

**MEETING MINUTES - CENTRAL REGION RC&D COUNCIL**  
**Gladstone City Hall - Tuesday, December 4, 2012**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by Vice- Chairman Renee Baron.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Howard Haulotte-Delta CD; Renee Barron-City of Gladstone; Teri Grout -Alger CD; Brian Bousley-Menominee Co Administrator; Thomas Elegeert-Delta Co Comm; Clyde Thoune-Menominee CD; Renee Leow and Ally Dale-Marquette CD; Bill Rice-Dickinson CD; Bill Cook-MSUE; Dave Silvieux-Hiawatha Natl Forest; Darcy Rutkowski -UP RC&D Council

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES:** The agenda was approved (Rice/Grout). The minutes from the meeting of October 4, 2011 were approved (Haulotte/Leow) as written.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Darcy Rutkowski presented the treasurer's report which indicated that there was a balance of 442.58 in the bank account. There has been no activity in the account during 2012. The report will be filed.

**BUSINESS ITEMS:**

**Election of Officers:** Since the last Central UP RC&D Council meeting both the Chairman (Hampton Waring) and the Treasurer (Dave Andersen) have resigned from the Council. Vice-chairwoman, Renee Barron, was not able to assume the duties of the chairwoman, therefore elections were held to elect all three officers. Ms. Barron opened the nominations for Chairperson. Leow nominated Teri Grout for chairperson, seconded by Haulotte. Nominations were requested two more times with no additional nominations being made. A motion was made (Thoune/Elegeert) to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Grout. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Grout opened the nominations for Vice-Chairperson. Barron nominated Howard Haulotte for vice-chairperson, seconded by Elegeert. Nominations were requested two more times with no additional nominations being made. A motion was made (Thoune/Barron) to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Haulotte. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Grout opened the nominations for Secretary/Treasurer. Barron nominated Renee Leow for secretary/treasurer, seconded by Elegeert. Nominations were requested two more times with no additional nominations being made. A motion was made (Thoune/Haulotte) to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Leow. Motion passed unanimously.

**Elect Two Members to UP Council:** A motion was made Haulotte, seconded by Leow to elect Teri Grout to represent the Central Regional Council on the UP RC&D Council. Motion passed. Howard Haulotte also represents the Central Region at UP Council meetings, and one position remains open at this time.

**County Dues:** ED reported that the Council has not received 2012 County dues from Ontonagon, Schoolcraft or Chippewa Counties. ED also reported that no conservation district dues were requested for the Central Regional Council. A motion was made to reinstate the Central Council dues in the amount of \$25 (Leow/Thoune). Motion passed.

**Change Regional Council Structure:** Howard Haulotte reported that the UP Council was discussing the possibility of changing the regional council structure – possibly having two regional councils instead of three. This would mean that some of the central counties/conservation districts would have to join the Eastern Council and some would have to join the Western Council. Members present were not in favor of making this sort of change to the structure – they were in favor of keeping 3 regional councils. They felt there would be less participation if that change was made.

**Set Meeting Schedule for 2013:** Meetings will be held on June 4 and December 3, 2013.

## **REPORTS**

**Alger Conservation District:** Teri Grout reported that the Alger district held Agripalooza last week in conjunction with the Marquette County CD where 400 5<sup>th</sup> graders from the two counties visited 24 different stations. They are working on two grants right now – NFWF Community Grant in both Mqt and Alger counties – 4 culverts will be replaced, control and mapping of purple loosestrife and measuring the connectivity of the Whitefish River. They just had a successful Annual Meeting, now have a certified pesticide applicator on staff and a business license. They have one year left on their GLRI grant and that will include some social monitoring regarding what people think is important.

**Delta Conservation District:** Howard Haulotte reported that their District has 4 grants and 4 employees. They are now managing the county parks and have made lots of improvements. They have been working with Wildlife Unlimited and UP Whitetails and have 200 applicants for creating wildlife openings. Other projects in the works include the Escanaba River Clean-up.

