

Meeting 1/04

28 January 2004

Not for general publication

Meeting called to order at 1 p.m. in North Conference at the National Center for Appropriate Technology, 3040 Continental Drive, Butte.

Present: Marla McCombie (in the chair), Dave Ryan, Lee Tavenner, Kathi Montgomery, Georgia Brensdaal, Chris Borton, Patrick Judge, Tony Boniface, Mikey Strickland, LuMarie Strickland, Tim Ranf;

Apologies: Chris Daum; Dan Healy.

Minutes: Minutes of the 8 October 2003 meeting were read and approved.

Treasurer's Report: Here's the past year in numbers for MREA.

Beginning balance as of 1/1/2003: \$3504.39

Income: Dues - \$3055 LED Xmas Light Sales: \$871

Total Income: \$3926

Checks:

#1011 for \$225 to Sage Mountain Center for bumper stickers

#1012 for \$15 to Secretary of State for filing fees

#1013 for \$50 to Corp. of Northern Rockies for Sustainability Fair Booth

#1014 for \$267.88 to Northwestern Energy for mailing fees

#1015 for \$1000 to Corp. of Northern Rockies for Sustainability Fair sponsorship

#1016 for \$619.23 to Kellogg Plastics for LED Xmas lights

#1017 for \$427.52 to Kellogg Plastics for LED Xmas lights

#1018 for \$50 to Chris Borton for Bob Anderson's plaque Total checks written:
\$2654.63

Current balance as of 1/1/2004: \$4775.76

2003 Paid Members:

Northwestern Energy

Jerry Spencer

Oasis Montana Inc.

Sunelco

Windpark Solutions (Robert Quinn)

Rural Sustainability Organization

Solar Plexus

Dearborn Solar

M.E.I.C.

Independent Power Systems

Jim Tracy (personal membership)

Lincoln Electric Coop

MT DEQ

Mission Valley Power

BPA

NCAT

Sundance Solar

Pine Ridge Products

Craig Rech

Kent Perelman/Mary Shaffer

Brett Potter (initially paid \$25. sent another \$25 in 6/03)

Dale Horton

Montana PIRG

Kathleen Miller (\$40 – non-voting)

NW SEED

Included in the above \$3055 dues collected are three 2004 memberships paid for late in 2003:

Oasis Montana Inc. (business voting)

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Charles Day (non-voting)
AERO (non-profit voting)

BusinessUSB Updates

Sage Mountain Center (SMC) Programs

Solar Homes Tour of grid tied homes – 30 homes signed on, and had 200 people tour. It was a good learning experience; need to have better advertising, and to be able to show different technologies. 92 site assessments were done in 2003, 150 are to be done in 2004. Open house tours and workshops at SMC were attended by 906 people.

NCAT Programs

Business as usual, though there will be a cut in the residential PV program, but increases in community building PV, including more fire stations, and new outreach to city and county buildings. There will be no NCAT wind program for 2004, although there may be some leftover funding from 2003. Any new wind projects should apply directly to NWE for possible incentives (\$2.00 per watt).

MontanaGreenPower.com will continue to be funded at the same level as 2003. MREA has a page on MontanaGreenPower.com/MREA which Jim kept updated, but which is badly out of date and needs to be funded by us to have it continue. Dave Ryan is to look into cost to maintain and get back to the group at the April meeting. We decided to allocate some time each meeting to feed the web page.

Other Projects

A 10 KW Bergey was installed on the Liberty County Shop facility. Tony Boniface said one problem surfaced in that noise from the inverter is bothersome in the shop.

Filling Secretary Position

Jim Tracy resigned the position of Secretary, we need to replace him. Nominations should be made to the group via email two weeks before the April meeting. At the April meeting the board will vote on the new Secretary. Dave Ryan volunteered but would have to resign as President. Pat Judge also has indicated he is willing to take on this position.

Update on energy committee, other policy related information:

Pat Judge reported the following:

There is to be an AARP energy summit February 2 in Helena. Pat will summarize the summit proceedings and any related activities at the next MREA meeting.

Potential MREA Membership in the following organizations was discussed:

- Sustainable Energy Coalition Membership - has a nice newsletter

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- NorthWest Energy Coalition – MREA could take good ideas NWEC comes up with and use in MT. NWEC is a good resource for research.

Discussed NWE procurement plan.

We want to try to head off any renewable energy vs. low income public purpose conflicts.

Small scale renewables still need incentives

EQC asked for draft legislation, Pat will draft.

Coal bed methane – don't know where this will go and how much it will cost.

Wind Working Group (WWG) Update – Georgia Brensdal

The WWG has a goal to help Agriculture to get proposals in for section 4006 farm bill funding. Their foci are Ag outreach, development of wind on state lands, and improving electric transmission.

The Energy and Environmental Research Committee (EERC) is putting together regional educational activities, Georgia is on Steering Committee. RESOLVE (a consensus building and dispute settlement organization) is the contractor facilitating this collaborative.

Harvesting Clean Energy Conference

Kathy Montgomery is involved in putting together the conference for 2005, to be held in Great Falls, January 20 and 21. The agenda for the 2004 conference in Portland can be viewed on climatesolutions.org. MREA needs to decide if we want to contribute.

DEQ Loan Program

Kathy Montgomery also reported nine loans have been made with DEQ Loan Program funds. Loans are available at 5% interest, maximum of \$10,000.00, five year payback term.

Sustainability Fair 2004

MREA will again sponsor the fair. We voted to spend \$1000.00 to support the fair. We also will provide the demonstration trailer built by John Walden to provide some off grid power and a display of technologies. Anything else we need to do we'll need to talk about at the April meeting. The fair is scheduled to be held July 10, 2004.

Membership Efforts and Dues due for 2004

We need to put together an updated brochure, and send out invoices to the membership so they can pay their dues. Dave Ryan is going to put together a database application to track membership (not done yet, boy is MY face red!) and Georgia is going to revise the brochure. We need to figure out who is going to print the brochure once it is ready.

2004 Taxes

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Dave Ryan is to contact Kim Moran to get the federal income taxes filed.

Exploration Works

Tim Ranf reported on a new project to be built in Helena. Exploration Works is to be a LEED certified sustainable building demonstration. The science center is to be built in the Great Northern Town Center in Helena. Tim had conceptual drawings and plans. Exploration Works has about 50% funding secured, and is looking for more funding. They will apply for USB funding.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00