

Red River Watershed Management Board

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Board of Managers

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RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

May 21, 2002

Wells Fargo Bank, Barnesville, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, May 21, 2002, at the Wells Fargo Bank, Barnesville, Minnesota.

Chairman Ron Osowski called the meeting to order.

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

Others present were: Don Ogaard, Executive Director
Dick Nelson, Financial Coordinator
Naomi Erickson, Associate Director
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
Jerry Bennett, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Middle River-Snake River WD
Chuck Fritz, Program Manager, Red River Basin Board
Lance Yohe, Executive Director, Red River Basin Board
Wayne Goeken, Water Quality Project Monitoring
Bruce Albright, Administrator, Buffalo-Red WD
Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office
Harry Farris, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Dennis Nikolayson, Red Lake WD
Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
Jeff LeDeux, Engineer, Houston Engineering
Jerry Bents, Engineer, Houston Engineering

An additional item was added to the agenda in the *District Reports* section by Manager Deal regarding an update on activities of the Board of Water & Soil Resources.

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

Due to the cancellation of the April board meeting, the Treasurer's report for March 2002 was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Nelson to approve the March 2002 Treasurer's Report, **Seconded** by Manager Solberg, **Carried**. The Treasurer's report for April 2002 was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Erickson to approve the April 2002 Treasurer's Report, **Seconded** by Manager Wright, **Carried**. A one-page handout of monthly bills to be approved was distributed. **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Deal, **Seconded** by Manager Solberg, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Buffalo-Red River WD Resolution

Ogaard stated that a letter was forwarded to each member watershed district from the Chairman of the Buffalo-Red River WD (BRRWD) regarding notice that the District decided to withdraw their membership from the RRWMB. This action would be effective 10/01/02.

Motion by Manager Erickson to acknowledge the receipt of the resolution from the BRRWD on March 29, 2002, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

Manager Deal noted that it was very unfortunate to receive this notification from the BRRWD. He inquired about the reasons the board decided to withdraw their membership. Manager Nelson responded that the Board of Manager of the BRRWD feels that their board contributes significant funding to the RRWMB, but only receives a portion of it back again for project funding.

Manager Wilkens explained the levy that was authorized under the legislation passed in 1976 establishing the RRWMB. He stated that the proceeds of one-half of this levy shall be credited to the district's construction fund and shall be used for the construction and maintenance of projects of common benefit to the district. The proceeds of the remaining one-half of this levy shall be credited to the construction fund of the RRWMB and shall be used for the construction and maintenance of projects of common benefit to more than one member district. He added that prior to the establishment of the RRWMB, individual watershed districts only had their administrative fund to cover operating costs.

Following discussion, the board determined that the Board of Managers of the BRRWD should be invited to a RRWMB meeting to further discuss this issue. **Motion** by Manager Deal to invite the Board of Managers of the BRRWD to the July RRWMB meeting to address this issue, **Seconded** by Manager Johnson, **Carried**.

Report on Red River Basin Commission

Ogaard requested that Lance Yohe summarize the April and May board meetings of the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC). Yohe responded that the RRBC is in the process of merging the three original entities which involves getting the articles reorganized. The financial records of the new organization should be ready by June 1st. The RRBC is focusing on the following four areas of activity: leadership, partnership, communication, and technical resources. The mission of the RRBC is to continue to develop a vision for the Red River Basin which includes promoting a unified voice for the basin.

Financial Coordinator Report

D. Nelson reported that the bonding bill passed on May 19th with the flood damage reduction portion at a record \$30 million dollars for the state. The RRWMB's share of the bill is \$10.7 million which includes: \$4.3 million for the City of Warren, \$2.1 million for the Agassiz Valley Water Management Project, \$2.8 million for the North Ottawa Project, \$500,000 for the Hay Creek Project, and \$1,000,000 for Ross No. 7 Project with a 50/50 cost share. The following Senators assisted in passing this legislation: Moe, Langseth, and Stumpf. The following Representatives also assisted: Finseth, Penas, Lieder, Skoe, Marquart, and Goodno. D. Nelson cautioned member districts to not expend any appropriated funds as of yet as the Governor has two weeks to veto the bill.

Manager Deal commended Dick Nelson on the excellent work he did at the legislature. He noted that had it not been for Dick Nelson, it was quite likely that the North Ottawa Project would have been defeated by Senator Berg and Representative Westrom.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met prior to the board meeting and conducted another review of the TSAC strategy paper that Charlie Anderson has been developing relative to the assessment of storage options in the Red River Basin.

Thul explained that the strategy paper discusses how different storage options, if applied in upstream storage areas, could be applied to ideal situations. He noted that project teams would have a better understanding how much extra storage volume would be needed to equal the ideal storage volume on the mainstem should this information be available. Yohe added that the RRBC's Flood Damage Reduction task force has been developing a project that would test various storage options and has \$50,000 committed to this effort.

Thul stated that the TAC also discussed the on-channel vs. off-channel storage issue. He noted that there is a negative political view of on-channel storage sites, however, due to the topography of some WD's this is the most feasible alternative.

Executive Director Report – Don Ogaard

A) Review Section 9 / Project Prioritization Worksheet

Ogaard stated that Section 9 of the Governing Documents includes a Project Prioritization Worksheet which shall be used by the board to determine the priority for funding of each proposed project. He explained that he developed criteria to be utilized in conjunction with the worksheet and distributed a draft of the Project Funding Evaluation form.

Manager Deal inquired whether the TAC has reviewed the draft. Thul responded that although he agreed with the numbers developed for the first draft, the TAC has not yet reviewed the document.

Motion by Manager Deal to discuss the draft Project Funding Evaluation form at the next board meeting following review by the TAC, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

B) On-stream Flood Damage Reduction Storage Issue

Ogaard stated the importance of the TSAC discussing the issue of on-stream storage. Manager Wilkens added that the RRBC is also addressing this issue and suggested that the two groups should coordinate their efforts in order to avoid duplication.

Charlie Anderson stated that the TSAC has not discussed this issue but would do so at the direction of the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group. He added that the success of the TSAC can be attributed, in part, to the fact that the process is not guided by the work group.

Ogaard inquired about the representation of the RRWMB on the TSAC. Anderson responded that he and Rick St. Germain currently represent the RRWMB.

C) Schedule Appointments for Visits with Individual WD's

Ogaard inquired about scheduling visits with the individual watershed districts with himself and Dick Nelson to discuss pertinent issues of the RRWMB. The following appointments were scheduled: Roseau River WD - June 4th, Two Rivers WD – June 4th, Sand Hill River WD – June 4th, Red Lake WD – June 13th, and the Bois de Sioux WD – July 18th.

D) FEMA Ditch Repair Claims Ruling

Ogaard noted the importance of individual member watershed districts proceeding in the same manner with regard to FEMA ditch repair claims. He stated that previously claims were contested by FEMA if work had been requested but funds were levied for maintenance.

E) Distribution of Annual Report

Ogaard stated that the 2001 Annual Report has been completed and copies can be picked up by the individual member watershed districts during the noon lunch break.

F) Ring Dike Allocation

Ogaard explained that \$250,000 was appropriated by the legislature for ring dike construction and the RRWMB should consider the cost share allocation at the July board meeting. Following discussion, the board requested Ogaard to poll the individual member watershed districts regarding the number of eligible ring dikes.

Motion by Manager Deal to authorize Don Ogaard to solicit proposals from member watershed districts for ring dike construction to utilize the legislative appropriation, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

G) Progress of Projects Funded with Legislative Funds

Ogaard explained that the next meeting of the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (RRBFDRWG) is scheduled for Thursday, May 30, 2002, in Detroit Lakes, MN. He stated that presentations will be conducted by each of the four watershed districts that received legislative funds for project construction. The work group will need to determine whether it is necessary to reallocate funds within the four projects in order to ensure that the funds will be expended. Following discussion, the board agreed that a meeting should be conducted with the four RRWMB representatives the evening before the work group meeting in order to discuss how to proceed.

Jerry Bennett, Administrator-Wild Rice WD, distributed a request to increase the original budget for the SAPP and overall plan update from \$368,223 to \$450,223, a total increase of \$82,000. In accordance with the original funding agreement the RRWMB share would be \$20,500, which represents a 25% cost share. The current completion date for the overall plan update is planned for the early part of 2003.

Jeff LeDoux, Houston Engineering, distributed a summary of the SAPP overruns. He explained that a significant portion of the cost overruns were due to incorporating comments of project team members which resulted in a number of revisions to the document. He added that the cost overruns include the completion of the overall plan update.

Dick Nelson inquired about the difference between conceptual comprehensive watershed management plans and the SAPP. Bennett responded that this question could best be answered by conducting a presentation of the SAPP. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to table discussion about the funding request for the SAPP until a presentation is conducted, **Seconded** by Manager Johnson, **Carried**.

