

Red River Watershed Management Board

PO Box 763 Detroit Lakes, MN 56502-0763 Phone: (218)844-6166, Fax: (218)844-6167

Board of Managers

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Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

December 19, 2006

Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, December 19, 2006, at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota.

Chairman John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were: Farrell Erickson Dan Money
Orville Knott Daniel Wilkens
Robert Wright Jerome Deal

Others present were: Naomi Erickson, Administrator
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office
Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD
Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
Steve Dalen, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD
Jim Skaurud, Wild Rice WD
Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, RRBC
Roger Hanson, Sand Hill River WD
Joe Belford, Ramsey County Commissioner
Don Buckhout, MNDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD

Manager Finney requested that the Devils Lake update be added to the agenda under *Other Issues*.

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

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

Red River Basin Commission

Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator – RRBC, referred to the 24th Annual Summit Conference scheduled for Tuesday, January 23 – Thursday, January 25, 2007 at the Ramada Plaza Suites, Fargo, ND. She stated that a nomination form was forwarded to the RRWMB requesting assistance with regard to recognizing the PL 566 Project of the Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD. The flood diversion channel, a component of the project which routes floodwaters of the Snake River around Warren, has been named the Richard P. Nelson Floodway in the late Mayor's honor. Following discussion, the board directed N. Erickson to complete the nomination form for the PL 566 Project and submit it to the RRBC for consideration.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

In the absence of Wayne Goeken, the project monitoring monthly report was distributed. Notification was received regarding the MPCA Surface Water Assessment Grant for a monitoring proposal of \$252,000. The proposal did not score high enough to receive funding. A total of 41 requests were submitted for \$2.8 million of the \$1,010,000 that was available to be awarded. Other available resources will be reviewed to address common monitoring needs in the basin.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul noted the Technical Advisory Committee's (TAC) concern relative to the TMDL permitting restrictions addressed by Nate Dalager-HDR Engineering, Inc. and Jim Ziegler-MPCA at the previously monthly meeting. Following discussion, the board agreed to suggest to the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group that this issue be addressed at the upcoming March Conference. Don Buckhout agreed to coordinate with Dan Thul with regard to obtaining Brad Moore, recently named Commissioner of the MPCA, to attend the conference to discuss TMDL permitting restrictions.

Ring Dike Needs Assessment

N. Erickson stated that a memo was distributed requesting each member district to compile a list of ring dikes remaining to be constructed in their district. Cost estimates and numbers of both applications on hand and potential eligible applicants were requested to be forwarded no later than January 9, 2007. The goal is to provide the legislature with a total number of ring dikes remaining to be constructed over the next two years.

Administrator Report

A) Legislative Briefing

N. Erickson reported that at the November board meeting, the Board authorized sponsoring a legislative briefing scheduled in St. Paul on January 16, 2007 in conjunction with the January RRWMB board meeting and also the Work Group meeting scheduled for the following day.

The RRWMB meeting has been scheduled for January 16, 2007 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the St. Anthony Room at the Kelly Inn, St. Paul, MN. The legislative briefing will be conducted in the Buffington/Gilbert Room at the Kelly Inn following the RRWMB meeting and begin with a brief social at 5:30 p.m. with a buffet dinner at 6:00 p.m. The evening program is expected to conclude by 8:00 p.m.

B) Vacation Accrual

The unused vacation days for Naomi Erickson, Wayne Goeken and Danni Halvorson have been calculated for calendar year 2006. Wayne Goeken elected to carry over his unused vacation days (4) to 2007. The unused vacation paid out for N. Erickson and D. Halvorson was \$2,334.27 and \$990.56 respectively.

C) Governing Documents / Draft Amendment to Funding Procedures

A draft amendment to Section 4, Application Procedures for Funding Flood Damage Reduction Projects and Related Programs was prepared by Smith Partners and distributed at the November board meeting.

The amendment provides explicit authorization to the board's procedures for providing loans to member watershed districts. The Board inquired about the voting requirement (three-fourths majority) of the amendment and requested clarification from Louis Smith, Smith Partners.

N. Erickson stated that she discussed the amendment with Mr. Smith who forwarded a response with regard to the voting requirements for the amendment. Mr. Smith indicated that the proposed amendment to the funding procedures could appropriately require either a two-thirds majority or a three-fourths majority vote. The Joint Powers Agreement imposes a stricter voting requirement for approving a project (three-fourths vote) than it does for disbursing funds for projects or operating expenses (two-thirds vote). **Motion** by Manager Erickson to authorize the draft amendment to Section 4, Application Procedures for Funding Flood Damage Reduction Projects and Related Programs utilizing the two-thirds majority voting criteria, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

D) ADA Meeting

The Association of District Administrators (ADA) conducted a meeting in conjunction with the MAWD Annual Meeting on Thursday, November 30, 2006 at the Radisson Arrowwood, Alexandria, MN.

Representatives of TeamWorks International, Inc. introduced strategic thinking and adaptive strategy development concepts and provided an overview of the processes used to develop a strategic communications plan and its implementation. The objective of this meeting was to identify the key messages that would apply to all watershed districts.

E) Public Information Committee

The Public Information Committee met following the ADA meeting on November 30, 2006. The committee agreed to invite a representative from TeamWorks International, Inc. to conduct a presentation regarding the development of a strategic approach for an effective communication plan at the January 16, 2007 board meeting in St. Paul, MN.

F) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, January 17, 2007, Orville Freeman Agriculture Building, St. Paul, MN.
2. 24th Annual Summit Conference – “Ripple Effect: Working Today for a Better Tomorrow,” Tuesday, January 23 – Thursday, January 25, 2007 at the Ramada Plaza Suites, Fargo, ND.
3. March Conference, Thursday, March 29, 2007, Northland Inn, Crookston, MN.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported that the west interceptor is currently finished as of the end of November. Gladen Construction was the primary contractor on the job. The Board of Managers were pleased with the performance and capabilities of the construction firm. The contractors will return next summer to close out the contract.
- The Two Rivers WD reported that the final plans and specifications for all facets of the Ross No. 7 project, including outlet structure, main dike, ridge dike, ring dikes, emergency spillway, inlet ditch, and other items are scheduled to be submitted to the District by JOR Engineering, Inc. by January 1, 2007. The District plans to advertise for bids in January and hold a bid letting in mid February. Once the bids are opened the District will be able to determine if any cost overruns will occur, and to what extent.

The District is negotiating with one landowner to secure land rights on 14 acres. All other parcels have either been purchased outright or a permanent easement has been purchased. If negotiations are not favorable with the final landowner, the board has authorized its attorney to obtain the parcel through eminent domain.

All permits have been secured with the exception of the DNR dam safety permit and the MPCA's NPDES permit. Construction will get underway as soon as conditions allow in the spring and once all permits have been obtained and land rights secured.

- The Red Lake WD reported on RLWD Ditch No. 11, Project No. 166. The bid opening for the Improvement of 6 ¼ miles of Polk County Ditch No. 40 was held on October 12, 2006 at the District office. Low bidder for the project was R.J. Zavoral and Sons from East Grand Forks, MN. Twelve bids were submitted for the project ranging from \$499,802.26 to \$869,438.28, with an Engineer's Estimate of \$549,983.90.

The 30-day review period for the SWPPP ended on November 16, 2006 and the District has received the MPCA General Storm Water Permit. As described in the SWPPP, construction on the project will be divided into three phases. Construction on phase 1 started on November 21, 2006 and included the excavation of 4 miles of channel along with dormant seeding. To date, phase 1 has been completed and construction has ended for the year. The District plans to begin phase 2 of the project early summer of 2007 with construction being completed by mid summer.

- The Sand Hill River WD reported on Project No. 17. Kern and Tabery have completed the project except for some minor work and grass seeding in the spring. The seeding that has been completed looks promising. The Board of Managers are very pleased with the project outcome.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported on the North Ottawa project. In the coming months, the District plans to develop the specifications for the next phase of the project. The goal is to build an operable project incorporating as many of the planned features as possible with the amount of funding that is anticipated to be available. Due to the lack of funding from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the natural resource enhancement features incorporated into the project will be limited.

Devils Lake Update

Joe Belford, Ramsey County Commissioner, reported on the status of Devils Lake. The Devils Lake Basin is a 3,810 square mile sub basin of the Red River of the North. To date, over \$600 million has been spent on flood protection efforts.

At an elevation of about 1,447 ft asl, Devils Lake begins to spill into Stump Lake; and at an elevation of about 1,459 ft asl the combined lakes begin to spill through Tolna Coulee into the Sheyenne River (a tributary of the Red River).

Once Stump Lake rises to the same elevation as Devils Lake, the lakes will rise together until reaching about 1,459 feet amsl (above mean sea level) and then will overflow into the Sheyenne and Red Rivers. The outlet will pump out of the lake over a 14-mile stretch of land, to the Sheyenne River with water flowing through a series of open canals and pipes. The outlet permit has several restrictions which include the state may only pump water from May through November, and must stop when the lake recedes to 1,445 feet asl.

District's Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

Legislative Briefing

Don Buckhout, MDNR, stated that he has been working with N. Erickson with regard to distributing invitations to legislators for the briefing scheduled for January 16, 2007 following the regular monthly meeting of the RRWMB. He added that he and Ray Bohn are also planning to schedule a meeting just prior to the legislative briefing with various agriculture groups to provide project updates.

The next meeting will be on January 16, 2007, at 1:00 p.m. at the Kelly Inn, St. Paul, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator