

Red River Watershed Management Board

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Board of Managers

John Finney-Humboldt Farrell Erickson-Badger Harley Younggren. Secretary-Hallock Ron Osowsld, Chairman-Oslo Vernon Johnson-Clearbrook Daniel Wilkns. Treasurer-Fertile Sanford Moen-Gary Curtis Nelson-Barnesville Jerome Deal-Wheaton Don Ogaard. Executive Director-Ada

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

March 19,1998

Best Western, Thief River Falls, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Thursday, March 19, 1998, at the Best Western, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

Chairman Ron Osowski called the meeting to order.

Members present were: Daniel Wilkens John Finney
Farrell Erickson Sanford Moen
Jerome Deal Curtis Nelson
Vernon Johnson Harley Younggren

Others present were: Don Ogaard, Executive Director
Naomi Jagol, Administrative Assistant, Sand Hill River WD
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Middle River-Snake River WD
Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering
Maynard Pick, U.S. House of Representatives, Seventh District,
Congressman Collin Peterson's office
Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
Nolan Baratono, MPCA-Basin Coordinator
Paul Suomala, TIC
Bob Wright, Wild Rice WD
Lowell Enerson, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Jeff Lewis, MPCA Tim James, MPCA
Steve Mikkelson, MPCA

Minutes of the February 17, 1998, meeting were read and approved with minor corrections. **Motion** to approve the minutes by Manager Deal, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Nelson, **Seconded** by Manager Younggren, **Carried**.

A **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Moen, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**. For further conference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report. Don Ogaard presented an annual renewal notice from ICS Agency, Inc. for general liability insurance for \$1,948.00, to the board for review. A **Motion** to approve and pay the \$1,948.00 annual premium by Manager Finney, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

Request for Funding of Mediation Process - \$10,000 Matching Funds

A handout was distributed outlining the scope of the work to be performed in Phase II of the Red River of the North mediation project.

Don Ogaard discussed funding requirements for proceeding the second phase of mediation. Ogaard explained that of the original \$100,000 appropriated by the legislature for the mediation process, a balance of \$54,000 remains. It is estimated that \$60,000 - \$100,000 will be needed to complete the second phase of mediation. These agencies have made the following contributions:

| | | |
|---|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Department of Natural Resources | \$40,000 | |
| Minnesota Pollution Control Agency | \$ 10,000 | |
| Board of Water & Soil Resources | \$10,000 | |
| RRWMB (Proposed) | <u>\$10,000</u> | |
| Subtotal | | \$ 70,000 |
| Balance remaining of legislative Appropriation | | <u>\$ 54,000</u> |
| Total | | <u>\$124,000</u> |

A request was made by the DNR that the RRWMB also contribute \$10,000 to be paid by 6/30/98. Ogaard discussed the draft contract to be signed by the State of Minnesota and the RRWMB. After Board discussion, it was agreed that the RRWMB should contribute to the process. Wilkens noted the requirement for the State of Minnesota to have the money up front to ensure project completion. Wilkens further stated that at the meeting held to discuss the continuation of the mediation process, when this funding was initially discussed, it was his understanding that if these funds were not expended they would be returned to the RRWMB. Osowski noted that the \$10,000 would be paid to the facilitators, and any additional meeting expenses incurred by the Board would be extra. **Motion** by Wilkens to include a qualifier with the \$10,000 contribution stating that if the second phase of mediation is completed for less than \$124,000, the balance be returned to the RRWMB up to the amount of the original contribution, **Seconded** by Finney, **Carried**.

