



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 Diane Ista-Ada Jerome Deal, Secretary-Wheaton
Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

August 18, 2009

Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, August 18, 2009 at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota.

President John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

Steve Lee	Dan Money
Orville Knott	Daniel Wilkens
Diane Ista	Jerome Deal

Others present were:

- Naomi Erickson, Administrator
- Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator
- Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
- Mark Meister, CR*CS
- Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, RRBC
- Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator
- Wallace Sparby, Congressman Peterson's office
- Todd Miller, Roseau River WD
- Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
- Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
- Paul Wannarka, MNDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
- Jim Ziegler, Unit Supervisor-MPCA
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Robert Wright

Motion by Manager Wilkens to increase the service award paid to retiring managers from \$50.00 to a rate of twice the per diem or \$150.00, **Seconded** by Manager Knott, **Carried**.

Motion by Manager Lee to approve the minutes as written with minor corrections, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **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 Osowski, **Carried**. A one-page handout of monthly bills to be approved was distributed. **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Deal,

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

Public Information Initiative

Mark Meister reported on the public information initiative. A meeting was conducted with Erika Johnson and Henry VanOffelen in preparation for the video project. Narratives were developed to be used in conjunction with the videos that will be available via the internet.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Committee

Mark Meister reported that at the July board meeting, the Board of Managers received a recommendation from the Water Quality Project Monitoring Committee to develop a steering committee to further discuss the future of the water quality monitoring initiatives currently administered by the RRWMB. Due to scheduling conflicts among various individuals, a steering committee was not convened.

A two-year plan developed by the International Water Institute (IWI) was distributed. The IWI received input from partners including MN River Watch program staff and members of the River Watch Strategic Leadership Team to develop a strategy to expand the River Watch program.

Manager Wilkens explained that the River Watch program began with four high schools in the Sand Hill River WD in 1995. Although the program has expanded in Minnesota to include the development of a water quality project monitoring component, the initial intention of the RRWMB was to use the program in Minnesota as a model to develop similar initiatives in North Dakota and Manitoba prior to transferring the administration of the effort to another organization.

Manager Wilkens recommended another attempt at coordinating a meeting among various stakeholders in the Red River basin to discuss furthering the River Watch program in North Dakota and Manitoba. He added that the transition of transferring the River Watch program to another organization could take several years in order for similar initiatives to be developed in North Dakota and Manitoba.

R. Harnack stated that in 2009 the Minnesota Legislature authorized \$250,000 in year one, and \$296,000 in year two to the RRWMB to expand the program to additional schools in the Red River basin. Manager Wilkens inquired whether these funds could be used to expand the program in North Dakota. R. Harnack responded that the funds must be expended in Minnesota and further noted that transferring the water quality project monitoring activities currently being administered by the RRWMB to the IWI would be timely as the contracts associated with the above-mentioned appropriation have yet to be executed.

Meister noted that the IWI works closely with many partners throughout the Red River basin to deliver programs that serve not only basin residents, but also local, state and federal officials. He added that the consolidation of funding sources along with the transfer of administrative responsibilities to the IWI under the Tri-College University could be conducive toward the expansion of the River Watch program in North Dakota and possibly Manitoba as well.

Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute, explained that the River Watch program is currently being implemented in North Dakota with ~ five schools that have incorporated it into their

curriculum. Goeken added that with the additional state appropriation received from the Minnesota Legislature, he plans to develop a pilot program to be used as model for implementation throughout the state of Minnesota with potential for expansion to North Dakota and Manitoba schools as well.

Manager Deal suggested the development of a work plan to be reviewed at the next monthly meeting for the IWI to assume responsibility for all aspects of the River Watch program and project-related water quality monitoring activities currently being administered by the RRWMB. **Motion** by Manager Deal to develop a work plan for the transition of the River Watch program and water quality project monitoring activities of the RRWMB to the IWI, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

Project Coordinator Report

Ron Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. The House Capital Investment Committee has a tour planned of the Red River basin for Wednesday, Sept. 2 - Thursday, Sept. 3. The tour will begin in Wendell, MN and conclude in Moorhead, MN. Prior to the RRBC meeting scheduled for Thursday, September 3rd, a presentation will be conducted by the RRWMB to discuss future initiatives and proposed legislation for water management with legislators on the committee.

Harnack discussed the transition of the River Watch program and water quality project monitoring efforts from the RRWMB to the IWI. He reiterated the timeliness of transferring the administration of the initiatives in order to coincide with the execution of the contracts for the legislative appropriation. He added that although other organizations, including the RRBC, had been suggested to assume the long-term administrative duties, the IWI seems to be best-suited to assume the initiatives as their primary focus is to coordinate and develop watershed research and education in the Red River basin.

Red River Basin Commission

Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator – RRBC, distributed a brochure for the 27th Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference scheduled for January 19-21, 2010 at the Alerus Center, Grand Forks, ND. The theme of the conference is *The Changing Face of Flooding*.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Wayne Goeken reported that he assisted with the development of a work plan with the River Watch Strategic Leadership Team regarding the proposed transition of the River Watch program and water quality project monitoring initiatives.

Goeken referred to a contract with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and requested consideration for board authorization for him to sign the contract on behalf of the RRWMB. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to authorize Wayne Goeken to execute the above-referenced contract between MPCA and the RRWMB, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul reported that the TAC met on August 4, 2009 in Fargo, ND. The TAC discussed the potential to coordinate the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Watershed Feasibility Study with the RRBC's Red River Flood Prevention Planning Study.

The USACE requested suggestions with regard to utilizing an additional \$278,000 of federal stimulus money that was recently secured for the study. Several activities were identified by the group that should be completed by the USACE as part of the study. The activities included completing the HEC-RAS unsteady flow model of the Red River main stem; incorporating hydraulic connections into the LiDAR data at road crossings for all the river and stream crossings; developing a website LiDAR viewer tool; and developing some of the decision-making tools identified in the IWI's *Next Generation RRBDIN* proposal.

Suggested language to be incorporated into the USACE Watershed Feasibility Study's project management plan was distributed. **Motion** by Manager Ista to incorporate the suggested language in the USACE Watershed Feasibility Study under Task D, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

Administrator Report

A) Funding Commitments Worksheet

A revised funding commitments worksheet as of July 31st was distributed.

B) Northwest Minnesota Foundation Grant Proposal

N. Erickson reported that at the July board meeting, a motion was passed to support a grant proposal developed by the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) for their continued participation in the Red River Basin mediation process. The grant included a funding request of \$25,000 over a two-year period for salaries and related benefits and expenses for professional staff.

N. Erickson stated that Jim Steenerson, Grants Specialist – Northwest Minnesota Foundation (NMF), notified her that the RRWMB would have to assume responsibility for the project as a grantee, and couldn't simply sign on as a co-applicant with MCEA. Mr. Steenerson indicated that the RRWMB would also be required to provide matching funds of \$25,000 to meet the grant requirements. Following discussion, the Board of Managers agreed to withdraw board support regarding the request at this time.

C) Letter of Support – LCCMR

N. Erickson distributed a letter of support that was developed regarding the proposal submitted to the Legislative Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) for Strategic Wetland Restoration in the Red River Basin by MCEA.

D) Supplemental Project Team Funding

N. Erickson stated that at the May 19, 2009 board meeting, the board authorized supplemental funding of an additional \$5,000 for FY09 for member watershed district project teams. She requested member districts to check their records to determine whether their WD could be eligible for the additional supplemental funding.

E) Otter Tail Watershed / Letter of Support

N. Erickson reported that at the July board meeting, the Board of Managers authorized a letter of support to be forwarded to the Wilkin County Board of Commissioners relative to the initiative to establish a watershed district for the Otter Tail River.

Following discussions with several state and county officials, it was confirmed that the following counties are included within the Otter Tail watershed: Becker, Clay, Clearwater, Mahnomen, Otter Tail and Wilkin. Individual letters were developed to be forwarded to each county Board of Commissioners.

F) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, Thursday, August 27, 2009, Northland Inn, Crookston, MN.
2. Red River Basin Commission's 27th Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference, January 19-21, 2010, Alerus Center, Grand Forks, ND.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported that Phase I of the Hay Creek/Norland Project (set-back levees) has been awarded to North Pine Aggregate of Forest Lake, MN, and Phase III (connection channel) has been awarded to All Seasons Contracting of Blackduck, MN. The bids came in under the engineer's estimates on both phases by over 30%. The construction is scheduled to begin this fall with work to be completed by October 15, 2009. The District is also advertising for bids for construction of up to six control structures for Phase II (impoundment) of the project yet this fall.

Construction has started on one ring dike in July and is expected to be completed by the end of August. R.J. Zavoral & Sons of East Grand Forks, MN were awarded the contract to complete the ring dike. The District received three applications from landowners for the EQIP ring dike program, however, only one ring dike qualified for funding this year.

- The Red Lake WD reported on the Polk County Ditch No. 53 Improvements and Lateral Petition (RLWD Ditch No. 12) Project. Construction on ~ 8.5 miles of open channel and the installation of various culverts has been severely hindered due to rain and very wet conditions. To date, the project is ~ 85% complete. At their August board meeting, the Board of Managers accepted a request from R.J. Zavoral & Sons for an extension until September 1st.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that negotiations continue with landowners for the Redpath Project. An appraisal of the property has been prepared and submitted to the sellers for their review and consideration as the District's offer to purchase. The appraised value of the property is \$3,195,000.00. The State of Minnesota has appropriated \$1.75M for land acquisition, with the RRWMB authorizing matching funds for the state appropriation.

Service Award

Manager Finney presented Robert Wright with an eleven-year service award for his devoted service given to the Red River Watershed Management Board.

District's Funding Requests

1. Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD / Funding Update / Brandt-Angus Flood Control Project

Nick Drees, Administrator, reported that negotiations continue to purchase land utilizing a contract for deed for the above-referenced project. **Motion** by Manager Money to authorize funding assistance for land acquisition utilizing a contract for deed, not to exceed five years, contingent upon obtaining an appraisal, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

2. Bois de Sioux WD / Funding Advance / Redpath Project

A report was distributed regarding the status of land acquisition for the Redpath Project. Negotiations continue with landowners for the acquisition of ~ 1,033 acres. The RRWMB previously authorized a match for state funding up to \$1.75 million. Following an agreed-upon purchase price, a funding request will be submitted to the board for reimbursement.

The next meeting will be on September 15, 2009, at 9:30 a.m. at the City Council Chambers, Warren, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator