

Red River Watershed Management Board

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Board of Managers

John Finnev-Humboldt Farrell Erickson-Badger Harlev Younggren, Secretary-Hallock Ron Osowski, Chairman-Oslo Vernon Johnson-Clearbrook Daniel Wilkens. Treasurer-Fertile Sanford Moen-Garv Curtis Nelson-Bamesville Ralph Christensen-Campbell Don Ogaard, Executive Director-Ada

RED RTVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

February 18,1997

The Northland Inn, Crookston, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, February 18, 1997, at The Northland Inn, Crookston, Minnesota.

Chairman Ron Osowski called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

Ron Osowski	Sanford Moen
Vernon Johnson	Kelman Kvien
Harley Younggren	John Finney
Daniel Wilkens	Curtis Nelson
Ralph Christensen	

Others present were:

Don Ogaard, Executive Director
Naomi Jagol, Administrative Assistant, Sand Hill River WD
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Jerry Paul, DNR
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Middle River-Snake River WD
Lowell Enerson, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Rick St. Germain, Engineer, Houston Engineering
Steve Mikkelson, MPCA
Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
Rudee Anderson, Two Rivers WD
Charlie Anderson, JOR Engineering
Gerhard Ross

Minutes of the January 21, 1997, meeting were read and approved with minor corrections. **Motion** to approve the minutes by Manager Nelson, **Seconded** by Manager Christensen, **Carried**.

A draft copy of the Treasurer's report was presented by Manager Wilkens and it was approved as read. Manager Wilkens explained that due to the fact that the 1996 records were brought to the auditor, some needed information was unavailable and, therefore, a revised Treasurer's Report would be presented for the month of January at the next monthly meeting for approval. **Motion** to approve the draft Treasurer's Report by Manager Moen, **Seconded** by Manager Nelson, **Carried**.

A **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Moen, **Seconded** by Manager Younggren, **Carried**. For further reference, a copy of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Ogaard Report - Don Ogaard

The first issue of "News & Views" was printed and distributed by Loyd Gilbert this past month. Each issue will need a feature article and the Managers were asked to forward any ideas or topics of interest to Don so that he may refer these to Susan Gilbert. The publication will also highlight activities occurring in each of the watersheds each month. Don asked the Managers to prioritize the activities in each monthly district report to facilitate ease of retrieval and also to eliminate the responsibility of Susan to make the determination of what to include for each district.

The Managers were asked if their individual watershed districts had reviewed the Policy Manual. They responded that only minor wording corrections or updates in language were needed. Motion to send out a summary of corrections rather than printing a whole new manual by Manager Moen, Seconded by Manager Nelson, Carried.

A legislative update was given regarding the BdSWD's amended resolution. A handout was distributed regarding this resolution to be presented at the Legislative Session along with a copy of a resolution stating support of the Wilkin County Board. It was noted that authorship is needed in the Senate and that support of county officials could be instrumental in obtaining this. Manager Christensen stated that all counties within the BdSWD would be in support of this resolution except for Big Stone, Grant, and Stevens. Don suggested each Manager decide which county boards they would contact in their watershed district to gain support for this resolution, and handouts were distributed as visual aids. Motion to make these presentations to county boards by Manager Christensen, Seconded by Manager Wilkens, Carried

Progress to date on retrieving the documentation relating to the Environmental Impact Study on file at HDR Engineering, Inc. was discussed. Don stated that HDR has agreed to furnish copies to the RRWMB at no charge rather than the previous estimate of \$3,000. A memo from Ron Headrick of HDR was distributed defining the working relations for this project between HDR and Houston Engineering, Inc. Don also noted that the COE is currently trying to develop an internal system to utilize more current data to determine flood damages.

An update on the Sand Hill River Watershed District's legal challenge was given by Don. He noted that this case will be heard in the Court of Appeals in Brainerd on March 5, 1997. Don is planning on attending along with representation from the SHRWD's Board of Managers. Comment was made about the Center for Environmental Advocacy Group's right to enter legal proceedings of watershed districts. This group is composed of 12 board members, headquartered out of the Twin Cities, and has an attorney on retainer. Don stated that he periodically receives information relating to these legal proceedings and that he could furnish this to the Board of Managers should they so desire. After discussion, it was decided that Don was to review the information received and to update the Board with a condensed version of highlights.

A Distinguished Service Award was presented to Gerhard Ross for his years of service to the RRWMB by Chairman Osowski. Gerhard then proceeded to discuss some observations on natural resource management. He noted that due to the political structure inherent in local units of government, it is essential for a network to be established among county agencies in order to obtain common goals. He suggested that the Internet would be an excellent medium of communication among watershed districts and would facilitate this networking ideology. Gerhard reiterated the goals of the RRWMB which include flood reduction, impoundments, adequate ditches and levees, and water quality. He commented on the staffing needs of the RRWMB. He stated that he felt the Executive Director was doing a commendable job of staying well informed and always being a step forward on pertinent issues. He noted that obtaining clerical assistance through the position of Administrative Assistant in order to increase Manager participation was a positive step and also discussed the possibility of obtaining

technical staff in the area of engineering. In conclusion, Gerhard thanked the Board for the plaque and gift of money and noted how much he enjoyed serving in this capacity.

The development and review of County Water Plans was discussed. Don stated that a trend seems to be developing of moving away from a watershed district approach and replacing it with an ecosystem approach. He distributed a handout outlining suggested changes to the Clay County Comprehensive Water Plan Update -1997. The importance of factual dialog rather than editorial comments was mentioned. After Board discussion, it was decided that copies of water plans from each participating district would be obtained and reviewed to determine if a definite trend is developing. If the watershed district approach appears to be neglected, concerns would then be brought to County Boards in order that they might be addressed prior to the public hearings. Manager Johnson noted the need for watershed district participation in order to increase credibility and suggested that perhaps the RRWMB should request time on the agenda at a BWSR meeting to discuss these areas of concern.

Don reviewed some topics of discussion for the upcoming March Conference to be held at the Best Western in Thief River Falls. An agenda was distributed and also the guest list was discussed. He noted that in addition to the items listed on the agenda, Ray Bohn and Woody Love would be making a presentation on the benefits of utilizing the Internet.

The University of Minnesota/DNR survey mailed to a select group of Managers was discussed. It appeared to be a random survey with the answers obtained to remain confidential. Don obtained information that 488 surveys were sent out with 230 in Minnesota, 230 in North Dakota, and 28 outside the basin. However, after further review it was determined the surveys were numbered and the questions were of a biased nature. Don stated that a letter was sent to Associate Professor, Dorothy H. Anderson, Ph.D. who assisted in drafting this survey, to address these areas of concern.

Red River Coordinator Report - Dan Thul

Dan handed out a copy of an article entitled, "California Floods Change Thinking on Need to Tame Rivers." He commented on new approaches to managing rivers which include less expensive set-back levees that allow the river to occupy its natural flood plain.

A review of project commitments of the RRWMB was discussed. Dan categorized these commitments into Impoundment Projects(step 1-3), Impoundment Projects (pending EIS), Other Projects, and Other Studies and Initiatives. The outstanding balance remaining to be funded should these projects materialize is \$8,690,652. Dan stated that this summary may be a worthy feature to include in the next newsletter.

Applications for Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Assistance Program were distributed.

Review of Red River Coordinator Position - Jerry Paul, DNR

Jerry stated the RRWMB's contract with DNR regarding Dan Thul's position is up in June of 1997. He gave a brief history on the establishment of this position stating that it was first developed in 1979 due to the fact that LCMR money appropriated through the legislature needed to be monitored through a state agency. He suggested to focus this position as a Division of Waters representative rather than the whole Department of Natural Resources as was previously done. Jerry proposed funding this position with a 70/30 relationship with the DNR bearing the majority of responsibility. He noted that a united effort between the Division of Waters and watershed districts needs to be preserved. Dan's position will encourage and facilitate participation with the RRWMB by other agencies within DNR. This proposal is based on a one to two year interim which would then be subject to negotiation when a clear departmental relationship has developed.

TIC Report - No report was available this month.

District Reports:

- The Wild Rice WD reported that a verification of the HEC 1 model for the Marsh Creek Detention Site No. 6 by **the** COE will be scheduled for the early part of March. The Norman and Clay County Water Planning Committees have agreed to provide funding that will be matched by the watershed district to develop a Stormwater Management System for the Dalen Coulee. At the February meeting, the Board of Managers adopted the Viewer's Report and authorized notice of the final hearing in connection with the establishment of grass buffer strips on Norman County Ditch No. 12. This project was initiated by 60% of the affected landowners and involves the acquisition of 26 acres of real property with an estimated cost of \$31,858. One of the stated goals in the WRWD Revised Water Management Plan is to inform and educate the citizens within its jurisdiction of its ongoing activities and projects. To address this need, the WRWD at its February meeting, approved hiring a media consultant to provide communication support for the District.
- The Red Lake WD reported that the Board of Managers accepted the Plans and Specs on the City of East Grand Forks Erosion Project No. 108 and will be opening bids in March. They also accepted the Plans and Specs for a drainage improvement by Oklee, Project No. 115, Equality/RLWD Ditch 1, Lat. C, and will be opening those bids in March also. The Red Lake Watershed District has just hired a new Water Quality Coordinator, Maggie Leach. Her first day of employment is February 18, 1997.
- The Roseau River WD reported that the Board is waiting to hear if the Flood Damage Reduction Grant has been approved before starting work on the HEC 1 model. Work continues on the digitization of soil maps. To date, 17 field sheets have been scanned and the data is being labeled. Discussion continues on ways to encourage public support. The Board has begun a petition and the City of Roseau has passed a resolution supporting the District's attempt to develop a flood control plan. The Board held a special meeting to discuss flood control on February 17, 1997.
- The Two Rivers WD reported that the Board of Managers continues work on updating rules and regulations of the district. They are also working on the completion of their annual report.

- The Joe River WD reported that the annual report has been completed and is scheduled to be distributed the week of February 24th.
- The Sand Hill River WD reported that the SHRWD and the RLWD are currently in the process of redetermining their joint boundary. Preliminary maps have been prepared by the engineers and will be distributed to the 17 affected townships prior to their annual meetings scheduled for March. In the spring, both boards will conduct a concerted effort to ensure the proposed boundary changes are as accurate as possible for presentation to BWSR for the public hearing. The Board has also been in contact with Ray Bonn discussing the steps needed to get on the Internet. The Board feels there is a great need for improved communications between our districts and citizens and believes the Internet offers a great opportunity to expand public relations.
- The Buffalo-Red River WD reported that landowner negotiations and permitting issues are continuing regarding the Economic Development Administration Grant for the Moorhead, Dilworth, and Hawley Projects. The City of Moorhead has requested the District to include a force main in the concrete liner plans. The force main would be used to pump treated wastewater to a municipal golf course. The City will pay for all additional costs.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that the Board of Managers is testing their After-The-Fact Permit Fee rule on three permits that are non-complying. Letters are being drafted to the land owners spelling out the options they have. If they do not comply, projects will be removed, put back to original form and will not function, with costs to be assessed to their taxes. Staff was instructed to meet to discuss doing a public survey with regard to the North Ottawa Project in order to gain input and direction. A meeting was held with consultants on February 7, 1997, with a report to follow at the next Board meeting on February 20, 1997. JOR Engineering has opened a satellite office within the BdSWD office for Marilyn Englund. The BdSWD will provide office space and an Internet connection, in exchange for the ability to use JOR Engineering computer equipment for GIS purposes and Internet purposes.
- The Middle River-Snake River WD reported that going into the 1997 spring snowmelt they have in the open areas above the City of Warren approximately 3 to 3.5 inches of water content in the snow. The status on the repair of Judicial Ditch #75 has not changed. Work on this project has been halted for the 1996 construction season with approximately 31% of the work completed to date. The hearing on the Engineers and Viewer's Report was held on February 13th in Alvarado for the Watershed Ditch #5/Watershed Ditch #6 Projects. Each of these projects is for the establishment of approximately 15 miles of channel with a combined estimated cost of 2.7 million dollars. The land purchase/exchange for the Angus Oslo Site #4 Project is still underway. To date, 640 acres have been purchased. The Engineers report is being finalized and plans are underway to submit a request for a step 2 approval in March.

District's Funding Requests:

1. Bois de Sioux WD - North Ottawa Project:

Contract for Deed Payment 1996			
Principle	\$297,816.75		
Interest	\$104,235.86		\$402,052.61
Less: <u>Balance on hand</u>			
Receipts		\$496,361.25	
<u>Less: Land purchase (\$336,572.48)</u>			
Tax payment	(12,841.00)		
Plus: 1996 Interest 4,192.04 <u>(345.221.44)</u> \$151.139.81			
Net RRWMB Funding Request			<u>\$250,912.80</u>

Motion to approve land payment as requested by Manager Christensen, Seconded by Manager Moen, **Carried**

RRWMB Expenditures to Date:

3/25/96	\$496,361.25
2/20/97	<u>\$250.912.80</u>
Net Received from RRWMB	<u>\$747.274.05</u>

2. Red Lake WD - City of Thief River Falls: Lowell Enerson requested action on the previously submitted RLWD funding request in the amount of \$250,000 to dredge and remove sediment in the recreational reservoir in the City of TRF. Lowell noted that the RLWD Managers voted and it passed by 4 to 3 in favor of funding the watershed district's portion. **Motion** by Kelman Kvien to deny the request based on the rationale that it does not meet the criteria or goals as established by the RRWMB to facilitate flood control measures, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**

Lowell Enerson, RLWD Administrator, discussed the funding potential for a U.S.G.S. Methyl Mercury Study. He stated this would be an opportunity to learn more as a local unit of government. Don Ogaard questioned the importance of DNR permitting projects relative to methyl mercury. He stated that until some answers are brought forth, it will continue to remain an issue. Don suggested conducting the study in cooperation with DNR and MPCA in an effort to obtain acceptable results to all parties involved. Dan Thul suggested possibly applying for FDR funding but noted that funds would not be available until 7/1/97. Lowell stated that he would explore all potential funding avenues and report back to the Board at the March meeting.

The next meeting will be held on March 20, 1997, at 9:30 a.m. at the Best Western in Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Harley Younggren
Secretary

Naomi L. Jagol
Administrative Assistant