



Red River Watershed Management Board

Board of Managers

John Finney, President-Humboldt Steve Lee-Badger Dan Money-Hallock Ron Osowski-Oslo
Orville Knott, Vice President-Red Lake Falls Daniel Wilkens, Treasurer-Fertile Robert Wright, Secretary-Felton Jerome Deal-Wheaton
Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

November 20, 2007

Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, November 20, 2007, at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota.

Chairman John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

Steve Lee	Dan Money
Ron Osowski	Arnold Stanley
Daniel Wilkens	Robert Wright
Jerome Deal	

Others present were:

- Naomi Erickson, Administrator
- Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
- Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD
- Steve Dalen, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
- Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering, Inc.
- Maynard Pick, Congressman Peterson's office
- Brian Dwight, Watershed Specialist, BWSR
- Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator
- Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
- Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute

No additional items were added to the agenda.

Motion by Manager Deal to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as written, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

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

Basin-wide Digital Elevation Model

Charles Fritz, Director-International Water Institute (IWI), discussed the basin-wide Digital Elevation Model (DEM) initiative. The Request for Proposals (RFP) have been distributed to over 55 vendors/firms (the RFP is also available in the IWI website).

Fritz added that a non-federal match of \$500,000 is required to secure funding commitments. Funding of \$575,000 will be sought from the Minnesota Legislature during the next session. Following discussion, the board agreed to forward a letter to William Hunt, State Conservationist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), requesting a match for the North Dakota funding commitment.

Project Coordinator Report

Harnack distributed a draft letter to Congressman Oberstar relative to the proposed Clean Water Act amendment. The letter stated how the proposed amendment could impact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) permitting process. Following discussion, the board directed N. Erickson to finalize the letter in conjunction with R. Harnack. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize forwarding the letter to Congressman Oberstar, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

Harnack reported that he completed a review of the consolidated conservation lands recommendation by the hearing examiner. The Board of Managers requested N. Erickson to invite Mike Carroll, MNDNR-Regional Director, to a future board meeting to discuss the changes.

Harnack discussed the legislative funding priorities for the upcoming session. He reported that the following watershed districts will be seeking construction funding in next year's bonding cycle: Red Lake WD - Grand Marais Restoration; and Wild Rice WD – Felton Ditch.

Harnack stated that all the funding from the last appropriation for the Farmstead Ring Dike Program has been allocated to the watershed districts. He explained that special language allowed spending next year's funding during the current year. He requested each member watershed district to forward an updated list of the remaining ring dikes to be constructed prior to the December board meeting.

A copy of the House File No. 2536 authored by Lanning, Hansen, Ozment, Eken and McNamara was distributed. The legislation relates to the establishment of river basin authorities throughout the state, similar to the RRWMB. The Board of Managers agreed to further discuss this issue at the next board meeting.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met prior to the board meeting and discussed reevaluating the Star Value method. A summary of the discussion will be prepared for review at the next board meeting.

The TAC discussed the Red Lake WD's tile study with Nate Dalager. He reported that in 2006 there was minimal outflow from the tile systems. In 2007, no measurable outflow occurred until year-end. The District is currently reviewing the data and will develop a report with recommendations on whether or not to continue the study.

Thul noted that an invitation was received to participate in a teleconference and “webinar” hosted by the National Weather Service (NWS) on November 28, 2007. Following discussion, the Board of Managers requested that Dan Thul, or a designated TAC member, participate in the meeting.

Thul reported that the TAC continues to wait for a recommendation from Dr. Gary Sands of the University of Minnesota regarding the design criteria developed for tile drainage systems in the Red River Basin. Charlie Anderson added that he reviewed a preliminary version of Dr. Sands’ recommendation, and would like to address some issues in the report prior to its final distribution.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Wayne Goeken distributed the project monitoring monthly report. Notification was received from the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) that the proposal submitted to assess channel stability and biological monitoring did not receive funding. Further discussion is planned among monitoring partners and resource managers in the Red River Basin regarding various approaches to assessing channel stability and how to best proceed with this initiative.

Human Resources Committee

At the October board meeting, Manager Wilkens explained that he is a member of the committee that provides direction to the staff members associated with the Water Quality Project Monitoring initiative. He requested the Human Resources Committee of the RRWMB to schedule a meeting to discuss the cafeteria plan of the board since the staff members of the water quality effort are RRWMB employees and, as such, adhere to the policies of the board.

The Human Resources Committee (HRC) met following the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group meeting on October 30, 2007 to discuss the cafeteria plan. At the HRC meeting, N. Erickson distributed a benefit comparison based on current benefits provided by member watershed districts to their employees and also a statewide comparison of watershed district benefits.

