

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes



April 1st, 2020

10:00am

USDA Service Center
420 North Hooper St.
Kingsford, MI 49802

Members Present (on phone): Greg Cleereman (Marinette County Land and Water Conservation Department), Bill Rice (Dickinson Conservation District), Justin Bournoville (USFS), Aaron McCullough (WDNR-Marinette), Amber Butterfield (Dickinson CD Manager), Steve Kircher (Forest County Conservation Dept.), Scott Goodwin (Florence County LCD), Dick Peterson (Lake Township, Menominee Co), Tracy Beckman (Lumberjack RC&D)

Members Absent:

Guests: Charlene Peterson

Staff: Lindsay Peterson (Coordinator), Katherine Mentel (WRISC PM), Kyle Hafeman (WRISC PM)

Meeting called to order at 10:08 am by B. Rice.

1. **Approval of Agenda** – Motion to approve the agenda **as amended**, with the request that the round robin updates be made by email to L. Peterson, was made by A. McCullough/D. Peterson. Motion carried.
2. **Approval of Minutes** – Minutes from the December February 5th, 2020 Meeting were presented. G. Cleereman/A. McCullough moved to accept the minutes **as presented**. Motion carried.
3. **Grants & Treasurer's Report** – A. Butterfield led a discussion of the grants report as of March 30th, 2020. A. Butterfield stated that she was currently working on grant reporting. Grant reporting is almost wrapped up for all the grants except the ones scheduled to end in April. MISGP was set to close at the end of April/start of May. Due to disruptions caused by COVID-19, L. Peterson and A. Butterfield will be reaching out to the grantors to discuss options to close the grant on time or seek another extension. In the coming weeks, CBCW, GLRI-NNIS, and PCG grants will be on track to close nicely. In a recent meeting with Darcy, from UPRC&D, the sub-award for the Phragmites Cost-share Program grants was adjusted. WRISC was also notified that they received the newest CBCW grant and a new CWMA grant. WRISC is excited to begin work on both these grants. The CWMA grant will allow WRISC to complete survey work on trails and work in school forests. A. Butterfield reiterated that WRISC will also be starting the new SOGL grant to expand the Phragmites Cost-share Program in its WI counties. To wrap up, A. Butterfield expressed that the grants were going well overall. A. Butterfield noted the current undesignated fund is still at \$3,036.85, as there have been no expenses in this fund since the last meeting. A motion to place the grant and treasurer's reports on file **as presented** was made by S. Goodwin/D. Peterson. Motion carried.
4. **Project Updates/Reports** – L. Peterson worked through the Project Updates for the last several months.
 - a. Since the February 5th meeting, WRISC had the opportunity to discuss summer career options with students at the NMU Job Fair on February 12th. Many events WRISC had been scheduled to attend were canceled or subject to change due to COVID-19. WRISC was slated to attend the Great Northern RV, Boat, and Off-road show in March, but instead dropped off informational material and did not stay for the full event. Currently, WRISC is not actively seeking or attending new events.
 - b. L. Peterson gave an update on WRISC's grants. The MISGP grant is still currently scheduled to end in May. L. Peterson has been working to spend money from MISGP, and has ordered many materials for the museum and additional grant deliverables. The status of the Museum work is not clear, but the assumption is that much of the work has been halted due to COVID-19. L. Peterson reiterated that whatever funds are not spent from the MISGP grant will be deducted from the newly awarded MISGP Core Funding grant but that she is working with grant technical contacts to develop a strategic plan for this project. L. Peterson also stated the MEF grant is on track and the new volunteer platform will be ready to launch on the updated WRISC Website. GLRI-NNIS has wrapped up nicely and will officially end on April 6th. L. Peterson mentioned that not much work has been done on the EPA grant, as much of the