Associate Director Report

N. Erickson reported that she attended the Funding Committee meeting of the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in St. Paul, MN on May 14, 2002. A proposed spending plan for FY 2003 was prepared and will be presented at the next work group meeting scheduled for May 30, 2002 in Detroit Lakes, MN. The proposed allocations for FY 2002 and FY 2003 are \$625,000 and \$650,000 respectively. A meeting with Paul Swenson and Dan Wilkens will be conducted prior to the RRBFDWRWG meeting scheduled for May 30th to discuss the status of FY 2000 and FY 2001 funds.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported that the Board of Managers reviewed the ERR/EA report received from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regarding the Hay Creek Project at the May board meeting and suggested minor changes to the document. The District will conduct a public informational meeting at the local town hall near the project.
- The Two Rivers WD reported that the Ross No. 7 Project is progressing through the project team. The natural resource benefits are being assessed and a plan for wetland restoration is being developed and will be presented to the Board of Managers. A field day is planned for June to assess wetlands, identify photo reference points, and discuss monitoring. Necessary permits will be applied for and obtained throughout the year.

The District is pursuing land purchases needed for the project. To date, 572 acres have been purchased. An additional 360 is currently being negotiated with interested landowners. Potentially, an additional 1,332 acres will be needed, for a total of 2,260 acres.

- The Middle River-Snake River WD reported on the status of the Public Law 566 Project. The bid opening for the railroad and roadway structures for Phase II of the project was conducted on May 14, 2002. Eight bids were received, six of which were within about 15% of the engineers estimate. The bids were for the installation of 5' rise x 10' span reinforced concrete box culverts at three locations and are part of the non-federal portion of the project.

The notice of award has been given to the low bidder on Phase II which is the off-channel floodwater storage structure. The low bidder is Riley Brothers Construction of Morris, Minnesota. The District is waiting for the executed contract documents to be returned. The pre-construction meeting was conducted on May 17, 2002. Construction is expected to begin the first part of June. Work on Phase I is also expected to resume in June.

- The Red Lake WD reported that the District received notice that the application for the Clean Water Partnership/Clean Water Act Section 319 grant for Glacial Ridge was approved. The U.S. Geological Survey anticipates starting work on the project in the very near future.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on the Lockhart Flood Storage Pilot Project. The Norman County SWCD and the District have been working to identify a potential seed source for the remaining acres that will require grass cover on the project. Carlson Prairie Seed Farm, Inc., has provided prices for a common native seed mixture that could be used for the upland and flooded areas. The District will be getting the final measurements for the number of acres that will need seeding in time for a spring planting date sometime during the early part of June.
- The Buffalo-Red River WD reported on the Clay County Ditch No. 59 Improvement/Lateral. Following the March 14, 2002 Preliminary Hearing, the Board of Managers directed Houston Engineering, Inc. to take a second look at their design. The project has been scaled down, substantially lowering costs and addressing outlet concerns. The second Preliminary Hearing has been scheduled for May 23, 2002.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that the Board of Managers has scheduled a special board meeting for Thursday, May 23, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. to review/approve an agreement with the North Ottawa town board regarding the North Ottawa Project. The Board will also review and advise the planning team and their writer on the direction of the comprehensive watershed management plan update.

Board of Water & Soil Resources Update

Manager Deal stated that BWSR committees are reviewing overall comprehensive watershed management plan updates. Matching grant proposals for LCMR grants are also being discussed. He added that the Tamarac watershed is in the process of being added to the Middle River-Snake River WD.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Wayne Goeken distributed a report regarding an update of the Water Quality Project Monitoring activities. He stated that site tours and monitoring plan development have occurred regarding the Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project and the Hay Creek Project. He added that monitoring of these projects is being coordinated with MPCA.

Monitoring activities for the North Ottawa and Moonshine Lake projects in the Bois de Sioux WD have also been reviewed with JOR Engineering. Coordination with MPCA includes the installation of automatic recording equipment to address TMDL, flood damage reduction, and other monitoring needs.

District's Funding Requests

1. Two Rivers WD / Ross No. 7 Project

A handout was distributed regarding a funding request for an additional \$200,000 from the RRWMB to aid in the timely purchase of land needed for the project. The estimated total cost share to be provided from the RRWMB is \$650,773. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to approve the additional \$200,000 funding request, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

2. **Middle River-Snake River WD / Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project**

Ron Adrian, Administrator, distributed a funding request for consideration. He explained that under established procedure, a funding request would be submitted after the approval of Step III, however, due to the approvals for the state portion of the project a request is being submitted to the RRWMB to approve payment as the project proceeds and that payment be made as funds are expended. With the current approvals for state funding through Phase I, this will amount to approximately 40% of the total estimated project cost or approximately \$406,000. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to approve the funding request through Phase I of the project, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

The next meeting will be on June 18, 2002, at 9:30 a.m. at the Sand Hill River Watershed District office, Fertile, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Farrell Erickson
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Associate Director