**MAAO Ag Committee Meeting**

**Summer Seminars**

**Holiday Inn, St. Cloud, MN**

**May 23, 2013**

**7:00 a.m. breakfast area**

**Minutes**

**Members present: Chair Jeanne Henderson, Vice Chair Keith Kern, Ron Vikre, Sue Schulz, Mark Koehn, Joyce Schmidt, Doug Bruns, Steve Carlson, Al Heim and Tom Reineke (DOR).**

**The CPI Summer Seminar course went very well. Thanks to everyone who helped bring this course together. It was discussed that the CPI Course may be presented at the fall conference. Courses and seminars are very much supported by the Department of Revenue and MAAO. The Ag Committee should possibly look into developing additional seminars for the future.**

**Chair Henderson will look at increasing the Ag Committee’s budget as she would like to add one additional meeting each year.**

**The Rural Preserve Program was discussed to determine how the process was going to enroll qualified property into the program and if the process of issuing paybacks for non-enrolled property has begun. Committee feedback indicated that most counties made a very concerted effort in contacting property owners to explain the process which has resulted in a high number of applications recently. At this time, it appears that no county has started the payback process.**

**Discussion was held concerning new statutory language in regards to the valuation of conservation easements. Tom Reineke stated that DOR will be sending out a directive to help clarify and that counties should hold off in making any changes to conservation easements until such directive is released. It was noted that Doug Bruns does have some RIM sales within his Region that may be useful.**

**It was brought up that the CPI method to value agricultural land may be very useful in helping to set Green Acre values throughout the state by the Department of Revenue. Additional discussions between the Ag Committee and DOR are needed.**

**The issue with Ethanol plants and whether certain types of tanks are taxable or exempt is in the hands of the Department of Revenue. They will be reviewing all information including personal property concerning the 21 plants in the state and preparing a study for the legislature. It was determined that counties that are affected with Ethanol plants should wait for direction from Revenue before making any changes.**

**Fertilizer Storage Facilities have been and continue to be a very hot topic. Region 2 has set up a tour of a facility in Martin County on Friday May 31st. Region 2 has compiled a lot of data and information concerning the different types of facilities that exist throughout the state. The Ag Committee agreed to focus on this issue and make it a top priority. It is extremely important that all parties involved work together to help develop a policy and procedure guideline for fertilizer storage facilities.**

**Submitted by:**

**Keith R. Kern, Vice Chair**

**Region 9**