remaining funds will be for vDASH work. WRISC may look at extending EPA, due to COVID-19 affecting the timeline for deliverables. The CBCW grant will be wrapping up on April 6th. Currently, the two broken boat washes are being fixed in Appleton, and the remaining funds for the grant will be allocated for the repairs and travel time. L. Peterson also stated that the contracts for the new CBCW grants are in the works. The PCG grant is also set to end on April 6th. WRISC is still working with local videographers from Mountain Media Works. While the project has been invoiced out, the project will be filmed into the summer to ensure quality work. HWA is done for the season. WRISC is happy to say the response rate from landowners was adequate and no HWA sightings were reported. HWA surveys will commence again in the fall. For the Phragmites Cost-Share Program, WRISC is working closely with UPRC&D and other parties to plan the coming year and adjust the budget appropriately. Nick Cassel, previously the Three Shores CISMA Coordinator, was chosen to fill the new UPRC&D position and WRISC is looking forward to continuing a great relationship with the organization. L. Peterson also reported that she hosted the first project meeting for the MEF Purple Loosestrife grant and sent out sub-awards to the partnering organizations. WRISC is beginning to spend money out of the MISGP Core funding, with current focus circling education materials and Wild Parsnip. L. Peterson announced that WRISC was awarded the full amount requested for GLRI-CWMA. Some main focuses of GLRI-CWMA consist of off-road survey work, land-owner empowerment, and school forest education and management. L. Peterson also submitted proposals for a Pathways Education grant and a new MEF grant. She expects to hear back on those by the end of April/early May. Note: COVID-19 may prolong these dates.

- c. L. Peterson gave a quick update on staffing, stating that two positions have been offered to qualified candidates. Due to COVID-19, signing work agreements has been put on hold. L. Peterson and A. Butterfield may wait to finish paperwork until there is a clearer picture on how field season will play out.
- d. L. Peterson stated that the annual newsletter was published. Online outreach has dropped slightly as WRISC employees transition to working from home.
- e. WRISC is still working on rebuilding and updating the new website, which will be launched in May.

5. Old Business:

- a. **Partner Signatory Pages & New Partner Invites:** K. Mentel has been working on completing new partner packets and 128 were recently mailed out. As of April 1st, WRISC has received applications for 10 new partners. L. Peterson will be publishing a news article in the partner, encouraging interested businesses to become partners. In coming weeks, WRISC is working on putting together current Partner packets to show appreciation for their support and give them the chance to schedule events with WRISC. The current Partner Packets will also include a reminder that the MOU will require all partners to resign next year.
- b. **Annual Meeting Planning:** L. Peterson initiated discussion about the scheduling of the WRISC Annual Meeting due to concerns about COVID-19. Discussion was had about possibly postponing the Annual Meeting to August. Shakey Lakes has been noted as an ideal location for the meeting. As for the June board meeting, Partners will get a proxy vote to elect board members' positions. A motion to postpone the WRISC Annual Meeting until August and reassess at the June board meeting, as well as elect board members via proxy vote at the June 2020 meeting, was presented by S. Goodwin/A. McCullough. Motion Carried.
- c. **Summer Hiring:** L. Peterson and A. Butterfield have conducted interviews and have offered positions to two qualified candidates. L. Peterson asked the WRISC board to make a recommendation to the DCD Board to approve the hiring of the two candidates, as grant funding and current situations allows. A motion to recommend the hiring of summer field crew candidates to the District Board was presented by S. Goodwin/D. Peterson. Motion Carried.

6. New Business:

- a. **Annual Work Plan:** L. Peterson stated that she had been close to completing the Annual Work Plan, but the outbreak of COVID-19 threw a wrench in planning for the season and there is currently too much

uncertainty to truly plan for the summer. However, L.Peterson offered that, as always, Partners are encouraged to suggest sites for survey or treatment. L.Peterson will also keep the Board informed of any substantial impacts to the 2020 season and/or grant work.

7. **Round Robin:** Partner organizations were invited to email L. Peterson with important updates. No updates were provided at this time.
8. **Other Business:** The next WRISC board meeting will be June 3rd, 2020. L. Peterson will work on the ballot for board elections.
9. **Future Agenda Items:** No additional future agenda items were discussed at this time. L. Peterson did state that the meeting in June will most likely be held via conference call due to concern/restrictions of COVID-19.
10. **Adjourn.** Motion by T. Beckman/D. Peterson to adjourn at 10:56am. Motion carried.

***Minutes compiled and submitted by Katherine Mentel, Scott Goodwin, & Lindsay Peterson
Minutes Approved on June 3rd, 2020***