**Delta County:** Thomas Elegeert reported that the county commissioners work very closely with the conservation district and have several potential projects they are discussing.

**Dickinson Conservation District:** Bill Rice reported that their district is in the second year of having a forester on staff, and in the second year of a purple loosestrife grant with WeEnergies. Carol Kurtz, long-time district employee, retired and they are looking for help with bookkeeping. They also have a new earthworm grant.

**Marquette Conservation District:** Renee Leow reported that their assistant administrator, Jaime Beranek moved out of the area she introduced Ally Dale who has taken that position. They had a very successful tree sale with the largest order yet from Cliffs Natural Resources. They are sharing a forester with the Alger Conservation District. They have the first MEAP verification in Marquette County.

**Marquette County: No rep present**

**Menominee CD:** Clyde Thoune reported that their district is looking into joining the Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coalition (WRISC) and they are interested in helping promote the UP phragmites project. The district has applied for two grants, their tree sale was successful, and their Annual Meeting will take place in March.

**Menominee County:** Brian Bousley reported that he oversees two county parks along the Bay and that they are very interested in helping with the new UP Phragmites project.

**Schoolcraft CD & County: No members were present**

**MSUE:** Bill Cook reported that he routinely meets landowners in many counties with pest problems and each month he sends a press release to all newspapers. He commonly makes presentations on wood energy issues and forestry issues and maintains a website ([uptreeid.com](http://uptreeid.com) and [miforestpathways.net](http://miforestpathways.net)). He works at the MSU research center growing woody biomass (since 1992) and they had a field tour this year at the stations where they grow hybrid poplar and willow for wood energy. These plots are 5-6 times as productive as a natural forest.

**USFS:** Dave Silvius reported that the Hiawatha NF is doing well. They still don't have a FY13 budget passed so they are operating under a continuing resolution and have the same programs as last year. They are planning for a 5-10% funding decrease anticipating that may happen when the budget does get passed. They have 120 employees on the forest and 15 current vacancies on hold for hiring. He is retiring at the end of the year but plans to stay active as a consulting forester. Tracy Anderson is the person in charge of stewardship contracting for Alger, Schoolcraft, and Delta Counties (about 500 acres - sell timber, keep funds and return to local forest through restoration of wildlife and forest health). This accounts for 400 acres in Chippewa and Mackinac counties. The fire management officer is Eric Rebitzkey who is responsible for fire protection plans in 5 townships. There are federal funds for hazardous fuels reduction. Ann Oconick is in charge of youth programs (YCC, Kids in Woods) and they are trying to expand into Alger and Marquette counties. Deb LeBlanc is the CWMA Coordinator on the West Side, the silviculturalist is James McFarland and the Forest Supervisor is Jo Reyer in the Gladstone HQ. They have about

\$200-250 thousand dollars of GLRI funds and annual budget of 12 million. The Dept of Ag is depending on the USFS for climate change research and the Hiawatha is working with MTU research station on this.

**CUPPAD: No reps present**

**City of Gladstone:** Renee Barron reported that the city turned the responsibility for the Gladstone Marsh over to the Delta CD which has a 25 year lease agreement with the DNR. They are still planning boardwalks, viewing platforms and nature trails. Some Eagle Scout projects have been completed there. They have had grant funds from local organizations and are looking for more funding.

**New Projects: The UP RC&D Council is not accepting any new project applications at this time.**

**Project Updates:**

**UP Phragmites Project:** Darcy reported that the UP RC&D will be receiving a \$458,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to map and treat (with herbicide) 400 acres of non-native phragmites in the UP. The project will take place during 2013 and 2014 and the Council will be working closely with the CLMCD, Delta CD, Alger CD, Dickinson and Menominee CD's on this project.

**Correspondence: None**

**Next Meeting: The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm (Leow/Barron).**