

Red River Watershed Management Board

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Board of Managers

John Finney, President-Humboldt Farrell Erickson, Vice Pres.-Badger Dan Money-Hallock Ron Osowski-Oslo
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Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

March 16, 2004

Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, March 16, 2004, at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

Chairman John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were: Farrell Erickson Dan Money
Ron Osowski Vernon Johnson
Daniel Wilkens Robert Wright
Jerome Deal

Others present were: Naomi Erickson, Administrator
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Ron Adrian, Administrator, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD
Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office
Dale M. Nelson, Red Lake WD
Alvin Nybladh, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD
Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering
Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, RRBC

An additional item was added to the agenda. Manager Deal requested adding an update on the revisions to the Governing Documents publication under item no. 12.

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

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Johnson to approve the Treasurer's Report, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**. A one-page handout of monthly bills to be approved was distributed. **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Erickson, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Northwest Minnesota Foundation

Jim Steenerson, Grants Specialist-Northwest Minnesota Foundation (NMF), discussed the Natural Resource Program Grant initiative adopted in 2003. The NMF adopted new initiatives in 2003 to help develop the region's natural, social, structural and economic assets through business financing, training, philanthropic services and grant making.

The Natural Resource Program is designed to address two priorities:

1. Research leading to the development of new strategies and/or technologies that adds value to local resources, including agricultural and forest products.
2. Promoting the sustainable use and preservation of the natural resource base.

The NMF is interested in receiving proposals that would address the above-mentioned priorities. For more information regarding the available grant programs, please visit www.nwmf.org.

Financial Coordinator Report

In the absence of D. Nelson, a handout was distributed on his behalf. The report discussed the bonding bill for flood damage reduction initiatives. The bill has passed the House Environment Committee and was also presented to the Capital Investment Committee. On the Senate side, the Environment Committee ranked their choices of bills to be passed. The report stated that D. Nelson is confident of the board's position as the Senate has typically been very supportive of flood damage reduction initiatives.

The projected \$160 million shortfall in the budget balance is being reviewed by both the House and Senate. The Governor developed a proposal which could affect Flood Damage Reduction and Ring Dike funds. Funds that have been committed but not yet expended could pose a problem as they are considered unused funds.

The MAWD Board of Directors prioritized increasing the board manager per diem from \$55 to \$75 during this session. This issue was unable to move forward this year, but could have better support next year.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

At the previous monthly meeting, the board authorized forwarding a revised letter of support to legislators regarding CREP. Manager Wilkens reviewed the draft letter and explained that the purpose of forwarding the letter was to explain the board's position on the issue of permanent easements. Maynard Pick noted that since changes occur almost on the hour it is difficult to keep informed on the status of the initiative. **Motion** by Manager Deal to table the issue of forwarding a revised letter of support, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met prior to the board meeting. The potential changes to the streamflow monitoring network were discussed. The changes relate to the Buffalo-Red River WD no longer being a member of the RRWMB and also the redistribution of funding sources. Thul noted that he would contact James Fallon, USGS Supervisory Hydrologist, to discuss the changes of the funding source redistribution.

The TAC discussed the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) modeling effort. A MIKE 11 model and HEC RAS model have been developed. Anderson added that the RRWMB will be issued a license to use the MIKE 11 model. Thul added that the MIKE 11 model is a better planning tool for the Red River Basin than the HEC RAS model. Following discussion, the board agreed that as chairman of the TAC, Dan Thul should be responsible for distributing the license for the MIKE 11 model and keeping track of the part used in conjunction with the program.

The issue of tile drainage was discussed by the TAC. Anderson stated that he has had discussions with representatives from the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and the Minnesota Extension Service regarding tiling. Although most of the design standards were developed in the southwestern part of the state, tiling is becoming popular in the Red River Basin. The TAC determined that it would be beneficial to conduct a forum to discuss the guidelines that should be developed with regard to tiling in the northwestern part of the state. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize the TAC to contact BWSR to discuss initiating a forum relative to tile drainage in the Red River Basin, **Seconded** by Manager Wright, **Carried**.

Thul reported that the DNR has completed a survey of Minnesota agricultural levies in the basin. The survey was directed at addressing concerns that certain portions of the levies were not in compliance. The profiles prepared in conjunction with the survey will be distributed to the affected watershed districts.

Red River Basin Commission

Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator-RRBC, distributed activity reports for the various centers including leadership, partnership, communications, technical resource and outreach. She added that planning is underway for the 22nd Annual Conference. A committee is being formed and will begin meeting in the next couple of months. Since no space is large enough to host the conference in Grand Forks, ND, the board will need to decide between holding the conference in Fargo or Winnipeg.

Administrator Report

A) Webpage Update

N. Erickson stated that the independent contractor continues working on updating the RRWMB website. Following the board meeting, photos will be taken of the board members to be included on the website.

B) Cedars Program

N. Erickson explained that a representative from Marshall Bank, N.A. contacted her regarding a national program that allows rural banks to extend FDIC insurance for invested funds. A quote would be obtained from the respective bank with the funds transferred from the RRWMB account to the bank in question. The bank would then invest the RRWMB funds in excess of \$100,000 with other banks to avoid having to obtain pledged collateral. The change would involve significantly less paperwork for both the RRWMB and the respective bank.

C) Water Quality Project Monitoring Program

N. Erickson explained that a commitment was made at the September 16, 2003 board meeting to authorize the RRWMB to continue funding the Water Quality Project Monitoring Program in the interim through December 2003. At that time, another funding commitment was discussed for calendar year 2004 which included obtaining funding through MPCA of \$100,000 with the RRWMB contributing ~ \$50,000 of the proposed \$150,000 annual budget. Although this issue was discussed the board did not officially move to

authorize this proposal. The funding package was secured from MPCA for \$100,000 for calendar year 2004. **Motion** by Manager Money to authorize the \$50,000 funding commitment for calendar year 2004, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

D) Computer Purchase

N. Erickson stated that approval was obtained at the previous monthly meeting to purchase a new desktop computer for the RRWMB office. A Dell Dimension 4600 Series (Pentium 4 Processor with 3.4GHz.) was ordered and delivered to the RRWMB office and installed by the computer consultant. The computer that was replaced was delivered to Thief River Falls to be used by Vernon Johnson during his term as a board member.

A committee was also established at the previous monthly meeting to obtain cost estimates for purchasing or leasing a new photocopier and/or printer. The committee agreed to buy-out the old lease of the previous copier and purchase a new color copier that also functions as a fax, scanner, and printer.

E) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. Funding Committee, April 14, 2004, Alexandria Airport Terminal, Alexandria, MN.
2. Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, April 22, 2004, Detroit Lakes, MN.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported that a revised preliminary engineering report for the proposed West Intercept project was presented at a special meeting of the Board of Managers in January. A viewer's report has been submitted to the board for their review at the April board meeting.
- The Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD reported on the status of the Public Law 566 project. The bids for culverts on Minnesota Trunk Highway No. 75 are scheduled to be opened on March 30th. The bids for the remaining portions of Phase 3 which is primarily the Floodway Channel upstream of Highway No. 75 are scheduled to be opened on April 6th. The District is currently working with the Canadian Pacific (Soo Line) Railroad and MnDOT concerning the structure under Trunk Highway No. 1. It is expected that the work on Phase 2 (Off Channel Floodwater Storage Site) and the crossings will be completed this summer/fall and the work on the Floodway will be completed next summer.
- The Red Lake WD reported that Myron Jesme-Administrator, and Nate Dalager-HDR Engineering appeared before the House and Senate bonding committees on February 24th regarding future funding for the Grand Marais Watershed (Project No. 60) project. Land acquisition is progressing well at this point, with options drafted for 7 of the 9 affected landowners.
- The Sand Hill River WD reported on the Union Lake Flood Control and Erosion project. Jim Larsen-District Engineer is developing plans and cost estimates for the project. The project is designed to eliminate erosion going directly into the lake. The design includes two small dams for sedimentation and a cable concrete channel to bring water into the lake. The project team is also considering land treatment measures upstream.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on the Heiberg Dam. The Board of Managers approved proceeding with planning for the repairs needed to the dam with restrictions being placed on the project by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The project was damaged during the 2002 summer flood with the Wild Rice River breaking out north of the dam finding a new route to the north and into the Mashaug Creek.

In a letter from the DNR, the restrictions are related to the crest elevation of the dam indicating that the 994 elevation, which is six feet below the current crest, would be permitted. "It is unlikely that designs with higher crest would be permitted," the DNR letter states.

The Board consensus was that the best option is a repair that includes the notch in the dam and rock structure to allow fish passage, as well as building concrete structures designed to break ice as they cascade over the crest. The next step will be to complete the preliminary planning for a project design that can receive a DNR permit and be eligible for FEMA funding assistance.

- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that two appeals have been received regarding the North Ottawa project. One appeal is from the North Ottawa Township Board and the other from a group of landowners. Unfortunately, the appeals will delay construction activities.

North Ottawa Project

Manager Deal reported that appeals have been received regarding the North Ottawa project from the North Ottawa Township Board and a group of landowners. He explained that the mediation process is being challenged in the lawsuits and requested that the board consider assisting the Bois de Sioux WD in the litigation process. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize the board to obtain the services of an attorney to assist the legal counsel of the Bois de Sioux WD in the appeal process regarding the North Ottawa project, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

Governing Documents

Manager Deal stated that a summary of the revisions suggested by the Transition Team was distributed at a previous board meeting. At that time, the board agreed that any comments on the revisions should be forwarded to N. Erickson. Since no comments have been received, the board agreed that the proposed revisions should be implemented to the Governing Documents publication and distributed to the list of recipients.

Motion by Manager Deal to approve the proposed revisions to the Governing Documents publication, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

District's Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

The next meeting will be on April 20, 2004, at 9:30 a.m. at the Wild Rice Watershed District office, Ada, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator