



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

May 19, 2009

City Council Chambers, Warren, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, May 19, 2009 at the City Council Chambers, Warren, Minnesota.

President John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

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

Others present were:

- Naomi Erickson, Administrator
- Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
- Mark Meister, CR*CS
- Rob Sando, Administrator, Roseau River WD
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Bob Bezek, MNDNR Regional Hydrologist
- Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, RRBC
- Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator
- Danni Halvorson, Monitoring Specialist
- Paul Swenson, MNDNR, Natural Resource Tribal Liaison
- Wallace Sparby, Congressman Peterson's office
- Todd Miller, Roseau River WD
- Henry Van Offelen, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
- Linda Kingery, Exec. Dir., Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships

Motion by Manager Knott to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as written, **Seconded** by Manager Lee, **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 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 Osowski, **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. He stated that he had contacted individuals from Rep. Collin Peterson's office relative to why the board was not invited to participate in discussions regarding flood damage reduction efforts affecting the Red River Basin that were recently addressed by legislators in Washington, DC. He noted that positive responses were received regarding his inquiry and he was informed that the board would be invited to participate in future dialogues.

Meister stated that a Public Information Committee meeting was conducted on May 1, 2009 at the Sand Hill River WD office, Fertile, MN. Items addressed by the committee included post flood media relations, the collaborative video project with the Minnesota Center for Environmental Education (MCEA), and future public information initiatives.

Discussions have occurred with KFGO in Fargo, ND relative to highlighting flood control projects funded through the RRWMB and the possibility of retaining Joel Heitkamp to broadcast from the KFGO cruiser. Information has been prepared for individuals selected to be interviewed on behalf of the board. The committee suggested that John Finney and Jerome Deal be interviewed.

The committee discussed the joint annual meeting scheduled for July 21, 2009 with the Red River Joint Water Resource Board. The committee recommended that Meister proceed with coordinating, planning, and facilitating a media tour of project sites to be included on the tour.

As this year's joint annual meeting will focus on projects in the northern part of the basin, the committee recommended that a similar tour be conducted in the southern part of the basin, namely the North Ottawa Impoundment Project of the Bois de Sioux WD. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize Mark Meister to plan tours in conjunction with the joint annual meeting and also in the Bois de Sioux WD, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

The video project coordinated by Henry VanOffelen of MCEA was discussed by the committee. The committee noted their concern that the project lacked focus and recommended refraining from any financial contribution until a project focus is achieved.

Van Offelen noted that the project was originally intended to develop brief video clips to be posted on the internet. The clips will highlight various issues including the project team process, natural resources, and flood damage reduction. Initial footage was obtained by flying over the basin to capture footage of holding areas still retaining water from spring flooding. Additional footage is needed as the camera angle of the previously acquired footage didn't provide the desired outcome. Van Offelen requested the Board of Managers to consider cost-share funding for the video project of \$2,000 to assist with the development of the video clips.

Motion by Manager Deal to direct Mark Meister to continue to work with MCEA relative to the video project and to fund the initiative at a maximum of \$2,000, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**.

Meister reported that the committee further discussed the direction of future public information initiatives. He noted that due to other professional commitments, he has limited time to devote to the board and added that in the future the board may want to consider hiring a public relations firm.

Manager Deal stated that he supports the current direction of the public information initiative and that Meister should continue fulfilling his two-year contract with the board. Manager Wilkens concurred with Manager Deal.

Project Coordinator Report

Ron Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. He reported that the board's legislation was modified during this session to provide clarification regarding the Open Meeting Law. The following language was inserted: The Red River Watershed Management Board may conduct its meetings at a public facility within the Red River basin, or within the jurisdiction of an authority with which the Red River Watershed Management Board is authorized to cooperate.

Harnack stated that he is working with member districts to develop a five-year capital investment plan. Upon completion of the individual watershed district plans, a master spreadsheet will be compiled which can be provided to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) to be utilized by their finance department.

Harnack noted that discussion occurred in the legislature this year regarding flood damage reduction measures implemented following the flood of 1997. He suggested that relative to the Mediation Agreement, a ten-year progress report be prepared prior to the beginning of next year's session. Following discussion, the board appointed the following inter-agency representatives to comprise the committee: R. Harnack, N. Erickson, M. Meister, D. Thul, and P. Wannarka.

