

Red River Watershed Management Board

705 Fifth Street West Ada, MN 56510 Phone: (218)784-4156, Fax: (218)784-2015

Board of Managers

John Finney, Vice Pres.-Humboldt Farrell Erickson, Secretary-Badger Harlan Solberg-Greenbush Ron Osowski, President-Oslo Vernon Johnson-Clearbrook Daniel Wilkens, Treasurer-Fertile Robert Wright-Felton Curtis Nelson-Barnesville Jerome Deal-Wheaton Don Ogaard, Executive Director-Ada

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

May 15, 2001

Warren City Hall, Warren, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, May 15, 2001, at the Warren City Hall, Warren, Minnesota.

In the absence of the President, John Finney-Vice President called the meeting to order.

Members present were: Farrell Erickson Harlan Solberg
Daniel Wilkens Dennis Nikolayson
Robert Wright Curtis Nelson
Jerome Deal

Others present were: Don Ogaard, Executive Director
Naomi Jagol, Administrative Assistant, Sand Hill River WD
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering
Ron Adrian, Administrator, Middle River-Snake River WD
Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
Jerry Bennett, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
Ryan Odenbach, Red Lake WD
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
Jim Ziegler, MPCA

No additional items were added to the agenda.

Motion by Manager Deal to approve the minutes as written with minor corrections, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

The Treasurer's reports for the months of March and April were presented and approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Nelson to approve the Treasurer's Reports for March and April, **Seconded** by Manager Solberg, **Carried**. Manager Wilkens requested that bills be submitted by each of the individual project teams at the next monthly meeting as the state funds must be expended prior to 6/30/01.

Motion to approve and pay bills by Manager Deal, **Seconded** by Manager Solberg, **Carried**.

Report on Red River Basin Board (RRBB) Meeting

Ogaard stated that significant progress was made at the May 11, 2001 meeting as a result of the retreat conducted in Manitoba.

Ogaard noted that discussion occurred regarding impediments relative to implementing flood damage reduction efforts including an inaccurate accounting of damages from flooding with no agricultural or personal losses recorded. He stated that the RRBB agreed to reactivate the Flood Damage Reduction task force in order to develop information to be utilized by the reconnaissance study currently being conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

Manager Wilkens stated that he is a member of the human resource committee developed to conduct interviews for a new Executive Director. He noted that several applications were received for the position with interviews occurring during the week of May 7th. He added that the position was offered to Lance Yohe, who had been previously employed by the International Coalition (TIC). Mr. Yohe will begin employment on June 15, 2001.

Manager Erickson inquired about the status of TIC. Manager Wilkens responded that the RRBB is conducting meetings with TIC to see how the two organizations can be more compatible and eliminate duplication of efforts. The RRBB's information/education task force is involved in the same areas as TIC.

RRWMB Office Transition

Ogaard referred to a list forwarded to the Board of Managers regarding expenses paid to the Sand Hill River WD and Desktop Documents regarding the duties currently performed by Naomi Jagol for the RRWMB. Ogaard noted that he has operated out of his home for the position of Executive Director and added that this practice is becoming very common. He explained that since the majority of the work involves responding to phone inquiries, the new position of Associate Director could be performed by Jagol from her home.

Manager Finney inquired whether the personnel committee had conducted any meetings since the last board meeting. Manager Erickson responded that the committee was waiting to receive cost estimates for establishing an in-home office.

Motion by Manager Wilkens to offer the position to Naomi Jagol and authorize the personnel committee to schedule a meeting with Jagol to finalize the details of the Associate Director position. The committee will develop a personnel manual and submit a recommendation to the board at the next monthly meeting, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, discussion followed.

Manager Erickson noted that at the previous monthly meeting, board members had indicated they wished to discuss this position with their respective boards and report back at the May board meeting. He requested the individual managers to report on the discussions with their boards.

Manager Wilkens stated that the Sand Hill River WD would greatly miss Jagol in her position of Administrative Assistant, but wished her well in her endeavors with the RRWMB.

Manager Nelson stated that the Buffalo-Red River WD had discussed the new position and was concerned regarding the proposed salary as well as operating out of an in-home office. Managers Finney and Deal noted that their boards directed them to vote at their discretion.

Manager Solberg added that the Two Rivers WD had also questioned the proposed salary and suggested that either the salary be maintained at the current level for 3 or 4 years, or start at a lower salary with incremental

increases over a certain time period. He noted that his board also felt the position should be opened up for applications.

Manager Wright explained that the Wild Rice WD was concerned about the issue of at in-home office. He added that the proposed salary was also discussed and after an explanation of Jagol's qualifications the board was more receptive to the dollar amount.

Nikolayson stated that although the Red Lake WD agreed to support Vernon Johnson's decision, he believed that the proposed salary would be an issue of concern for the board. He noted that due to her years of experience with the Sand Hill River WD and the RRWMB, Jagol would be an excellent choice for the position.

Manager Erickson addressed the various concerns relative to the proposed salary. He stated that the RRWMB is currently incurring expenses in excess of the proposed salary amount for administrative services and publishing the newsletter.

Ogaard stated his support of offering the position of Associate Director to Naomi Jagol. He noted that he has devoted 25 years to the RRWMB, working closely with Jagol for the past five years. He added that it was with great confidence that he recommended Jagol for the position.

Manager Erickson inquired about RRWMB representation at future conferences. Jagol responded that although she would be interested in conducting various PowerPoint presentations, she envisioned greater board manager participation at future conferences and meetings.

As there was no further discussion, a vote was taken. Those voting in favor of the motion included: Erickson, Solberg, Wilkens, Nikolayson, Wright, and Deal. Those opposing the motion included: Nelson. **Motion carried.**

Water Quality Report – Ryan Odenbach

Ryan Odenbach, water quality technician for the Red Lake WD, reported on a water quality study conducted on Good Lake. He stated that the intent of the study was to determine the chemical and physical characteristics of the impoundment as well as an estimation of the hydrologic boundary.

Odenbach referred to a map of the sub-watershed boundary. He stated that the Good Lake Impoundment project was constructed in 1995 with the main purpose of flood control. The project is located southeast of the City of Goodridge, within the Red Lake Indian Reservation, and drains into the Red Lake River.

The study recommendations concluded that outlet structures should be designed on impoundments to ensure a thorough mixing with the air, which could lessen downstream effects and provide for improved management of the impoundments during certain critical times.

Odenbach distributed copies of the study and requested that they be returned following the meeting. He noted that should anyone wish to keep a file copy, to contact him and he would forward them a copy.

Financial Coordinator Report

Ogaard distributed the Financial Coordinator Report in the absence of Dick Nelson. The report noted that \$234,000 is included in the House Environment bill with the same amount in the Senate bonding bill. It is uncertain as to how this will be conferenced out as the House continues to not support a bonding bill.

A one-time appropriation for \$750,000 is included in the Senate Environment and Ag bill for ring dikes. The House supports funding in the amount of \$250,000 for the first year, \$318,000 for the second year and subsequent years until this funding becomes part of DNR base budget.

The PILT(Payment in Lieu of Taxes)/Pilot payment is attached to the Administrative increase bill in the Senate. Information on the House side has been difficult to obtain for several reasons. The first reason is that it opens up a new precedent in tax law by allowing one local government unit (LGU) to pay another LGU. Another reason is that the House is trying to eliminate and/or reduce taxes, not create new tax programs.

The Senate has included \$850,000 for Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (RRBFDRWG) funding, however, the funding has been zeroed out in the House and will be sent to conference committee.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) had met earlier and discussed the monitoring proposal approved by the RRBFDRWG. The TAC discussed the potential for developing criteria for monitoring the effectiveness of flood control impoundments.

Anderson explained that the Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (TSAC) had been assigned to develop protocols for projects built as part of the FDR work group effort. The TSAC had encountered significant difficulties in this effort, until at a recent meeting when discussion had occurred relative to the types of monitoring that should be conducted including project specific which would involve monitoring water quality, hydrologic parameters, and other environmental indicators or species. Secondly, basin-wide background data monitoring should occur which would include developing baseline data. And finally a research component should be included in order to answer questions that could arise. Discussion regarding maintaining a centralized data bank that could be accessed through the Internet also occurred.

Ogaard inquired whether the TSAC had developed a monitoring proposal with a cost estimate that identifies the responsibilities of various agencies or organizations. Anderson responded that the TSAC is scheduled to meet again in June to further refine the criteria needed in the proposal. Anderson also noted that the TSAC feels that MPCA should be responsible for developing baseline data.

Thul noted that the TAC had discussed their role in developing the hydrologic parameters of projects. A number of items were discussed regarding examples that should be incorporated into a site specific monitoring plan including keeping accurate records of gate operation, developing rating curves (measuring outflow and inflow, installing staff gages and rain gages), and monitoring downstream conditions (reducing damages, keeping roads from being overtopped). The development of appropriate models in order to study various scenarios was also discussed.

Ogaard stated that funding for project monitoring in the amount of \$136,630 was approved at the 5/03/01 meeting of the RRBFDWRWG and added that a project sponsor is needed to administer the funding.

Jim Ziegler-MPCA explained that projects currently funded by the RRBFDWRWG do not include a monitoring component. The funding approved at the 5/03/01 meeting would provide for monitoring the four projects that received funding from the RRBFDWRWG that are currently in progress.

Ziegler stated that one goal of monitoring is to assess the various efforts currently being conducted and determine whether they are consistent with regard to data collection in order to avoid duplication of efforts. He noted that the project monitoring plan does not identify how the funds will be administered. He requested that the RRWMB consider being the fiscal agent for the project. He added that RRWMB is the best candidate to administer the funds since they are connected to all the individual watershed districts and project teams.

Ogaard inquired whether a committee would be established to advise how the funds would be administered. Ziegler responded that a committee would be developed to assist with directing the staff that would be hired to conduct the monitoring. Ziegler added that he envisioned committee members from MPCA, DNR, BWSR and the RRWMB.

Ogaard inquired whether this initiative would be pursuing continuous funding. Ziegler stated that currently the plan is to pursue continuous funding, however, revisions may be needed as the TSAC reviews the monitoring results and develops recommendations for implementing project monitoring.

Nikolayson inquired about integrating project monitoring with the current River Watch program. Ziegler responded that the plan would insure that the data collected through the River Watch program would be used in conjunction with project monitoring. Ziegler further noted that the plan also provides that Wayne Goeken, current River Watch coordinator, would be hired as the project monitoring coordinator.

Ogaard inquired about the timeframe for designating an agency to administer the funding. Ziegler stated that state agencies' fiscal year end is June 30th, therefore, the funds must be forwarded prior to July 1st.

Motion by Manager Erickson to accept the grant approved by the RRBFDWRWG (\$136,630) and act as the fiscal agent as per the recommendations of the personnel committee, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

Executive Director Report – Don Ogaard

A) Report on the May 3rd RRBFDWRWG Meeting

Ogaard stated that proposals were discussed regarding the remaining funds from the 2001 fiscal year. The funds were reallocated among the following initiatives: Extension Service Facilitator, Tilden Farms Monitoring, and Project Monitoring Implementation.

B) Discuss/Receive Direction for next RRBFDWRWG Fiscal Year Funding

Ogaard explained that direction is needed regarding the next fiscal year funding relative to the distribution of funds. He noted that some members of the work group would like to charge monitoring expenses to projects rather than allocating funds for that purpose. He added that currently the preliminary and final engineering costs may be funded through the work group and that monitoring expenses could be treated in a similar manner.

Manager Wilkens noted that monitoring expenses should be allocated from legislative funding rather than absorbed by the individual watershed districts. Manager Deal concurred with Wilkens and stated the importance of forwarding legislative funds to the watershed districts.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is continuing with the preliminary study (Section 206) on the Hay Creek project. During the project team meeting conducted in April, Tom Raster-USACE discussed the different proposals for the meandering channel as well as the timeline for the project.
- The Two Rivers WD reported that a planning meeting regarding the overall plan update was conducted on May 3, 2001. The planning team divided the District into sub-watersheds and will now begin analyzing each sub-watershed along with the pertinent issues, problems, and potential solutions. The Citizen's Advisory Committee decided that future meetings should be conducted at locations central to each sub-watershed, and that residents of each of the sub-watersheds be invited to attend in an effort to solicit public comment. The next planning meeting is scheduled for June 14, 2001 in Badger, MN.
- The Middle River-Snake River WD reported on the status of the Public Law 566 project. The appraiser's report is being finalized with the final hearing scheduled for the last week in June. The appraiser's determined the benefits and damages on the project which is the first time the District was responsible for providing this information for a federal project. The preparation of the plan for Phase III by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is underway and should be completed by the end of the year. A Step III submittal will be forwarded to the RRWMB following the hearing.
- The Red Lake WD reported that the Board of Managers authorized signing the grant agreement with the DNR for the Thief River Storage and Diversion. Several landowners are interested in selling their property for storage purposes.
- The Sand Hill River WD reported that a meeting was conducted with Polk County commissioners, the watershed district, and other interested individuals in order for Kurt Deter-Rinke Noonan to answer legal questions regarding the Polk County No. 41 Road Re-build project. The District has been working with the landowners and the county board on this project for several years to coordinate the road rebuild with the ditch system that runs alongside. The technical and engineering aspects have been considered. The landowners received answers to several legal questions that were needed prior to making the decision to bring an improvement petition to the watershed district board of managers. The most recent cost estimate to do the needed erosion improvements, connection channel, and necessary legal work for the improvement project was \$242,000 or a cost of between \$5.00 and \$6.00 per acre depending on the area included.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on the Lockhart Flood Storage Pilot project. A bid opening was conducted in March. The District is in the process of certifying the low bidder on the project. Options for the land have been executed with anticipation of a spring construction start.
- The Buffalo-Red River WD reported that the District is conducting an inventory of all the county ditch systems and projects under their jurisdiction for damages occurred during the 2001 spring flood event. Preliminary estimates exceed \$500,000 in damages from the high water problems. Over thirty permit applications have already been filed this year.

- The Bois de Sioux WD reported on the flood of 2001. Following the flood, the District analyzed the information gathered and determined that the volume of water recognized during the 2001 event, was greater than that in 1997. However, more communities and individuals were better able to fight the flood this year as they were more prepared as structural work had been completed for protection.

District's Funding Requests:

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

The next meeting will be on June 19, 2001, at 9:30 a.m. at the Wells-Fargo Bank in Barnesville, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Farrell Erickson
Secretary

Naomi L. Jagol
Administrative Assistant