State Water Planners Conference - Daniel Wilkens

Wilkens distributed a handout regarding the State Water Planners Conference hosted in the Red River Valley this summer at UMC on July 21-23. The planning committee anticipates 250 people to be in attendance. Wilkens stated that on the 22nd, 6 different tours will be conducted to include two buses sponsored by the RRWMB. Lowell Enerson added that he had been in contact with Tanya Hanson, Red Lake County Soil & Water Conservation District, who requested the Red Lake WD to sponsor a bus tour of the Clearwater Nonpoint Project which highlights water quality. Enerson noted that in order to avoid competition between the soil & water conservation districts and the watershed districts, the tours sponsored by the RRWMB should incorporate more than flood control projects. Enerson promoted the idea of watershed districts including sites on the tour that support water quality and water quantity management. Wilkens recommended that the Board appoint a committee to make the arrangements regarding the route of the buses, meals, and refreshment breaks. The following individuals volunteered to assist in the planning process for the bus tours: Don Ogaard, Daniel Wilkens, Vernon Johnson, and Lowell Enerson. Wilkens added that he would contact Tanya Hanson to invite her to participate as well.

Project Development - Finance Projects for 1998

Ogaard stated that no Step I submittals have been received from the districts for the 1998 construction season. Reports have been received from the Buffalo-Red River WD and the Red Lake WD regarding construction plans for the current year. Ogaard requested that each district prepare such a report and forward to the RRWMB so that potential funding needs can be assessed. The workload thus far has consisted primarily of water retention and flood control projects.

District Reports;

- The Middle River-Snake River WD reported that for the first time in recorded history, the Snake River flooded in February. Without a continuous snow cover, in late February the temperature rose to the mid 30's to the lower 40's followed by thunderstorms which brought between one and two inches of rain over a 6 hour period. The saturated ground caused enough runoff to cause a stage of 49.8 feet in Warren (45 feet is flood stage). In addition, the Red River rose high enough to cover Trunk Highway #220 and Trunk Highway #3 near the outlet of the Snake River. With the return of colder weather, the water froze and ice currently covers portions of TH #220 and TH #317 even though the water has since receded.
- The Sand Hill River WD reported that the District's advisory committee met last month. Jim Todahl was re-elected chairman of the advisory committee at the annual meeting held in conjunction with the SHRWD regular board meeting. The advisory committee will recommend to the county board that Daniel Wilkens be re-appointed to the Board of Managers. Discussion was held regarding the county turning over the ditches to the watershed district. The advisory committee will meet again in April to further discuss this issue and make a recommendation to both the county and the watershed board. Manager Wilkens gave a presentation to the advisory committee regarding activities of the past year of the Sand Hill River WD, the Red River Watershed Management Board, and the Red River Basin Board.
- The Joe River WD reported that the District's annual audit is complete with the annual report forthcoming. The rules of the district are being reviewed with some changes taking place. Also, the district is trying to simplify the permit application form in an attempt to make it easier for the applicant to complete.
- The Roseau River reported that local resident Lavern Voll filed a complaint about runoff that enters Hay Creek which should be going into the Warroad Lake. The District will investigate the area.

The Board met with several landowners on the back water effect of the proposed Norland Project. Charlie Anderson showed preliminary graphs comparing the existing water surface profiles with those of the completed project. A discussion followed regarding how the Board handled this project. There still are a lot of misgivings about the District buying land and having the DNR involved. It was stated that the District should have included the landowners in developing the project from the beginning. Despite these negative comments, the Board did make progress in identifying some of the landowner's concerns.

- The Wild Rice WD reported that warm temperatures led to a very early thaw and flood event on the Wild Rice River. Despite the fact that this year's melt was not a major runoff event, ice jams caused some flooding problems in the Upper Reaches Project area of the Wild Rice River, southwest of Ada. The District responded to a problem when an ice jam damaged an approximate 100 foot portion of the river levy. This is the same area that had been repaired by the Army Corps of Engineers following the floods in 1996 and 1997.

Water from the channel gushed through the levy behind the ice jam, resulting in flooding over approximately 3,000 acres in Hegne and Mary townships. A couple of homes slated for the voluntary flood prone buy out program were also threatened by rising water. The District was able to reach the damaged levy area on the river with a backhoe and put in a temporary plug. When the ice jam let go later in the day, a stage decrease of approximately five feet was reported in the area by that evening.

- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that staff has met with representatives of MnDOT and the COE regarding the potential for restoring the high flow outlet for the Mustinka River as a possible way to reduce the water quality degradation of Lake Traverse. During periods of high flow, the Mustinka delivers a rather large sediment and, subsequently, phosphorus load to the lake. By allowing this to be placed in Mud Lake, the marsh type water body will better trap sediment and absorb the nutrients associated with it. This does not discount the fact in any way that sediment control needs to be done in the watershed but it will get the district to a point where anything that is done throughout the watershed will begin to show an affect on the lake. The discussion was surprisingly well received.

Jon Roeschlein updated the Board on the progress of the Bois de Sioux legislation. Manager Deal added that Ray Bohn of MAWD has been working very hard to ensure passage of the bill. Bohn informed the District that the bill is very close to passing. Deal stated that the session closes on April 9, 1998. Osowski inquired to Deal whether a delegation would be needed from the RRWMB for any upcoming committee hearings. Roeschlein stated that when confirmation is received regarding a date and time for the next hearing, he will contact Ogaard. Ogaard stated once he receives word from Roeschlein, a group will be organized to attend the committee hearings. Lowell Enerson noted the importance of staying in contact with representatives on a daily basis in an effort to keep both parties well informed of current initiatives. Manager Johnson added that he would contact Representative Edgar Olson to request his support regarding the BdSWD legislation.

- The Buffalo-Red River WD reported that work on twenty-four logjams on the Buffalo River is about 75% complete.

The District received a DNR Protected Waters Permit to do the work on the Deerhorn Creek Levees. Meetings with landowners are being arranged to obtain the necessary easements for construction.

- The Red Lake WD reported that plans and specs have been approved and bids have been advertised for the Louisville/Parnell Impoundment Project. Land acquisition for this project is nearing completion.

The public informational meetings on the Flood of 1997, "Can we prevent it from happening again?" were very well received in the District.

- The Two Rivers WD had no report this month.

Executive Director Report - Don Ogaard

Ogaard presented highlights of the Netherlands tour he attended on March 7-14. The objective of the tour was to observe the government structure relative to water management. Ogaard stated that water boards in the Netherlands dated back to the 1300's. Currently, there are 66 water boards operating but there is an initiative to reduce this number down to 25. The annual budget for the water boards is approximately 3 billion dollars. Ogaard stated that two methodologies were emphasized on the tour. The first one being that water is managed

by mankind, for mankind. The current operation of the water boards is a very grass roots oriented system. Ogaard noted that all of the projects in the Netherlands proceed with a plan. The planning process can be very tedious but once it's adopted, the plan shall be carried forth. Ogaard added that the water boards determine drainage and irrigating procedures and that nearly all farmland is tiled. Currently, a large shift has occurred in the Netherlands with an emphasis on water retention in the highlands. The second methodology stressed was that water is treated as the primary resource, agriculture is secondary. The average size farm consists of 10 - 25 acres with farmland costing approximately \$40,000 per acre. The country is highly industrialized with a factory existing approximately every 20 miles. The major commodity is hog production but the government is trying to implement a 50% reduction of hogs due to the lack of disposal for manure. The population of the country is approximately 15,000,000 people with the government strongly promoting equality for its citizens.

Ogaard discussed the progress to date of the Communications Committee. Several statements have been agreed to thus far by both parties involved. Ogaard added that the committee plans to keep meeting as long as the mediation process progresses. Manager Finney added that throughout the duration of the committee meetings, he has observed several changes taking place. Finney explained that when the group first started meeting, the DNR was reluctant to discuss stream storage capabilities, however, now this is one of the statements agreed upon. Manager Johnson inquired to Ogaard whether the proceedings of the communication committee were documented. Ogaard indicated that minutes had been prepared for each meeting and that these would be forwarded to the mediation panel comprised of Vernon Johnson, Don Ogaard, Daniel Wilkens, and Jerome Deal as well as Charlie Anderson and Harley Younggren named as alternates.

A request was received from the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding funding assistance - for a hydrologic modeling effort. Ogaard explained the request involves a commitment of \$200,000 a year for 4 years. Ogaard recommended pursuing the investigation of this initiative due to the fact that since it's a federal project, the RRWMB would be required to adhere to the guidelines set forth in the modeling effort. Dan Thul, chairman of the technical advisory committee (TAC), offered to have the TAC review the letter to assess the opportunity for involvement by the RRWMB. Motion by Manager Johnson to direct Ogaard to prepare a response to the USFWS indicating the TAC of the RRWMB will review the letter to determine the level of participation from the RRWMB, Seconded by Manager Wilkens, Carried. Maynard Pick added that he would draft a letter directed to Congressman Collin Peterson's office informing him of this issue.

The levy for 1999 was discussed. Ogaard reminded the Board that July is the final date for setting the levy.

The maps for the MAWD summer tour were discussed. Ogaard stated that at the prior monthly meeting, the managers had agreed to develop maps of their respective districts to be forwarded to the RRWD upon completion. Ogaard noted that no maps have been received to date and encouraged the managers to have these completed.

The public informational meetings conducted by Susan Gilbert throughout the Red River Valley on March 16-18 were discussed. Ogaard stated that the meetings in Moorhead and Warren were videotaped and excerpts would be used to formulate a video. The cost of this video is anticipated to be approximately \$1,000. Manager Johnson added that the press was excellent regarding coverage of the meetings and concurred with the idea of preparing a video. Lowell Enerson stated that once the video is developed, the individual districts could contact the public television stations in their areas and request airtime. Enerson commended Susan Gilbert for the excellent presentations given and suggested additional public informational meetings be conducted depicting a basin-wide perspective instead of highlighting local watershed districts.

Red River Coordinator Report - Dan Thul

The minutes from the TAC meetings conducted on February 17, February 27, and March 11 were distributed and reviewed by Dan.

Dan stated that on February 27, 1998, the committee met with other State and COE representatives to discuss the 1997 Flood modeling effort and the final UNET report by the COE. A concern developed regarding the use of the model to analyze future "what if scenarios since the routing procedures are based on empirical relationships rather than physical relationships. Routing methods are available based on physical characteristics of the river so that if the flows are altered, the routing will still fit. These methods are very data sensitive since they rely on obtaining river cross-sections for all reaches. Brent Johnson agreed to review available options and continue developing routing coefficients.

On March 11, 1998, the committee attended a meeting called by BWSR to discuss the Technical Guidelines the RRWMB developed for member Districts to use when administering their rules. After lengthy discussions, the entire group agreed that certain efforts were warranted and would help to get a better handle on this issue. They are:

1. Someone should sample previous F & W restorations to evaluate how they "fit" the criteria within the BWSR guidelines and the RRWMB guidelines. Emphasis would be to determine how big of an issue are we dealing with?
2. The Tech Committee said they would revisit the guidelines and make changes where appropriate.
3. We all need to find ways to work together! Much could be accomplished if all were working toward a common goal. To this end the Tech Committee offered to discuss with the RRWMB a possible funding scheme that would provide financial incentives to landowners to incorporate improved floodwater retention into restorations.
4. The Tech Committee told all that the Districts are willing to work with applicants who have questions about the guidelines and how they are to be applied.
5. BWSR and the SWCD's agreed to provide specific comments on the parts of the guidelines that are causing them the headaches.

Charlie Anderson suggested utilizing the STAR value method for developing a cost share formula for watershed participation in wetland restorations.

District's Funding Requests:

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

1997 Annual Report

Copies of the 1997 RRWMB Annual Report were presented to the Board and Ogaard encouraged each watershed district to take with them the desired number of copies for their district.

Red River Diking Concerns

Chairman Osowski reported that Walsh County in North Dakota is proposing a diking project to reduce the acreage historically flooded. The proposed plan would cause a change in the inter-state dike elevation corrects plan. The Minnesota dikes would have to be raised to maintain the 43,000 cfs in the original agreement.

The next meeting will be on April 21, 1998, at 9:30 a.m. hosted by the Buffalo-Red River WD at Bogies Clubhouse at the Meadow's Golf Course in Moorhead, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Harley Younggren
Secretary

Naomi L. Jagol
Administrative Assistant