Harnack recommended that the Board of Managers establish funding priorities for current flood damage reduction projects under construction. The Board of Managers agreed that the following projects should be considered a priority for 2009 bonding: Bois de Sioux WD, Redpath \$1.75M; Roseau River WD, Hay Creek \$1.8M; and Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD, Agassiz Valley \$2.5M. Additional funding will be requested from the Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council (LOHC) for completion of the natural resource enhancement portion of the North Ottawa Impoundment Project as well as land acquisition for the Redpath Project. **Motion** by Manager Osowski to adopt the following funding priorities for 2009 bonding funds: Redpath \$1.75M, Hay Creek \$1.8M, and Agassiz Valley \$2.5M, **Seconded** by Manager Knott, **Carried**.

Harnack added that any remaining funds in this year's bonding bill could be utilized to fund projects listed in the bill and progressing through the step process. Manager Ista inquired whether the Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project would be eligible for the remaining funds. Harnack responded that the project would be ineligible since it's not included in this year's bonding cycle.

Red River Basin Commission

Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator – RRBC, reported that the next board meeting is scheduled for June 03-04, 2009 in conjunction with a tour of the Devils Lake basin. Following the RRBC board meeting, the Red River Water Resources Council will meet.

Goehring added that she has been working with Mark Meister and Linda Kingery developing *Water Minutes* to be aired on KFGO. The one-minute segments will include flood damage reduction strategies such as those included in the mediation agreement.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Wayne Goeken distributed the project monitoring monthly report. He reported that he continues to track sampling results and invoices from various Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) grant funded monitoring projects. He also has provided input to MPCA for assessment review for TMDL listings and delineation of stream reaches.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul reported that the TAC has a meeting scheduled tomorrow in Fargo, ND. Items to be discussed will include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Watershed Feasibility Study (WFS) with Aaron Snyder - Project Manager, and the final draft of the Agricultural Tile Drainage Study prepared by Dr. Gary Sands of the University of Minnesota.

Bob Bezek, Regional Hydrologist – DNR, reported that the contract with the State of Minnesota for the position of Red River Coordinator (Dan Thul) is approaching its renewal date. He noted that a job description for the position is being prepared prior to executing this year's contract. The draft description will be forwarded to the RRWMB's Human Resource Committee for review prior to contract execution.

Water Management Research

Henry Van Offelen, MCEA stated that the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) is developing a proposal to strategically restore wetlands in the Red River basin. Several organizations have been identified to support the initiative including the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), the University of Minnesota, the Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the RRWMB. Linda Kingery, Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, added that the proposed wetland restoration project would assist in promoting sustainable water management.

Van Offelen inquired about obtaining participation from the TAC to assist with the development of the proposal. Manager Finney directed the TAC to discuss the initiative at their meeting tomorrow and develop a recommendation for the board.

Administrator Report

A) Vacated Positions

Due to Manager Wright's retirement, several vacated positions need to be filled on the board including: Secretary, Transition Team, Red River Basin Commission Alt., and Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group.

President Finney requested Manager Deal to fill the remaining term of Secretary of the Board.

Motion by Manager Knott to appoint Jerome Deal for Secretary, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

President Finney appointed the following individuals for the respective vacated positions: Manager Money, Transition Team; Manager Lee, RRBC Alt.; and, Manager Knott, Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group. **Motion** by Manager Osowski to appoint the above-referenced individuals to the vacated positions, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

Manager Ista noted her concern relative to the Wild Rice WD not being represented on any board committee. Manager Finney responded that the positions would be reconsidered during the board's annual organization in January.

B) Joint Annual Meeting

N. Erickson reported that at the April 19, 2009 board meeting, the board agreed to host the annual meeting of the RRWMB and the Red River Joint Water Resource Board on Tuesday, July 21, 2009 in East Grand Forks, MN.

The Blue Moose has been reserved with the two boards conducting their individual board meetings separately beginning at 9:30 a.m., the joint meeting beginning at 10:30 a.m., and a noon lunch buffet served prior to the bus tour. Following lunch, a tour bus will depart to tour various projects in the Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers and Red Lake WDs.

C) Federal Funding for Farmstead Ring Dike Program

N. Erickson distributed a letter that the board requested she finalize at the previous monthly meeting to be forwarded to the federal delegation and legislators in the Red River Basin regarding a request for federal funding for the Farmstead Ring Dike Program.

D) Data Request

Representatives from the RRWMB met with Marijo Vik, Ada, MN to provide an inspection of data on May 1, 2009 at the Sand Hill River WD, Fertile, MN. Information requested included all disbursements from the RRWMB to the Wild Rice WD from 2005 through 2008. Michael Welch, attorney, Smith Partners represented the board at the inspection.

E) Water Quality Project Monitoring

N. Erickson explained that the RRWMB currently administers the funding received from various sources to support the above-referenced initiative. Along with associated payroll for the water quality positions, expenses are incurred and disbursed by the board to various vendors. Periodically, reports are generated and forwarded to Wayne Goeken, Monitoring Coordinator, for purposes of grant reporting. The level of detail required has increased which has resulted in updates to the accounting program utilized.

She further noted that the categories maintained by the board are of a much broader nature than those required for reporting purposes of the water quality initiative and recommended that the board authorize Jon Schauer to consult with Wayne Goeken to develop a detailed reporting system for him to use directly to provide the needed detail for reporting purposes. The funds would still be disbursed from the RRWMB, however, the categories maintained by the accounting system of the board would be of a general nature. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to authorize Jon Schauer to consult with Wayne Goeken and develop a detailed accounting system to provide the necessary detail for reporting purposes, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

F) Supplemental Project Team Funding

At the August 19, 2008 board meeting, the board authorized supplemental funding of an additional \$5,000 for FY08 for member watershed district project teams.

N. Erickson stated that due to some watershed districts submitting for reimbursement in excess of the Work Group FY09 allocated amount of \$11,250 per project team, the board may want to consider entertaining a similar motion for this fiscal year. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to authorize an additional \$5,000 for project teams of member districts for FY09, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

G) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. **Red River Basin Commission**, Board Meeting and Devils Lake Tour, June 03-04, 2009 (Board meeting in Grand Forks, ND).
2. **2009 MAWD Summer Tour**, Shell Rock River WD, June 25-27, 2009, Albert Lee, MN.
3. **July Board Meeting**, Tuesday, July 21, 2009, Meeting with the Red River Joint Water Resources Board, The Blue Moose, East Grand Forks, MN.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported that the District office has relocated to one block west of the previous office to the former Roseau County Law Enforcement Center.

The final engineering plans have been completed for the Hay Creek/Norland Project. The District is awaiting permits for the project and plans to begin construction of Phase I this summer.

- The Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD reported that the 2008 construction season ended with approximately 85% of Phase I completed on the Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project (AVWRMP). The District anticipates that work remaining on Phase I along with Phase III (wetland mitigation) will be completed this summer.

The bid opening for Phase II of the AVWRMP was conducted on April 16, 2009. The District accepted a bid from Davidson Construction for this phase of the project which should be completed this construction season.

- The Red Lake WD reported on the Grand Marais Outlet Restoration Project. The District received a 50/50 grant from the Working Lands Initiative of \$128,878.52. The grant will be used to assist in the acquisition of 450 acres of perpetual easements required in the project area and will augment the Re-invest in Minnesota (RIM) easement funding that was previously awarded to the project. The Grand Marais Creek Joint Powers Board of Managers plans to present a Step I submittal for the project in the near future.

Congressman Peterson's Office

Manager Finney welcomed Wallace Sparby as the new representative to the board from the office of Congressman Collin Peterson. Mr. Sparby replaces Maynard Pick who represented the Congressman for a period in excess of 18 years.

District's Funding Requests

1. Wild Rice WD / Step II Submittal / Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project

The information required for both Step I & II submittals was distributed to the board for review at the February board meeting. A tour of the proposed project was conducted following the April 21, 2009 board meeting.

Following the Step I authorization at the April 21, 2009, the board tabled action on the Step II submittal until the following board meeting. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize the Step II submittal of the Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project, **Seconded** by Manager Lee, **Carried**.

The next meeting will be on June 16, 2009, at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator