

# 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

September 17, 2002

Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, September 17, 2002, at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota.

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

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

Others present were: Don Ogaard, Executive Director  
Dick Nelson, Financial Coordinator  
Naomi Erickson, Associate Director  
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator  
Jerry Bennett, Administrator, Wild Rice WD  
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Middle River-Snake River WD  
Harry Farris, Administrator, Red Lake WD  
Harold Vig, Sand Hill River WD  
Jerry Bents, Engineer, Houston Engineering  
Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering  
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering  
Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD

No additional items were added to the agenda.

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

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. Manager Wilkens referred to a savings account which maintained a balance of ~ \$11.00 and explained that this amount represented an adjusting entry that had been made previously by the auditor. Wilkens recommended that another entry be made to eliminate this amount from the asset section of investments. **Motion** by Manager Nelson to write-off the amount of the adjusting entry that had been made by the auditor, **Seconded** by Richard Kuzel, **Carried**. **Motion** by Manager Nelson to approve the Treasurer's Report, **Seconded** by Manager Solberg, **Carried**. A one-page handout of monthly bills to be approved was distributed. **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Nelson, **Seconded**

by Manager Johnson, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

### **Report on Red River Basin Commission**

Manager Wilkens distributed a handout from the September 5, 2002 Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) meeting. Ogaard stated that the Communications Committee is planning the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Red River Basin Land and Water International Summit Conference which will be conducted in Winnipeg, MB.

### **Discussion on 2003 Funding for the Red River Basin Commission**

Manager Finney referred to the August minutes and explained that due to the withdrawal of the Buffalo-Red River WD from the RRWMB, a 24.7% decrease will occur in the \$100,000 forwarded from the RRWMB. He noted that a decision must be made whether the RRWMB will continue to fund the \$100,000 for Minnesota's portion, or less the amount of the 24.7% deficit due to the lack of tax levy funding received from the Buffalo-Red River WD. He added that the RRWMB is in the second year of a three-year contract with the RRBC.

**Motion** by Manager Erickson to obligate the RRWMB for \$75,000 to the RRBC for FY2003, **Seconded** by Richard Kuzel, **Carried**.

### **Report/Discussion from "Issues" Committee Meeting**

Manager Finney stated that a committee was established at the August meeting to address the concerns of the BRRWD. The following individuals agreed to be on the committee: Ron Osowski, Curt Nelson, Roger Ellefson, John Finney, Vernon Johnson, and Robert Wright.

Manager Finney stated that the committee had met and the main issues of concern of the BRRWD that were discussed included the personnel and project prioritization of the RRWMB. He noted his disappointment with the BRRWD that was unwilling to accept any concession from the RRWMB to keep from withdrawing its membership. Manager Johnson added that it was unfair of the BRRWD to withdraw from the RRWMB without giving the board a chance to address their issues of concern.

### **Report on the September 13<sup>th</sup> RRBFDROWG Meeting**

Ogaard stated that the policy committee met the evening prior to the regular meeting. Items discussed included project monitoring, activities of the TSAC, and the project team handbook currently being developed.

Ogaard distributed a letter that will be forwarded from the co-chairs of the RRBFDROWG which requests continued support from the state government to support flood damage reduction and natural resource enhancement efforts. He noted the importance of implementing projects in a timely manner in order to realize the 15-year goal outlined in the mediation agreement.

### **Financial Coordinator Report**

D. Nelson reported that a special session of the legislature has been scheduled for Thursday, September 19, 2002. He added that funding is extremely tight and that the leadership is very apprehensive about allowing any new items in the bill. He noted that the leadership would be changing as there are approximately 50 seats that are either new districts or open due to retirements.

D. Nelson stated that he would be meeting with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in the near future to further discuss flood damage initiatives in the Red River basin. He added that at this time the focus is on the Wild Rice and Roseau River watershed districts.

D. Nelson explained that he had been requested by Federal, State and local agencies to assist the City of Roseau with flood damage reduction initiatives. He stated that this is an opportunity to assist the local watershed district, the city, and the county to work together as a cohesive unit to reduce flooding. He added that his involvement also indicates recognition from agencies that they consider the RRWMB a leader in offering advice for these comprehensive efforts.

Ogaard stated that Dick Nelson's employment contract is up for renewal. He suggested that due to his upcoming retirement, the board may want to consider offering Dick Nelson an employee position rather than renewing his contract. He added that since Naomi Erickson and Dick Nelson will be assuming his duties after retirement, the board should decide how they would like to proceed with the transition.

**Motion** by Manager Wilkens that President Osowski appoint a committee (not to exceed four members) to address the human resources issues of the RRWMB relative to Don Ogaard's retirement, **Seconded** by Manager Solberg, **Carried**.

### **Red River Coordinator/TAC Report**

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met prior to the board meeting and discussed the LIDAR mapping initiatives in the Red River basin. He noted that at a previous monthly meeting, the TAC was directed by the board to discuss the types of mapping initiatives that would qualify for funding by the RRWMB. A handout was distributed from the Governing Documents relative to program funding which includes policy for funding imagery such as LIDAR mapping.

Manager Finney noted that at a previous monthly meeting the board directed the TAC to review the LIDAR mapping initiative of the Wild Rice WD that received funding approval from the RRWMB. The TAC was instructed to consider whether these types of initiatives should be considered for funding in the future. Following discussion, the board agreed that the mapping initiative of the Wild Rice WD would be considered a pilot project, with all future funding requests to be reviewed by the TAC to determine compliance with the Governing Documents prior to approval.

### **Executive Director Report** – Don Ogaard

#### **A) Report on MN/ND U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Meeting**

Ogaard stated that he attended a meeting conducted on September 10, 2002 which included discussion on stream gages. He noted that funding for a number of gaging stations has been eliminated, therefore, several will be closed.

#### **B) Member WD's Ring Dike Update**

Ogaard noted that a survey was forwarded to member watershed districts to conduct a needs assessment relative to the rural ring dike program in order to compile information for the upcoming special legislative session. He explained that although no funding is available at this time for this program, the number of ring dike requests received prior to the rainfall and flooding events occurring this summer as well as those received following the event is needed by Dick Nelson for the session.

**C) Concern with WD/PT Progress**

Ogaard noted that the RRBFDWRWG is very concerned with the limited number of projects moving forward in the individual watershed districts. He referred to the letter that was discussed previously regarding this issue.

**D) March Conference**

Ogaard suggested that watershed district managers and project team members conduct a mini-conference prior to the regular March Conference to address problems that have occurred relative to project development. Following discussion, the board agreed to discuss scheduling a meeting with watershed district managers and project team members in November at the next RRBFDWRWG meeting scheduled for October 30, 2002.

**E) Administrator's Meeting**

A handout was distributed highlighting the Administrator's meeting conducted on July 29, 2002. Items discussed at the meeting included parts of the mediation process that are frustrating, positive outcomes as a result of the process, and how to move forward.

**Associate Director Report**

N. Erickson reported that a rate survey was conducted to obtain rate quotes regarding the two investments that matured during the past month. Rates varied from 1.74% to 2.92%. The original quotes obtained for the investments that matured were as follows: 2.82% for \$250,000, and 2.50% for \$500,000. By conducting the rate survey, both financial institutions holding the CD's agreed to match the highest rate obtained of 2.92% which allowed for an increase in investment income of \$2,350 over a 12 month period.

N. Erickson stated that she met with Don Ogaard and Dick Nelson on September 12, 2002, in Ada, MN to discuss pertinent issues of the RRWMB including the transition associated with Don's retirement. Dick Nelson requested that a letter be distributed to the member watershed districts inquiring about a needs assessment of the rural ring dike program.

N. Erickson reported that she attended the RRBFDWRWG meeting conducted on September 13, 2002 at the Northland Inn, Crookston, MN. Status reports on the North Ottawa Impoundment Project, Agassiz Valley Water Management Project, and the USACE feasibility study of the Wild Rice WD were distributed. Jody Horntvedt reviewed a draft Project Team Handbook. A status report on the comprehensive watershed management plan update for the Two Rivers WD was conducted by Dan Money. The next work group meeting is scheduled for October 30, 2002 in Detroit Lakes, MN.

**Water Quality Project Monitoring Report**

The project monitoring monthly report was distributed. Primary activity continues to be monitoring of sites throughout the Minnesota portion of the Red River basin. In addition to the field monitoring and mailing of

samples to certified labs, project staff also maintains a computerized database of sampling results. Reports and analysis derived from this database have been provided to watershed districts, SWCDs, and local schools as a means of promoting greater understanding and awareness of monitoring results.

### **District Reports**

- The Two Rivers WD reported on the status of the Nereson Project. The sub-contractor has completed roughing in the dike related to the construction of the sub-impoundment. The work was begun in 1991, however, due to the continued wet cycle was unable to be completed until recently. The remaining work involves finishing dike construction. Bids are scheduled to be let for the emergency spillway, wildlife weir, and sub-impoundment outlet structures. The project is expected to be completed sometime next year.
- The Middle River-Snake River WD reported that the petition of the Marshall County Board of Commissioners to enlarge the District by adding the Tamarac watershed has been granted by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. The name of the District has been changed to the "Middle, Snake, and Tamarac Rivers Watershed District," however the previous name will be used until the Board of Managers is re-organized following the appointment by Marshall County of two additional managers.
- The Red Lake WD reported on the Parnell Impoundment Operating Plan. The Board of Managers passed the motion to proceed with Alternative No. 3 (with modifications) and authorized the Final Engineering Plan for the Parnell Impoundment Operating Plan. The plan will provide equal protection to both the South and West of the impoundment. It is anticipated that construction on the modifications to the impoundment will begin in spring 2003.
- The Sand Hill River WD reported on the Polk County No. 41 Rebuild project. The District conducted an informational meeting on August 21, 2002 with Richard Sanders, Polk County Highway Department Engineer, who discussed the available options with the landowners. It was agreed that a petition for improvement should be started immediately. A steering committee has been developed and will meet with Kurt Deter, attorney-Rinke Noonan, to develop a plan of action.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on the Lockhart Flood Storage Pilot Project. Repair items needed to finalize the project have been provided to the NRCS/FSA for review and comment. The seeding completed prior to the June summer storms was damaged and current plans are to re-seed these areas in the spring of 2003. FEMA inspections will be conducted for possible Federal assistance to repair flood damages on the project. The project team will be considering details of a monitoring and operating plan to provide consistency with the mediation agreement.
- The Buffalo-Red River WD reported on the Whiskey Creek tributaries study. An informational meeting was conducted on 8/22/02 with the landowners to review the concepts of the project team. None of the landowners in attendance expressed opposition to the proposed plan. At the 8/29/02 project team meeting, the team members signed the consent form to approve the project. The District plans to begin acquisition of the necessary easement options later this fall. The RRWMB and the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group will be approached in the near future for funding. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2003.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported on the reported on the North Ottawa Impoundment Project. The Board of Managers will discuss whether they will petition for the lateral realignments regarding the construction of the impoundment. Should the board decide to act as the petitioner, a hearing will be scheduled and published as soon as possible in order for some of the work to be completed this fall.

**District's Funding Requests**

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

The Board of Managers discussed changing the next regular monthly meeting from the third Tuesday of the month to the fourth Tuesday to allow for the completion of harvest. Motion by Manager Wilkens to reschedule the regular monthly meeting of the RRWMB for October 22, 2002, at 9:30 a.m. in the City Council Chambers, Warren, Minnesota, Seconded by Manager Erickson, Carried.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Farrell Erickson  
Secretary

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Naomi L. Erickson  
Associate Director