

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

December 20, 2005

Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, December 20, 2005, at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota.

Chairman John Finney called the meeting to order.

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

Others present were: Naomi Erickson, Administrator
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Don Buckhout, MNDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
Jerry Bents, Engineer, Houston Engineering
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD
Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering
Blake Carlson, Engineer, JOR Engineering
Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering
Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD
Jerry Bennett, JB & Associates
Paul Swenson, MNDNR Regional Director
Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office
Jim Skaurud, Wild Rice WD

No additional items were added to the agenda.

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

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Erickson 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 Johnson, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Financial Coordinator Report

In the absence of D. Nelson, Manager Finney reported that he has discussed the upcoming legislative session with Ray Bohn of the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) who offered to assist the board in the interim. Manager Finney added that Mr. Bohn requested that each watershed district that is seeking funding during this legislative session develop a one-page summary including a project description and also what will be accomplished during the bonding session and forward to the RRWMB office by January 10th.

Manager Finney inquired as to the level of interest received by member watershed districts regarding participation in the CREP II program. Manager Deal responded that the Board of Water & Soil Resources has had conversations with John Munson, USDA legal counsel, relative to the promotion of CREP II. Deal stated that although different interpretations of the law have been discussed, should CREP II not be feasible to implement, the funds would be transferred to other projects with similar goals.

Administrator Report

A) Agassiz Valley Water Management Project Litigation

N. Erickson reported that she continues to work with legal counsel in preparing responses relative to correspondence received from opponents of the above-mentioned project.

B) Stream Gaging Program

The cost share payments for USGS Stream Gages for last year's and this year's contracts have been forwarded to the member watershed districts for reimbursement. The individual cost share responsibilities are listed below.

	<u>Amount Due</u> <u>2004-2005</u>	<u>Amount Due</u> <u>2005-2006</u>
Red Lake	\$7,800.00	\$ 8,697.50
Wild Rice	\$8,650.00	\$ 8,947.50
Middle-Snake-Tamarac	\$3,437.50	\$ 3,542.50
Two Rivers	\$1,625.00	\$ 1,677.50
Sand Hill River	\$2,985.00	\$ 2,452.50
Roseau River	\$9,825.00	\$10,140.00

C) Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group

The Funding Committee of the Work Group met on December 2, 2005, in Alexandria, MN. Items addressed at the meeting included the following:

- Limit on Project Team Expense Reimbursement
The committee will recommend to the FDRWG that the current cap of \$10,000 per district (\$5000 admin/\$5000 alt. analysis) be raised to \$15,000 per district (\$7500 admin/\$7500 alt. analysis) for FY 2006. It was also acknowledged that RRWMB member districts will be eligible for an additional \$5,000 in project team support from the Red Board.
- Flood Damage Reduction Bonding Money
Buckhout reported that requests for DNR FDR bonding money will be given greater scrutiny in the future. Kent Lokkesmoe has indicated that he will be granting construction money after the land rights have been obtained by the proposer. There was general discussion of how to make reasonable project

funding requests for capital bonding money based on what can actually be accomplished each bonding cycle. The committee asked to have Kent attend the next FDRWG meeting to discuss this issue further.

D) Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD)

The MAWD 35th Annual Meeting and Trade Show was conducted on December 1-3, 2005, at the Arrowwood Resort and Conference Center, Alexandria, MN. The buffet luncheon featured speaker Dr. Mark Seeley, University of Minnesota Extension Climatologist, discussing climate trends and implications.

E) Vacation Accrual

The unused vacation days for Naomi Erickson, Wayne Goeken and Danni Halvorson have been calculated for calendar year 2005. Wayne Goeken had no unused vacation days for 2005. The unused vacation paid out for N. Erickson and D. Halvorson was \$2,229.57 and \$1,313.14 respectively.

F) Annual Report

The 2004 Annual Report has been prepared and copies are available at the close of today's meeting.

Discussion occurred relative to the preparation of an annual audit for the board. At the December 21, 2004 board meeting, Mark Hatton, Dahl, Hatton, Muir & Reese discussed the Independent Accountant's Report on Applying Agreed-Upon Procedures that had been developed previously for the board. These procedures consist of confirming cash balances and collateral for deposits, reviewing minutes, ensuring naming financial institutions and election of officers, and reviewing disbursements. Although performing an audit for the board would consist of procedures that would be wider in scope including random sampling, the board agreed at that time to conduct an annual audit once every five years beginning in 2005.