The HRC recommended that the board increase the cafeteria plan from \$400.00 per month to \$800.00 per month, retroactive to 01/01/07. As of January 01, 2008, the committee recommends increasing the cafeteria plan to \$900.00 per month. **Motion** by Manager Deal to revise the cafeteria plan as aforementioned, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Administrator Report

A) Committees & Membership List

N. Erickson reported at the March 20, 2007 board meeting, a committees and membership list was distributed and updated. The membership list of the Human Resources Committee (HRC) that was distributed stated that the committee was comprised of Managers Erickson, Finney, Wilkens and Wright. The board passed a motion for Orville Knott to replace Farrell Erickson on the HRC.

Recently, it was discovered that Manager Wright was inadvertently listed as a current member of the HRC, instead of Manager Deal. Please note for future reference that the HRC membership includes the following members: Orville Knott, John Finney, Daniel Wilkens, and Jerome Deal.

B) Accounting Firm Resignation

A letter dated October 31, 2007 was received notifying the board that the accounting firm of Dahl, Hatton, Muir & Reese Ltd. will no longer be able to provide auditing services to the RRWMB. Following discussion, the Board of Managers requested N. Erickson to obtain a list of the accounting firms retained by member districts prior to selecting a new auditor for the board.

C) Red River Valley U.S. Geological Survey / COOP Meeting

N. Erickson reported that she attended the annual USGS Cooperator meeting on Wednesday, November 7, 2007 in West Fargo, ND. The meeting included a budget discussion, new and/or discontinued gages, new technology, discussion of flood operations during spring/summer, and discussion of current conditions.

At the April board meeting, the board authorized funding assistance to USGS for a poster depicting the flood history of the Red River. The poster includes a list of the major floods in the Red River basin, as well as factors that caused the floods. Copies of the poster were available for distribution following the board meeting.

D) Palmville Restoration

N. Erickson reported that inquiries regarding the status of RRWMB funding for the Palmville Project of the Roseau River WD had been received. The minute archives were researched to find references to the project.

A Step I submittal was authorized for the project on 11/13/87. At that time, the estimated cost of conducting a study for the project was \$106,000, with a funding breakdown as follows: State of Minnesota \$53,000, RRWMB \$35,500, and RRWD \$17,500. On 04/12/88, the RRWMB authorized study funding of \$35,500, however, the state reduced their funding from \$53,000 to \$18,000.

The Governing Documents states that with a Step I Initial Submittal, the project must progress to a Step II within three years, or the Step I approval will be rescinded. All carry-over proposals will be reevaluated for consideration at the request of the sponsoring District or by action of the Board. Since no action was taken by the board to reevaluate the Step I for the project, the project was therefore rescinded.

E) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. MAWD Annual Meeting & Trade Show, November 29 – December 1, 2007, Arrowwood Conference Center, Alexandria, MN.
2. Red River Basin Commission, 25th Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference, January 22-24, 2008 at the Ramada Plaza Suites, Fargo, ND.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported on the Hay Creek / Norland Project. The Board of Managers received the Preliminary Engineer's Report for the project from HDR Engineering, Inc. A

public hearing is scheduled for December 11, 2007 regarding the establishment of the proposed project as required under Chapter 103D. The District will begin land acquisition following the hearing in December.

- The Red Lake WD reported on the Brandt & Euclid East Impoundment Projects. The final payment hearing for R.J. Zavoral & Sons, Inc. for the construction of Euclid East (Project No. 60 C) and Brandt Impoundment (Project No. 60 D) was conducted on September 27, 2007. Total construction costs for the Euclid East Impoundment was \$1,625,090.36), and total construction costs for the Brandt Impoundment was \$2,043,389.26. A final cost breakdown including any cost overruns will be available following the completion of the wetland mitigation seeding by Prairie Restoration next spring.

District's Funding Requests

1. Bois de Sioux WD / Step I Submittal / Eldorado 7 Impoundment Project

The information required for a Step I submittal was distributed to the board for review at the September board meeting. Charlie Anderson conducted a presentation of the proposed project prior to a tour of the project following the October board meeting.

Motion by Manager Deal to approve the Step I submittal for the Eldorado 7 Impoundment Project, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

2. Wild Rice WD / Mahnomen Drainage Project

A funding request was discussed by Jerry Bents, Houston Engineering, Inc. for the Wild Rice WD regarding the City of Mahnomen. A flooding problem is occurring which overloads the county sewer system and causes flooding in some areas of the city. The estimated cost of the project to alleviate the flooding is \$41,475.00.

The next meeting will be on December 18, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Wright
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator