



CARNELIAN-MARINE-ST. CROIX WATERSHED DISTRICT



Protecting Your Water Resources

**MEETING MINUTES
SPECIAL JOINT WATERSHED DISTRICT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS
Lee & Rose Warner Nature Center Classroom, Marine on St Croix, MN
Wednesday, April 20, 2016 at 6:00 PM**

Attending:

Brown's Creek Watershed

District:

Craig Leiser

Sharon Schwarze

Gail Pundsack

Karen Kill, Administrator

(Absent: Connie Taillon &

Gerald Johnson

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake

Watershed District:

Jon Spence

Wayne Moe

Jerry Grundtner

Jack McKenzie

Mike Kinney, Administrator

Mike Sorensen, Staff

(Absent: Steve Schmaltz, Jackie Anderson, & Jackie McNamara)

Carnelian-Marine St. Croix

Watershed District:

Kristin Tuenge

Tom Polasik

Dave DeVault

Andy Weaver

Wade Johnson

Jim Shaver, Administrator

(Absent: Joel Stedman & Eric Lindberg)

Others Present:

Ron Lawrenz, Director - Warner Nature Center

Julie Grecian, Assistant Director - Warner Nature Center

Krista Billerbeck, Outreach Naturalist - Warner Nature Center

1. Call Special Meeting for Brown's Creek Watershed District, Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District and Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District to order. Joint WD meeting called to order at 6:05PM.
2. Ron Lawrenz, Director of the Lee & Rose Warner Nature Center, welcomed and described the property ownership (the Manitou fund), science museum connection, natural resources of Warner, and geology of the nature center.
3. Julie Grecian, Assistant Director described her role in charge of programming, 110 volunteer program, oversight of the naturalist staff. Ms. Grecian described some the programs currently offered by Warner that fit watershed district youth education goals:

- Aquatic life/aquatic ecology
- Build a bog-wetland ecology
- Weather-water cycle
- Reptiles and Amphibians - water wildlife

Opportunities exist for watershed district partnership. There are currently about 100 schools on mailing list and 24 classes offered. The Manitou fund covers fee for curricula for K-8, allowing Warner to offer onsite programming to the schools free of charge. Onsite programming will be full for 2016-17 before end of this year. The students take two classes per visit. The goals for the classes are to teach awareness of nature, learning to be comfortable being outside, and giving children a personal connection to nature. Approximately 10 schools from our WDs are coming out to Warner already, but are not consistent with grades. Opportunity to get more grades out here. A barrier for school participation is typically bus funding. Most schools require two busses and costs range from \$200-350 per bus. Warner would be able to get more classes involved if more bus scholarships could be made available.

4. Krista Billerbeck, outreach naturalist for Warner, described the programming that can be brought to the classrooms. The programs are typically require about 1 hour visit. Current programs that fit WD goals for 3rd-5th grades as either a stand-alone program or as a pre-visit to enhance visit:
 - Watershed Tarp - Goals - Visualize a watershed, water moving, how we affect water, what we can do
 - Aquatic Insect Investigation - Standards connection - 5th grade environments, 4th grade FOSS Water, 1st grade FOSS Insects

If the watershed districts want to target certain schools, Warner Nature Center can make capacity to directly meet with schools to share opportunities. Opportunities for partnership include providing teaching supplies:

- Aquatic ecology - dip nets, field guides, magnifiers, etc...
 - Bog ecology - temp probes, rain gauge, rain barrel, etc...
 - Weather - data instruments, field thermometers, etc...
 - Outreach - magnifiers, sorting equip, bins, children's books, etc...
5. Ron Lawrenz described the unique bog and that it is a main teaching tool onsite. However, the bog is being threatened by both the crushed limestone driveway, neutralizing the acidity of the bog, and by the existing boardwalk, which is cutting the bog in half. Warner is currently fundraising to put in new docking system. It will provide for ADA accessibility. The system is expensive; about \$40,000. They are interested in partnering with the watershed districts and others to bring this unique bog resource to more visitors.

6. Small Group activities: Broke into groups for three hands on activities: watershed tarp, build a bog, and aquatic insect investigation
7. Next Steps - A scope for partnerships with watershed districts and Warner will be brought back to the individual Boards.

Adjourned at 7:50pm

*Adapted minutes from Karen Kill, Brown's Creek Watershed District Administrator