



Red River Watershed Management Board

Board of Managers

John Finney, President - Humboldt
Daniel Wilkens, Treasurer - Fertile
Roger Mischel - Warren

Greg Holmvik - Vice President - Ada
Jason Braaten - Roseau
LeRoy Ose - Thief River Falls

Jerome Deal, Secretary - Wheaton
Dan Money - Hallock

Robert L. Sip, Executive Director
Nikki Swenson, Executive Assistant

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING February 20, 2018 Meeting Minutes Wild Rice Watershed District | Ada, Minnesota

- 1. Call to Order:** The Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) met on Tuesday, February 18, 2018 at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota. Vice President Greg Holmvik called the meeting to order. Managers present were: LeRoy Ose, Dan Money, Jason Braaten, Daniel Wilkens, Roger Mischel, and Jerome Deal. Managers absent were: John Finney.

Others present included:

- Lisa Frenette, RRWMB Legislative Liaison (Via Conference Call)
- Rodger Hemphill, Interim Red River Coordinator MN Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Allen Wold, Manager, Bois de Sioux Watershed District (BDSWD)
- Blake Carlson, Engineer, WSN Engineering, Inc.
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake Watershed District (RLWD)
- April Swenby, Administrative Assistant, Sand Hill River Watershed District (SHRWD)
- Ted Priester, Executive Director, Red River Basin Commission (RRBC)
- Tracy Halstensgard, Administrator, Roseau River Watershed District (RRWD)
- Kevin Ruud, Administrator, Wild Rice Watershed District (WRWD)
- Jim Ziegler, Regional Director, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)
- Roger Hanson, Manager, SHRWD
- Curt Johannsen, Chair, RRBC
- Keith Weston, Executive Director, Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)

- 2. Meeting Additions and Adoption of Agenda: Motion** to approve the Agenda was made by Manager Money and **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

- 3. Approval of Meeting Minutes: Motion** by Manager Deal to dispense with the reading of the minutes and, **Seconded** by Manager Braaten, **Carried**.



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A **Motion** by Manager Deal to approve as written the January 16, 2018 meeting minutes, **Seconded** by Manager Mischel. Manager Wilkens asked for discussion about the meeting minutes and he referred to Page 15 of the meeting packet regarding the office location RFP. Manager Wilkens stated he was unaware of the February 16, 2018 deadline and indicated that his board wanted him to present the Sandhill River Watershed District proposal to the RRWMB at the meeting due to the sensitive nature of the proposal. Manager Holmvik stated that the February 16, 2018 date is correct. Manager Wilkens mentioned that he couldn't make the deadline because he was gone several weeks prior and stated that he did not know his board wanted him to present the SHRWD proposal at today's meetings. Wilkens stated he was in the RRWMB office in Ada previously a couple times. **Carried.**

- 4. Financial Reporting:** Sip indicated that an updated financial report was presented as several bills came in right before the meeting and the new report would replace the information in the packet that was mailed out. The Managers were asked to discard the draft that was e-mailed to them prior to the meeting. The draft Treasurer's Report was presented, and Manager Wilkens stated that he did not want the report approved and would like it tabled until the March 20, 2018 meeting. He said he had many questions about the report and that timing was an issue. Manager Wilkens indicated he and Executive Director Sip were unable to meet to review the Treasurers Report due to several recent meetings and the holiday

He stated that he would like the December 2017 report finalized along with the January 2018 report. Manager Wilkens said he would like to work with Executive Director Sip on the reports and it has been quite a challenge with the transition. He mentioned that he would like to be part of the process. Manager Money indicated that he would like to see fund balances in the future. Manager Wilkens stated that the previous administrator would move information from Quick Books into a spreadsheet and that it took too much time and that there is too much chance for errors and that we need to use Quick Books. He said that the Budget and Finance Committee can discuss proposed changes.

It was noted that Manager Wilkens wanted to work with staff to schedule a Budget and Finance Committee Meeting as soon as possible and that he wanted the Draft Treasurers Report taken off the RRWMB website because of errors. Manager Wilkens requested to table the report until it was accurate to make some changes. **Motion** by Manager Ose to table the Treasurer's Report, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried.**



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The bills presented for approval as of February 20, 2018, were as follows:

Date	Name	Memo	Amount
02/05/2018	Arvig	Office Rent 32292	\$625.00
02/06/2018	Brady, Martz & Associates, P.C.	Accounting assistance per April's request	\$275.00
01/31/2018	Dot.Com Connection	Website maintenance	\$195.00
01/23/2018	Houston Engineering, Inc.	TAC; Lower Red Basin Detention Study	\$5,560.00
02/09/2018	International Water Institute	CWL River Watch-Pay Request 6	\$43,314.35
02/08/2018	Liberty Mutual Insurance Company	Bond Renewal LSF056113-1597726	\$903.00
02/11/2018	Lisa A. Frenette	Financial/Lobbying Consultant - December 2017 & Jan 2018	\$752.21
02/09/2018	Marco Technologies LLC	Cartridge-Cyan	\$245.56
02/08/2018	MN PEIP	Coverage for 3-1-18 thru 3-31-18	\$1,479.36
02/20/2018	Nikki Swenson	Expense Reimbursement	\$1,178.74
02/15/2018	Northwest Beverage	Water for office	\$55.50
02/06/2018	Office Supplies Plus	Office Supplies	\$1,269.28
02/07/2018	PERA	Delinquency Fee	\$10.00
01/29/2018	Red River Basin Commission	Co-location Proposal-Annual Rental Contribution	\$15,000.00
01/31/2018	Sand Hill River Watershed District	Interim Assistance	\$3,376.22
02/07/2018	Smith Partners PLLP	January 2018 Services	\$2,535.76
01/31/2018	Thief River Falls Times and Watch	Classified Ad - Executive Assistant	\$143.75
02/02/2018	Trond Technologies, LLC	Classified Ad - Executive Assistant	\$87.05
01/28/2018	Verizon	Phone purchase and monthly bill	\$556.10
01/31/2018	Western National Insurance Group	Commercial Auto & Package Renewal	\$6,619.00
01/18/2018	Widseth Smith Nolting & Assoc., Inc.	Invoice 121967 Two Rivers-Lower Red Basin Detention Study Ph 2	\$2,075.00
01/29/2018	Wild Rice Watershed District	Reimbursements	\$66,207.24
TOTAL			\$152,463.12

Motion to approve and pay bills along with manager vouchers presented by Manager Ose, **Seconded** by Manager Braaten. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report as Exhibit A.



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Discussion was held about the format used for the bills and Manager Money asked about the \$15,000 paid to the RRBC for the RRWMBs annual rental contribution. RRBC Executive Director Ted Priester was in attendance and he added some background information. Manager Money indicated that he thought that it would be reviewed year-by-year and that next year the Board should review and discuss this payment.

Manager Money also stated that this payment was not perpetual. Manager Wilkens mentioned the Budget and Finance Committee should review it. Manager Money stated that the RRBC has its own office now and questioned why rent is being paid. Manager Wilkens indicated it was to help several Red River Basin agencies obtain co-located office space and Manger Deal stated that the RRWMB funding also matches the North Dakota Joint Water Resources Board funding.
Carried.

5. **Funding Requests:** There were no additional project step process reports and applications presented.
6. **Office Location:** Executive Director Sip explained the packet and informed the Managers that the SHRWD submitted an RFP prior to the start of the meeting. Sip said there was a proposal from the WRWD and discussed the resolution needed and indicated that there is a public notification process. Manager Wilkens asked if President John Finney could call in and Executive Director Sip said that state law does not allow for that right now.

Manager Holmvik stated that there was discussion and prior consent that previous meetings to leave the location of the office up to the Executive Director in conjunction with the executive assistant. Manager Deal said this consensus was correct and that Manager Holmvik was right in his statement. Manager Holmvik asked what Executive Director Sip's recommendation was and Sip responded that his recommendation is that the office be located in Ada and that the board follow his recommendations laid out in the agenda item. Sip stated that he is looking for a motion to accept the WRWD proposal for co-location as provided.

Manager Wilkens discussed the history of the RFP and stated that his board looked at the RFP hard and is offering a \$700 per month with shared expenses for 10 years. Manager Ose stated that the Managers directed Executive Director Sip to determine the office location and that the Managers would support his decision. Manager Ose also stated that the RRWMB hired an Executive Director to make decisions and it would be hard for him to go back on such a decision. Manager Deal agreed with this statement and Manager Ose also said the Managers were hesitant to designate an office location until the Executive Director was hired.

Manager Money reviewed the chain of events and asked if the SHRWD proposal came in on time. Manager Wilkens said he thought the deadline was last Friday. Manager Holmvik said that the decision was made by staff and it would be unfair to make them move.



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Manager Braaten agreed with Managers Holmvik and Ose about leaving the decision up to staff on the office location. **Motion** to have office location in Ada, MN by Manger Braaten, **Seconded** by Manager Deal. **Carried.**

Manager Holmvik asked what other items need to be addressed and Executive Director Sip discussed the items in the resolution and that it would need to be approved and Manager Deal would need to sign the document. Sip mentioned that the public hearing would be at the March 20, 2018 meeting and several additional details were discussed.

Motion made by Manager Mischel to approve resolution No. 18-01 indicating the establishment of the official RRWMB office to 11 5th Ave East, Ada, MN 56510 and **Seconded** by Manager Money.

Role Call Vote for the Resolution:

Wilkins:	Nay
Ose:	Yea
Money:	Yea
Braaten:	Yea
Mischel:	Yea
Deal:	Yea

Resolution passed.

Executive Director Sip further discussed the requirement to notify county auditors, to do public noticing in a newspaper of general circulation in the Red River Basin and that there would be some expenses to do so. Manager Holmvik reiterated that the hearing would be March 20, 2018 at the regular board meeting. Sip affirmed and mentioned that the hearing time would be 9:45 AM. Sip also asked about other items in the board agenda item and Manager Deal stated that Sip would negotiate out the terms laid out. Sip stated that legal counsel would also review documents.

- 7. Legal Council:** Executive Director Sip explained that Smith Partners is looking for a contract for legal services. Manager Wilkins wanted to know why Smith Partners wanted to have a contract now since the arrangement has been on an as needed basis in the past. Sip stated that if Smith Partners is under contract with the RRWMB, that we know they are always working for the RRWMB and not on the other side of the table. Manager Deal asked about if there was a retainer fee and Sip stated that there was none. Manager Money mentioned that this contract does not lock the RRWMB into using only one firm. Discussion ensued about the fees and hourly rates that had been levied in the past and if there were major changes. Executive Director Sip said he could get clarification if the Board wanted. A **Motion** was made by Manager Deal to approve if the rates are the same as what the Board has been paying, **Seconded** by Manger Money. **Carried.**



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- 8. Insurance Coverage:** Executive Director Sip explained to the Board what the premium is for the current commercial property coverage, what is covered, and recommended to raise coverage from \$5,000 to \$25,000 and to review all insurances again after the new office space is completed. Manager Deal made a **Motion** to increase the coverage to \$25,000.00 and **Seconded** by Manager Braaten. **Carried.**

9. Legislative Issues

A. Legislative Report: Legislative Liaison Lisa Frenette presented the report via conference call.

- i. **Senate:** Several bills have been introduced but three of interest are Representative Backer's bills requesting bonding money for the Bois de Sioux Watershed District including \$16 million to the Redpath Project and two other projects for a total of \$19 million. The Governor would like a \$1.5 billion bonding bill and House Speaker Daudt is proposing an \$800 million bonding package, which was about \$400 million more than most people expected. The Governor's bonding proposal is heavily focused on restoration of buildings and higher education. Senator Bakk apparently would like to see a bonding package focused more on public infrastructure and then a separate one for other issues related to the Governor's priorities.
- ii. **WCA Rule Update:** Frenette stated that there has been no movement on this issue.
- iii. **EQB/EIS Update:** A recent meeting with the EQB and many stakeholders regarding environmental review and proposed changes was not overly positive. Mandatory EAW thresholds have not been discussed and it appears that another layer of rules are being considered and are being called "off ramp" rules. Several groups and individuals walked out of that meeting. The discussion did not progress as hoped and Frenette is waiting to hear of another meeting date.
- iv. **BWSR:** Frenette asked drainage authorities about their thoughts on if adjustments were made to the 16.5-foot buffer strip for mowing activities and reducing the buffer width.
- v. **Wetland Credit Trading:** Representative Fabian asked Frenette and a larger group of associations to work on legislation that would allow for the trading of wetland banking credits and in lieu fees to help pay for projects on the front end. Frenette discussed some examples of where agricultural land has been placed into wetland banks and impacts to tax rolls. This proposed language is still in the development stage. Frenette and Executive Director Sip will present to the Managers when more information is available.
- vi. **MN Soil Loss Rule:** BWSR is holding a meeting today with an advisory committee to start working on possible changes to the current soil loss rule.

B. Legislative Committee Recommendations: Executive Director Sip and Frenette presented recommendations from the RRWMB Legislative Committee regarding projects to be included in the RRWMB bonding packet. The Legislative Committee recommends funding requests be prioritized on the bonding spreadsheet based on the following criteria:



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- i. If the project is listed on the Governors bonding bill.
- ii. Inclusion on the DNR Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Funding spreadsheet.
- iii. Step Level the project is in.
- iv. FDRWG project readiness form and Project Team process.
- v. If outside funding has been obtained or secured.

Frenette stated that we are working closely with the DNR on the spreadsheet that lists all the projects and funds being requested over five years. Myron Jesme asked for a correction to the Black River Impoundment on the spreadsheet. He stated that the total project cost should be listed for \$7,100,000.00 and it's a Step II submittal. Frenette stated she is still waiting for one more watershed to submit information and asked administrators to inform her of errors, changes, and final updates as soon as possible.

Sip further discussed the agenda item and asked for approval of the priorities listed including the letter of support to MAWD as previously discussed and how the RRWMB would move forward for next year with setting legislative priorities. Discussion was held about gathering information and updates for the spreadsheet and bonding packet in a streamlined approach.

Manager Money discussed the fact that the Governor's bonding bill was only \$20 million and that RRWMB projects were slated for only about \$4 million. He indicated that RRWMB projects need to be prioritized so that when the RRWMB submits information to the legislature and the DNR, we be will clear with our requests. He discussed the process and the need to streamline regarding how the RRWMB obtains funding.

He stated that we have to be organized, its getting more difficult to secure project money, and we need to make sure projects are ready to go. Manger Wilkens stated that in the past, the bonding process was more cooperative and that watershed districts across the state would help each other more. Frenette disconnected at 10:21 am

Motion by Manager Deal and **Seconded** by Manager Money to approve the prioritization process. **Carried.**

- 10. Strategic Planning:** Executive Director Sip presented potential next steps of the Strategic Planning Process. Phase 2 of the plan will primarily consist of outreach, obtaining more input, and have discussion with watershed districts, county commissioners, and other local units of government. Sip would like to take advantage of the opportunity that the March Conference has to host a facilitated discussion, with an online survey to come either prior to or just after the conference. After completion of these steps, the information would be compiled into a report to aid in further discussion with the visits that will be made this Spring/Summer.



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Sip recommended the Board approve commencing with Phase 2 of the Strategic Plan and he indicated that an ad hoc committee may be needed at some point. Manager Wilkens stated that we still need a five-year plan so that we all end up on the same page. Manager Holmvik asked about a Board discussion in the future. Managers Wilkens stated that we all need to be united on this issue.

Manager Money asked about the facilitated planning session at the March Conference and Sip explained that there will be several people at the conference and we want to get input at small table and group discussions. Manager Money stated that this should be done and then a board retreat would be needed to go through the input obtained at the conference. Manager Deal agrees that the Board should review input but that sideboards should be placed on discussions and that future boards should not be limited in what they can do.

Manager Money said that this is a RRWMB plan. Manager Wilkens stated that the plan should be reviewed every few years and said that the plan should relate to the governing documents. A **Motion** to continue with Phase 2 of the Strategic Plan was made by Manager Braaten and **Seconded** by Manager Deal. **Carried.**

- 11. Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA):** Executive Director Sip stated that this was an informational item only at this time and he reviewed the board agenda item. Sip stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has been working on this issue and that Chuck Fritz and Jerry Bents will be making a presentation at the next meeting.

Discussion was held about the need for BCA and the funds that have been expended on this activity. Manger Wilkens stated that the RRWMB has never been required to complete a BCA. Manager Money inquired about if this is part of the RCPP process and stated his concerns about BCA and the fact that there are no BCAs completed for the RRWMB. Blake Carlson stated that the IWI has been working on this with the TAC, who is directing how to approach the situation. Curt Johannsen talked about obtaining more funding from the state of Minnesota and the ability of the RRBC to address flooding issues from a regional standpoint.



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12. Additional Clarification of RRWMB Committees

- a. **RRWMB Committee Recommendations:** The following changes were made and approved. It was stated that Executive Director Sip will participate on all committees.

INTERNAL COMMITTEES

1. **Governing Documents Committee**

Jason Braaten
Jerome Deal
Greg Holmvik
Dan Money
Rob Sip

Committee Purpose – To review the Governing Documents at least every 5 years and make recommendations to the RRWMB Managers on proposed changes and updates. Provide guidance to RRWMB staff on updating the documents and implementing changes.

2. **Public Information Committee** (\$10,000 Annual Discretionary Budget – June 16, 2009)

Jerome Deal (*Committee Chair*)
Greg Holmvik
Dan Money
LeRoy Ose
Rob Sip

Committee Purpose – To discuss outreach and educational efforts, needs, and goals of the RRWMB with staff and make recommendations to the RRWMB Managers. Provide direction and guidance to RRWMB staff on implementing recommendations.

3. **Human Resources Committee**

Jerome Deal
John Finney
Greg Holmvik
Dan Wilkens
Rob Sip

Committee Purpose – To review the RRWMB Personnel manual and policies with RRWMB staff, conduct employee reviews, review salary and benefit packages with staff, and make recommendations to the RRWMB Managers.\



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4. Monitoring Advisory Committee (Established June 2008)

Dan Money
Dan Wilkens
Rob Sip

Committee Purpose – To provide guidance on water quality monitoring issues in relation to flood impoundments and to work with the International Water Institute on monitoring activities associated with the River Watch Program.

5. Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group

Jerome Deal, Co-Chair
Greg Holmvik
Leroy Ose
Dan Wilkens
Rob Sip
Alternates - Dan Money and Jason Braaten

Work Group Purpose – To implement the goals and objectives of the 1998 Mediation Agreement.

6. Mediation Agreement / Ten-Year Outcomes

Jerome Deal (*Committee Chair*)
Rodger Hemphill
Lisa Frenette
Rob Sip

Committee Purpose – To review outcomes of the 1998 Mediation Agreement and to advise on guidance for determining indicators or measures of progress.

7. Budget and Finance Committee

Jerome Deal (*Committee Chair*)
John Finney
Rodger Hemphill
Myron Jesme – Administrator Representative
Dan Wilkens
Rob Sip
Nikki Swenson

Committee Purpose – Annually review the budget, levy financial/banking needs and issues, and make recommendations to the RRWMB Managers. Provide direction to RRWMB staff to implement changes in conjunction with the Treasurer and other RRWMB Officers as needed.



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8. Investment Committee

John Finney
Greg Holmvik
Jerome Deal
Dan Wilkens
Rob Sip

Committee Purpose – To give direction to the Treasurer to purchase or sell approved investments according to the RRWMB Treasurers Manual and to make day to day investment decisions.

9. Legislative Committee

Jason Braaten
Lisa Frenette
Dan Money (*Committee Chair*)
LeRoy Ose
Rob Sip

Committee Purpose – Develop new and revise existing legislative priorities to be approved by the RRWMB Managers.

10. Technical Advisory Committee

Jerry Bents (HEI)
Chad Engels (Moore Engineering)
Nate Dalager (HDR)
Blake Carlson (WSN)
Charlie Anderson
Rob Sip
Red River Basin Coordinator (DNR Staff)
Other as determined by the RRWMB Managers and Executive Director (BWSR and IWI)

Committee Purpose – To review technical and engineering issues and make recommendations related to flood damage reduction, wetlands, drainage and related environmental considerations as directed by the RRWMB Managers.

EXTERNAL COMMITTEES:

1. Red River Retention Authority

Jerome Deal
John Finney
Greg Holmvik
Alternates: LeRoy Ose and Roger Mischel



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2. Red River Basin Commission

Delegates: John Finney and Dan Wilkens

Alternate: Greg Holmvik for John Finney

Alternate: Dan Money for Dan Wilkens

3. NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Committee

Greg Holmvik

Roger Mischel

Kevin Ruud

Rob Sip

4. Drainage Work Group

Jerome Deal

Lisa Frenette

Dan Wilkens

Rob Sip

5. State NRCS Technical Committee

Dan Money

Alternate - Rob Sip

6. International Water Institute

Dan Wilkens

Alternate - John Finney

7. Red River Basin Watershed Feasibility Study (WFS) Technical Committee

Jerry Bents

Chuck Fritz

Red River Basin Coordinator (DNR Staff)

Dan Money

Rob Sip

BOARD MEMBER COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION

Jason Braaten (RRWD)

1. Governing Documents
2. FDR Work Group, *Alternate*
3. Legislative Committee



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Jerome Deal (BdSWD) – RRWMB Secretary

1. Governing Documents
2. Public Information Committee, *Chair*
3. Human Resources Committee
4. FDR Work Group, *Co-Chair*
5. Mediation Agreement and Ten-year Outcomes, *Chair*
6. Budget and Finance Committee, *Chair*
7. Red River Retention Authority
8. Drainage Work Group

John Finney (JRWD) – RRWMB President

1. Human Resources Committee
2. Red River Basin Commission, *Delegate*
3. Budget and Finance Committee
4. Red River Retention Authority
5. International Water Institute, *Alternate*

Greg Holmvik (WRWD) – RRWMB Vice President

1. Governing Documents
2. Public Information Committee
3. Human Resources Committee
4. Red River Basin Commission, *Alternate*
5. FDR Work Group
6. Red River Retention Authority
7. NRCS RCPP Committee

Roger Mischel (MSTRWD)

1. Red River Retention Authority, *Alternate*
2. NRCS RCPP Committee

Dan Money (TRWD)

1. Governing Documents
2. Public Information Committee
3. Monitoring Advisory Committee
4. FDR Work Group, *Alternate*
5. Legislative Committee, *Chair*
6. Red River Basin Commission, *Alternate*
7. State NRCS Technical Committee
8. Red River Basin Watershed Feasibility Study Technical Committee



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LeRoy Ose (RLWD)

1. Public Information Committee
2. FDR Work Group, *Alternate*
3. Legislative Committee
4. Red River Retention Authority, *Alternate*

Dan Wilkens (SHRWD) – RRWMB Treasurer

1. Human Resources Committee
2. Monitoring Advisory Committee
3. Red River Basin Commission, *Delegate*
4. FDR Work Group
5. Budget and Finance Committee
6. Drainage Work Group
7. International Water Institute

13. Reports:

A. Internal RRWMB Committees: On January 31, 2018, the Legislative Committee met at the SHRWD and discussed prioritizing funding requests and streamlining the process.

B. External Committees:

- i. Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) Conference:** The annual conference was held in Winnipeg and was well received and productive. Manager Wilkens attended the conference and there will be a RRBC retreat in a couple weeks and he indicated that the RRBC is working on some project proposals. Ted Priester gave some additional insights into the conference and stated that they are working on their water quality strategic plan. They are also working on some additional projects and want to continue their water monitoring work with the University of MN and the Bois De Sioux Watershed District at the North Ottawa Project.
- ii. IWI - River Watch Forum:** Manager Wilkens attended this event and there were over 300 kids in attendance. The event moved from Crookston to the Alerus Center in Grand Forks to meet space requirements. Several colleges were also in attendance to recruit and interact with the high school kids.

Manager Wilkens discussed some historical perspectives of how the Forum came into existence and talked about data that is being obtained as well as experiences that kids are receiving. He also mentioned that it would be good to have our North Dakota counterparts more involved in the future. Myron Jesme asked about having someone come and update the watershed districts on the conference. Manager Wilkens said that would be good outreach and suggested Executive Director Sip coordinate that in the future.



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- iii. **Drainage Work Group (DWG):** Manager Deal updated the Managers on DWG activities. The DWG is close to finalizing legislative proposals with much discussion recently focusing on the Runoff Based Assessment alternative for local drainage authorities. However, the MN Center for Environmental Advocacy is having concerns with the alternative. Managers Deal and Wilkens stated that this is only an option and a tool for drainage authorities to use. Manager Deal stated that this alternative can work well and that it is an option for the drainage authorities. Allen Wold stated that his concern is that MPCA could use it to label ditches as point sources. Manager Holmvik asked if there was anything that will adversely affect our area and the response was that it would be a positive change/option for repairing a system. Manager Deal stated that the DWG is continuing to also track TMDLs and TALU. Executive Director Sip distributed a report for informational purposes on recommendations for accelerating buffer strip acquisition.

C. Executive Director Report:

- i. The Rinke Noonan Annual Drainage and Wetland Conference was well attended, with around 200 people participating in the event. The regular case law update was provided and altered hydrology was also presented by Houston Engineering. Other presentations included phosphorus in surface waters and the authorities that watershed districts have to implement buffer strips and projects in general.
- ii. A handout was provided for the MAWD legislative conference.
- iii. Meeting dates for the year for the RRWMB were included in the packet as well as a calendar of upcoming watershed district meetings.
- iv. An update was given on the March Conference regarding the agenda, KFGO radio show and registration materials.
- v. Information was shared about the current office printer, which may need to be replaced in the short-term. No service agreement is in place with MARCO due to the age of the machine.
- vi. Information was shared regarding the MN Prairie Plan, which was recently updated by state and federal agencies and several partners. Focal areas of the plan include regional complexes or habitat corridors that may align with goals and objectives of the RRWMB. Manager Money stated that DNR does not always include others in their planning processes and other Prairie Plan partners may not necessarily agree with including flood projects in their plans.
- vii. Maps illustrating Ducks Unlimited projects and BWSR easements were shared for informational purposes only.
- viii. A Minnesota Department of Agriculture factsheet regarding pesticide monitoring was shared.



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D. International Joint Commission:

- i. **Water Quality Committee Update:** Jim Ziegler updated the Managers regarding activities of this Committee, which is working on water quality objectives for phosphorus and nitrogen at the border and Lake Winnipeg. Ziegler discussed the specifics of what is being considered by the Committee for exact goals or standards. He stated that it is surprising the amount of algae growth in the Red River.

Ziegler mentioned that the MN standards for the Red River regarding phosphorus are identical to the Committee recommendations and seems to be reasonable. He also compared current water quality versus the objective, and phosphorus and nitrogen would have to be reduced by about 50% to meet the goals. However, this does not equate to farmers being required to reduce nutrient use by 50 % on individual fields. He also mentioned that Discovery Farms is providing some valuable information about on-farm applications and water quality data.

Ziegler stated that the long-range goal is achievable, and Canada will monitor at the border. He stated that this process is a clear indication that something needs to change in water quality in the Red River, so we need to take a serious look and see what changes can be made to reach the goal. He also said that the goal Canada is using is from the mid 1990's.

There was discussion about where nutrient loading is coming from by watershed and Ziegler stated that current data and models do indicate where work needs to be done and that agriculture is not the only source. Myron Jesme discussed water quality standards in relation to cities such as Thief River Falls and how standards are met and concerns about having to use funds to upgrade wastewater treatment plants versus using funds for downstream treatment.

Manager Money asked if there will be a rule versus a recommendation in the future. Ziegler stated that there are goals to work with potential regulated entities and that many changes have already been implemented by farmers. Manager Money stated tile drainage will be a concern by regulators and that education is good but there is still a lack of BMP implementation. Ziegler discussed plans for a cold weather BMP workshop and that the Red River Basin is different from other parts of the state.

Manager Money stated that local units of government are the agencies that get the work done at the local level. Ziegler talked about education and outreach and how more information can be brought to local units of government and that the RRBC can play a role in this.



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Manager Money also talked about the BTSAC tiling and drainage papers and how that information can help inform the process. Ziegler also stated that North Dakota has different water quality rules from Minnesota. It was stated that this is a large undertaking and will take much time, effort, and resources.

Sip asked how this effort corresponds to Minnesota's overall nutrient reduction strategy. Ziegler stated that this effort is part of the overall state plan. There was additional discussion about algae and sediment levels and the impacts we see at Lake Winnipeg. Allen Wold mentioned concerns about MDAs proposed Nitrogen Fertilizer Rule and the need for more study at the local level. There were questions about WRAPS and load allocations for nutrients and Ziegler provided additional information.

E. Agency and Partner Reports:

- i. **MN DNR** - Rodger Hemphill gave an update on the FDRWG and stated that the February 21, 2018 meeting was canceled due to lack of agenda items and scheduling conflicts. Hemphill also provided a list of flood projects and status of environmental review for each project. Manager Wilkens stated that the RRWMB should review the DNR Red River Basin Coordinator position and that it should be placed on the agenda for the March 2018 meeting given all the personnel changes in recent months. Manager Wilkens and others stated that a RRWMB Committee should review this contract. Mr. Jesme asked about accelerated funding requests and the status of this. Hemphill responded and provided additional information on this issue.
- ii. **RRRA** - Keith Weston gave an update about BCA and stated that watersheds are moving forward with RCPP planning. Mr. Weston presented about the Ag BMP workshop and the excellent opportunity for the science community and academia to discuss which BMPs work in this northern climate and the cold wet soils that are within the Red River Basin. The BMP workshop will be held in September 2018. Mr. Weston will be heading to Bismarck after the Board Meeting to give a presentation about RCPP watershed planning in the Red River Basin to the ND Water Topics Committee. The NDJWRD held a special meeting recently and they are looking at a coordinator position to work with their Board on legislative issues.

Mr. Weston has been working with Executive Director Sip to secure speakers for the March Conference on soil health and drainage. Mr. Weston presented that there is an opportunity through NRCS to address natural resource issues with some new funding through NRCS-USDA. There will be 18 grants possible totaling \$4 million through EQIP, wetland reserve easements, technical support, and CSP and the deadline is April 14, 2018. He mentioned that this might be the time to fund a watershed district or SWCD employee to work on specific projects.



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If applied for and awarded, it would involve quarterly reimbursements and six-month reporting. Weston indicated that an RRRRA meeting will be held on March 22, 2018 after the March Conference. It was stated that the North Dakota side would sponsor \$500.00 towards the annual conference. Mr. Weston stated that he has received some calls and emails about issues not being addressed in a timely manner by NRCS for RCPP review points and reimbursements. He will be in contact with NRCS to address this issue and Deb Walchuk of NRCS will work on this issue. NRCS State Conservationist Kathy Pullman will not be returning to Minnesota and has taken a new position in Maine due to some health issues. Curt Elke is the interim State Conservationist and he is hoping to meet with the RRWMB, North Dakota, and other NRCS officials in the future. Mr. Elke is the acting State Conservationist for 120 days according to NRCS policy.

Several questions and much discussion ensued regarding the funds available that Mr. Weston discussed. Myron Jesme, Tracy Halstensgard and others voiced concerns about the NRCS process and timelines and that there are several concerns from landowners about these types of issues. It was also stated that it is difficult to coordinate projects with landowners and NRCS given some of the additional requirements.

F. Advisory Comments: There were no advisory comments presented.

G. Upcoming Meetings: Executive Director Sip informed the Managers of his upcoming schedule and areas of focus. He also shared information about several upcoming events:

- MAWD Legislative Session in St. Paul - March 7 and 8, 2018.
- Subsurface Drainage Research Forum and Tile Drainage Design Workshop at NDSU in Fargo - March 6 and 7, 2018 NDSU Campus, Fargo.
- Whitney and Lake Bottom Open House – March 13, 2018

H. Adjournment: The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 9:30 a.m. at the Courtyard by Marriott, Moorhead MN. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:03 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Nikki Swenson
Executive Assistant