Following further discussion, the board agreed that an annual audit should be conducted each year. **Motion** by Manager Johnson to conduct an annual audit of the board, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

G) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. 23rd Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Conference, January 11-13, 2006, The Fort Garry Hotel, Winnipeg, MB.
2. Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, February 1, 2006, Northland Inn, Crookston.
3. March Conference, Thursday, March 30, 2006, Northland Inn, Crookston, MN.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported that a special meeting was conducted with JOR Engineering regarding timelines for projects that are currently progressing in the district. Timelines were established for the various projects.
- The Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD reported on the Public Law 566 (Snake River Watershed) project. Construction on Phase 3B continues with the floodway channel complete and the rock and sheet piling in place. The floodway should be in operation for the spring runoff in 2006. Wetland mitigation on the Off-Channel Storage Site continues.
- The Red Lake WD reported on the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan update. Copies of the "Draft 10-year Overall Plan" have been submitted to various parties for comment. All comments should be forwarded to the Board of Water & Soil Resources by February 17, 2006.

- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that at the December board meeting, the board approved a redetermination of benefits petition and appointed viewers for Judicial Ditch No. 14 (Mustinka River System). This petition will be the largest viewing process undertaken by the district, and is anticipated to take two to three years to complete. The drainage area of the system is 792 square miles.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Wayne Goeken- Monitoring Coordinator reported that field and lab data from the 2005 monitoring season is nearly all entered. Quality control data has also been entered to be used to assess whether quality control objectives have been met for the 2005 sampling season.

Manager Wilkens added that job performance reviews as well as revising pay scales to more closely resemble similar positions in MPCA have been conducted for the positions of Water Quality Monitoring Coordinator and Water Quality Monitoring Specialist. Cost of living adjustments as well as merit increases will be implemented as of January 1, 2006.

Manager Wilkens suggested that the board should consider conducting a review of the Personnel Manual. The following managers volunteered to serve on the committee to review the manual: Managers Finney, Erickson, Deal, and Wilkens.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met prior to the board meeting and discussed developing guidelines for culvert sizing within the member watershed districts. He noted that guidelines could provide uniformity and consistency throughout the basin.

Thul reported that the TAC has been reviewing a travel time map, with assistance from Jim Solstad-MNDNR, in order to develop a runoff hydrograph which does not provide for storage. The goal is to determine the runoff hydrograph for the Red River in an effort to apply the Star Value method.

Thul stated that Jerry Bents discussed the revised draft of the timeline/checklist that is currently under development by the TAC for member watershed districts regarding project implementation. The draft timeline requires that a project schedule be developed and/or updated and submitted along with each step application to the board. The draft was distributed to the board for review. **Motion** by Manager Deal to adopt the December 20th version of the *Project Schedule and Reporting Procedures* document, **Seconded** by Manager Wright, **Carried**.

The board requested Jerry Bents to forward a copy of the document to N. Erickson for distribution to the member watershed districts.

Project Management: Mead & Hunt

Jim Borg, Arie DeWaal, Perry Rossa, and Bryan Ripp with Mead & Hunt, discussed the services their firm provides relative to environmental and water resources capabilities. Their firm has offices located in California,

Michigan, Minnesota, Oregon, and Wisconsin, as well as project offices throughout the country. Their firm is also available to put an experienced project team on location.

Following discussion, the board distributed their annual report, and requested N. Erickson to forward a copy of the mediation agreement to their firm in order for them to become more familiar with projects that have been implemented or are progressing in the member watershed districts.

Janette Monear, Director of Outreach Programs with Tree Trust, distributed a handout titled *Green Spaces, Clean Waters* that included ideas for improving water quality.

USACE Regulatory Branch Position

Don Buckhout, MNDNR, discussed the possibility of the board sponsoring a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulatory branch position to work with the project teams in the Red River Basin. He explained that he had previously discussed the possibility of receiving RRWMB funding for the new position with Robert Whiting, USACE Branch Chief, St. Paul District. Following discussion, the board determined that they would like the opportunity to discuss the issue with Robert Whiting at the next monthly meeting. Don Buckhout agreed to contact Mr. Whiting to forward an invitation.

District's Funding Requests

1. Red Lake WD / Project No. 60 – Grand Marais Project

Myron Jesme, Administrator, discussed receiving an advance payment from the board for land acquisition for the above-mentioned project. The Step II submittal was approved by the board at the June 21, 2005 board meeting which authorized funding in the amount of \$1,929,694.

Motion by Manager Wilkens to authorize the funding request of \$500,000 which represents an advance payment for the Project No. 60 – Grand Marais Project, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

The next meeting will be on January 17, 2006, at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator