they may be easier to sell if some of the main problems could be listed, as some people may have mechanical experience to fix them.
- v. WRISC's GLRI CWMA grant is in limbo, as the extension modification request was not submitted in time. Therefore, L. Peterson has been working with J. Bourneville to submit a deviation request to potentially extend the grant. There is about 13,000 dollars left in the grant and two main deliverables that were pushed back due to Covid restrictions and staff issues: trail surveys and school forest workdays. J. Bourneville said the request has been submitted but it has to go all the way to Washington D.C. so it is a waiting game right now. If WRISC does not get the extension, we will not be at risk of being underfunded, but it would not be good to lose funds needed to complete important projects.
- vi. WRISC has another GLRI CWMA grant that is starting soon.
- vii. WRISC has a GLRI Pathways grant that has paid for media, such as the billboards, commercial, and radio PSA ads on the radio. With this grant, WRISC is going to get a field camera to make more field training videos. It is nice to have dedicated funding for outreach because our message can be -widespread. For instance, the billboards get over a million impressions each.
- viii. The MISGP Core grant was extended, and this grant included the dedicated funding for Wild Parsnip work on Michigan highways. K. Mentel has finished mapping the landowner permissions needed to obtain a MDOT permit, so hopefully WRISC can secure that this season. Overall, we are underspent on this grant because when it was written, WRISC had more staff on board.
- ix. The HWA project is wrapping up at the end of the month and final reporting is all done. Some of the money was reallocated to Alger CD because WRISC had less staff to fund and less area to survey. All deliverables for this grant were met. Based on the results of the HWA surveys for the

last three years, it is likely the state will not consider the UP a priority for HWA monitoring the next few years. No HWA was found in the UP and downstate quarantines seem to be effective.

- x. The SOGL LAP grant ends at the end of this year so we have another treatment season. This project focuses on Phrag treatments in Marinette and Menominee CO. WRISC will be focusing on a lot of Wisconsin treatments this year. L. Peterson also mentioned that the overall grant through the UPRC&D has contractor money available for big infestations. A. McCullough mentioned that the WI DNR will be doing contracted drone treatments in areas with known EFB.
 - xi. The WRISC EFB project is only MI money, however, WRISC is surveying right along the Menominee river boarder. If needed, WRISC can assist with some EFB work in Wisconsin and use the work as match for MI money. WRISC is working with the UPRC&D to plan the EFB training in Marinette at the end of June. L. Peterson invited Wisconsin groups to join. Also, for this grant, WRISC will be hosting landing blitz events in our southern areas with public outreach focused on EFB.
 - xii. The status of the SOGL Buffer Project with the WI DNR is unknown. It took over a year to get the project agreement and L. Peterson has not heard from her technical contact, Jason Granberg, since the first meeting. For this grant, WRISC will be doing private land surveys around the Dunbar and Spread Eagle Barrens. L. Peterson is hesitant to begin spending out of this grant without knowing more details.
 - xiii. The UPRC&D was awarded a new Phrag grant that is focused on the Lake Superior Watershed. WRISC only has a few acres of Phrag in this watershed in northern Dickinson County, so we will have a smaller sub-award.
 - xiv. WRISC was awarded a new MISGP Core grant. WRISC did not ask for the full amount of money because we have overlap from our current extended MISGP Core grant, and we have less staff. This grant will focus on streamlining WRISC operations for greater efficiency.
 - xv. Over the last few weeks, WRISC has submitted grants for a GLRI Education Grant, a WE Energies MEF pre-proposal, and a pre-proposal for SOGL. WRISC was invited to submit and full proposal for SOGL, which is due next week. For this project, WRISC has expanded on the project we submitted from last year based on grantors recommendations. This SOGL project would be a full survey of the Menominee River and would include landowner stewardship and shoreline revegetation efforts.
 - xvi. THE WI EDRR grant for GCT and YFH is still on hold if those infestations rebound. WRISC will check the sites this year.
- c. **Staffing:** WRISC has not been able to hire a full Strike Team. Currently, we have two staff hired, as well as K. Mentel in the Project Manager role. Both L. Peterson and K. Mentel will be working more in the field this year compared to last. All the Watercraft Inspectors are hired, however, the staffer who will be conducting CBCW and lake monitoring work is from New York and has not been able to find housing in the area yet. He has experience doing lake monitoring work and Strike Team work. His responsibilities will include general water quality and invasive species monitoring.
- d. **Social Media:** The WRISC social media is our biggest outreach medium, and numbers have remained high. L. Peterson is still working with TV6, who messed up our original campaign. Essentially, WRISC paid for parts of a media campaign that were never aired due to mistakes on TV6. To remedy the situation, TV6 will be redoing the entire commercial campaign in the summer. The MEF Pathways Education grant helps with this type of outreach.
- e. **Questions/Comments:** J. Bourneville added that the new GLRI grant agreements should be done by the end of the week. The GLRI deviation was submitted and must go through the Washington Office so it may take some time. Also, J. Bourneville said the trade-up event is a cool partnership and asked how the

Sustainable Forestry Conference was received by private logging companies. L. Peterson said she focused on BMP and not preaching or regulation.

5. Old Business

- a. **Hiring Update:** L. Peterson covered this in the Project updates.
- b. **Survey and Treatment Suggestions/Needs:** L. Peterson is still looking for treatment suggestions/needs. S. Kircher said Forest County mapped county roads and asked what the time frame for spraying should be. L. Peterson said Forest County workers could join the WRISC Strike Team to do a day of Wild Parsnip training on how to spray. A. McCullough said they could use help surveying for buckthorn in Marinette Co Forest land at the end of the year. Sheri asked if we could share the invasive species distribution maps for Marinette County.
- c. **2022 Annual Meeting-** L. Peterson needs a final decision on whether WRISC will be holding an in-person Annual Meeting. If voted yes, the meeting would be held at Camp Daniel in Marinette CO. There would be catered food on site, an outdoor pavilion, and the event would include individual sessions. The vDASH could be on display with a possible demonstration. The Annual Meeting is for our partners and the public.
 - i. **Motion to hold the 2022 Annual Meeting in person on June 1st called was made by A. McCullough/ S. Kircher. *Motion Carried.***
 - ii. L. Peterson will investigate having a short guest speaker. S. Goodwin said the Savannah Institute presents on agroforestry and the WRISC Annual Meeting could be a good place to have them speak. S. Goodwin will make sure they fit the WRISC mission first. D. Peterson has interest in having someone speak on the invasive species coming in from around the Midwest, not just about the invasive species here. He said B. Cook would be a good person to have present. S. Kircher said it could be valuable to have someone speak about tree invasives.

6. New Business

- a. **Board of Directors Elections**
 - i. Board Elections will take place at the Annual Meeting in June. Those up for reelection are D. Peterson, J. Bourneville, T. Beckman, and B. Rice. S. Topps seat is in an unusual place. She transferred to Trout Unlimited, and L. Peterson has not been able to get in contact with her about continuing her position on the BOD. L. Peterson is working on finding someone from Menominee Co. to fill D. Peterson's seat. D. Peterson wished for this to be his last year on the BOD, and his seat will be hard to fill. For those who are up for re-election, but wish to continue, L. Peterson needs a letter/email from people saying they intend to continue in their seat. In June, we also need to hold officer elections. The open positions are for Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. At the Annual Meeting, there will be a short meeting after for Elections and financials.

7. Round Robin

- a. S. Kircher said they have identified a small phragmites patch at a lumber yard in Laona. S. Kircher and Kayla will be checking it out after the meeting. They are also gearing up to treat WP and GM.
- b. A. McCullough, from the WI DNR, is working on planning for the season. This includes maintenance and permitting work. They will continue to work on knapweed control in the Barrens, and will be expanding the Athlestane Barrens management area. They want to burn a unit and put in another mineral break.

They will also work on some buckthorn control in one of the forest openings. The WI DNR monitor 70-80 forest openings a year and document the invasives. They no longer have a biologist at the Wausaukee office.

- c. D. Peterson said in Menominee County there is a local logger who does select cuts. He talked to them about a budworm in areas with spruce and tamarack. The loggers are also seeing a lot of beech bark, ESB, and woody invasive shrubs. The ice out may be a record because of the cold weather. The Menominee County Parks have gone online since May 1st and the response has been great. Bookings have been high. The Menominee River is high and so are the feeding streams. A lot of the parks are needing help to clean up the parks. D. Peterson had a good idea of having people sign up to have CBCW sign up online or in the newspaper.
 - d. B. Rice mentioned that the DCD's new forester started. A. Butterfield said the office is now fully open and it's great to see people. The DCD is focused on the tree sale and then planning will begin for the Annual Meeting, which was moved to August. Ann Hruska is retiring in June.
 - e. T. Beckman said the next Lumberjack meeting will be in Aurora and they will be honoring a long-time employee.
 - f. J. Bournoville said he was happy to be back and he is excited to be at the Annual Meeting. His temporary employee concluded, and he has also had a hard time hiring for the summer positions. He has been looking to hire another full-time seasonal person
 - g. Sheri Denowski from Marinette County is looking to hire four people, 2 specifically for frog-bit. They currently have 1 hired and 2 are in the process. They are gearing up for a NRDA grant and looking to replace culverts and create spawning habitat. WRISC can help with some invasive species spraying.
 - h. Karl Morrin from Florence County Schools said the 6 & 7 classes are going to forestry event. They are also holding an anti-bullying presentation, and they have a guest speaker for graduation who was a past graduate that is now in the military. They planted the peace-tree from the Menominee Tribal group.
 - i. S. Goodwin said they are gearing up for lake monitoring and CBCW work. He is looking for an AIS technician. There is the Lumberjack meeting to honor Yvonne VanPembrook. They will be holding July 12th exotic animal surrender event.
8. **Other Business:** The next WRISC board meeting will be the WRISC Annual Meeting on June 1st at Camp Daniel in Athlestane, WI. More information to come.
9. **Future Agenda Items:** None discussed at this time.
10. **Adjourn.** Motion by A. McCullough/D. Peterson to adjourn at 12:06 PM. *Motion carried.*

Minutes compiled and submitted by Katherine Mentel & Lindsay Peterson

Minutes approved on June 13th, 2022. Motion made by J.Piche, A.McCullough. Motion carried.