

## MINUTES

### AMRCC Alternative Materials & Energy Resources Work Group

October 7, 2009

TechWorks

Waterloo, Iowa

DRAFT

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**Members Present:** Chair, Sam McCord, MCG BioComposites; Cary Darrah, TechWorks; Steve Devlin, Center for Industrial Research and Service, Iowa State University; Larry Ehlinger, Pella Corporation; Terry Johnston, Cedar Valley TechWorks; Scott McCoy, Innovative Injection Technologies; Dean Reck, MCG BioComposites; and, Elliott Smith, Iowa Business Council

**Guests Present:** Michael Garvin, Iowa Northern Energy Corridor; and, Martin Wesemann, Pella Corporation.

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### Welcome & Introductions

Alternative Materials & Energy Resources (AM&ER) Work Group Chair Sam McCord called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. Mr. McCord reminded AM&ER members that anything discussed in this venue is considered public disclosure and cannot later be held out as proprietary or privileged.

### Review of AM&ER Meeting - 8.19.09

**Sam McCord** asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes of the AM&ER Work Group meeting held in West Des Moines on August 19, 2009 (previously distributed). **Cary Darrah** moved that the minutes be approved as distributed. Seconded by **Scott McCoy**. Hearing no objections, the motion passed unanimously.

### AM&ER Action Items

The following action items that emerged from the previous AM&ER meeting on August 19<sup>th</sup> were reviewed by **Sam McCord** with attendees of today's meeting:

**ACTION ITEM:** *Identify point persons at the Regent schools and Cedar Valley TechWorks to develop/coordinate an education component re: alternative materials research.*

**Cary Darrah** asked if this effort should include community colleges. Mr. McCord opined affirmatively --- dependent, however, on the curriculum of the particular school as not every community college in Iowa has an interest in what AM&ER is doing. Ms. Darrah suggested assessing classes at these schools to determine which have curriculum consistent with AM&ER's mission. She volunteered to contact Black Hawk Community College. **Steve Devlin** thought he recalled a similar effort by Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) two years ago with the Biomass Energy Conversion (BECON) Facility at Iowa State University. **Elliott Smith** volunteered to contact Rob Denson, President of DMACC. *[follow-up by Elliott: I e-mailed Rob Denson on 10.7.09 about this matter, & on 10.22.09 he replied saying he could not find record of any such initiative within DMACC related to BECON.]*

**ACTION ITEM:** *Identify fundamental fields of study for the Regents and TechWorks relevant to the needs of AM&ER Members.*

**Sam McCord** suggested holding off on this action item until point persons have been identified in Regent Schools and TechWorks. Agreement on this point by meeting attendees was unanimous.

**ACTION ITEM:** *How best to engage the Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED) in the efforts of AM&ER.*

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**Elliott Smith** noted that the activities of AM&ER may be low on the IDED's priority list right now with the budget-cutting activity and Film Office controversy of the past few weeks. In an effort to capture the Department's attention, Mr. Smith suggested holding the next AM&ER meeting at IDED in Des Moines. After the previous AM&ER meeting he e-mailed Karen Merrick and Mark Laurenzo of IDED and received enthusiastic responses from them both re: the efforts of AM&ER. Schedule conflicts prevented either person from attending today's meeting, but both expressed interest in participating in the future. **Sam McCord** would like to develop a list of questions related to the AM&ER/IDED relationship for Ms. Merrick and/or Mr. Laurenzo to contemplate prior to the next meeting. **Cary Darrah** suggested also inviting Roya Stanley, Director of the Iowa Office of Energy Independence. The group agreed that the more players at the table, the better. *[follow-up by Elliott: on 10.22.09 Karen Merrick secured IDED's Board/ICN Room for AM&ER to hold its next meeting on Wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup>.]*

**ACTION ITEM:** *Develop a one-page summary/charter document for the AM&ER Work Group.*

**Sam McCord** walked the group through the document developed by Elliott Smith seeking feedback/comments. Hearing none, he asked for approval on the document, which was given unanimously.

**ACTION ITEM:** *Develop an AM&ER membership list and a target member list.*

An AM&ER membership list was created by Sam McCord and Elliott Smith. It is available on the AMRCC Web site. Mr. McCord said he plans to follow up with those persons listed who have been absent for several meetings. He asked that the names of any prospective AM&ER members be e-mailed to either Mr. Smith or himself. **Cary Darrah** noted that holding a meeting at IDED may incent previously absent members to attend.

## **Presentation - Michael Garvin, Iowa Northern Energy Corridor**

**Sam McCord** introduced Michael Garvin, founder and President of the Renewable Energy Network for Aggregated and Integrative Services (RENAIS). The concept of the Iowa Northern Energy Corridor (INEC) was developed in a joint effort between RENAIIS Energy of North Liberty, Iowa, and the Iowa Northern Railway Company (IANR) of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. INEC is working to integrate several renewable energy technologies, e.g., wind turbine assembly and part supplier manufacturing, around the Iowa Northern Railway corridor that runs from Cedar Rapids through Waterloo/Cedar Falls to Manly, Iowa (Worth County). The project would provide low-cost transportation/logistics for delivery of equipment into the 'Wind Range' which stretches northwest, west, and southwest for the corridor.

Mr. Garvin said his specialty is "paradigm shift management." The Iowa Northern Energy Corridor began with a \$1.2 billion private capital investment, and he is now working with the Governor's Office, the Iowa Department of Economic Development, and the Iowa Finance Authority for additional funding.

INEC proposes to use stover, photovoltaic, and bio-methanol resources for business development and job creation throughout the corridor. RENAIIS plans to link the energy corridor by constructing five wind gardens of 50 megawatts each (small-scale turbines) that will supplement the many wind farms (large-scale turbines) near or along IANR. A major transmission line is being developed by a national energy corporation that will originate within the major wind farm region of the Upper Midwest (Dakotas) and, after traversing the IANR corridor, exit the state at Clinton and terminate in Chicago. Mr. Garvin said the project will be financed by a six or seven cent wholesale power purchase agreement with energy retailers over a 20 year period.

The RENAIIS five-year business plan includes creating 2,200 jobs and positively impacting 10,000 farms, increasing ag-related revenue in the region by up to 50%. Additionally, 32 manufacturing/production companies have committed to locating in the Corridor as a result of this project.

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**Cary Darrah** asked what the impact of the proposed federal 'cap & trade' legislation might be. Mr. Garvin expects RENAIS to reduce production costs and, ultimately, allow Iowa energy companies to determine whether if coal-fired or wind power is more profitable.

**Terry Olson** asked who will pelletize the stover. Mr. Garvin said 3fueled, LLC out of Waterloo will purchase and gather up to 4 million tons of corn stover at 12 locations along IANR for delivery to up to four densification facilities along the line. There the stover will be converted into pelletized, no carbon fuel providing close to the British Thermal Units (BTUs) per ton quality of Powder River Basin Coal.

**Elliott Smith** asked if there are any other corridor candidate regions in Iowa. Mr. Garvin said there are currently 42 prospective Corridors in the state.

Mr. Garvin noted that the biggest risk for the project would be if the Federal government does not continue the 30% wind energy production tax credit, which is currently extended through 2011. Passage of the Waxman/Markey 'cap and trade' legislation should generate additional tax credits for projects like RENAIS.

### **Moving Forward**

**Elliott Smith** said the AMRCC Web site is being updated. The one-page AM&ER Work Group summary and the AM&ER membership list are now listed on AM&ER section of the site. Mr. Smith briefed the group on the Iowa Career Hub, a page on the social networking site Facebook devoted to raising career awareness among Iowans. On this site an individual can browse career resources, follow organization and agency links, learn of event schedules, and pose questions. The page is meant to be a starting point for soon-to-be graduates, new job seekers, parents, teachers, etc. who desire to learn about the exciting career opportunities Iowa has to offer. Should the AM&ER Work Group wish to inform specific populations about manufacturing career opportunities, a Facebook site such as that developed for Iowa Career Hub is one way in which to do so.

**Cary Darrah** noted a meeting she will have soon with the Cedar Falls school district superintendent to develop a National Science Foundation grant in an effort to obtain funds for virtual reality equipment for schools. Elliott Smith will work to connect Ms. Darrah with Jack Harris of Rockwell Collins re: the Iowa Virtual Reality Education Pathways program he is spearheading. *[follow-up by Elliott: I put Cary in touch w/ Jack via e-mail on 10.7.09.]*

**Sam McCord** proposed November 11 or 18 or December 2 or 9 as dates for the next AM&ER meeting, depending on the availability of the IDED Board Room. Elliott Smith will contact IDED about same, and notify AM&ER WG members by e-mail once a date is determined.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the AMRCC Alternative Materials & Energy Resources Work Group, Sam McCord entertained a motion that the meeting adjourn. By group consensus, the meeting was adjourned by Mr. McCord at 11:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Elliott G. Smith

10.27.09