



Meeting Highlights – February 16, 2021

- 1. Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) Annual Funding:** The Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) Managers approved a regular annual allocation of \$85,000 to the RRBC for basin-wide coordination efforts related to communication and outreach, Long-term Flood Solutions, Red River Basin Feasibility Study, and other initiatives of the RRBC. The funding agreement and scope of services was approved via resolution.
- 2. Contract for Legislative Services:** The RRWMB Managers discussed the need for additional legislative assistance during the 2021 Minnesota legislative session. Much discussion was held and ultimately a contract and scope of services was approved with Brent Urdahl of Tethrippon Consulting LLC. The contract was approved via resolution for \$20,000 to provide additional legislative advocacy services in 2021 to the RRWMB. The Contract is for February 16, 2021 to August 31, 2021. The Managers agreed to review legislative advocacy needs for 2022 later in 2021.
- 3. Investment Committee Recommendations:** The RRWMB Managers heard recommendations from the Investment Committee about opening a checking account and money market account with Bell Bank. The Committee provided additional details about recent Committee meetings and discussions held with Bell Bank, Bremer Bank, and other financial institutions in the Red River Basin (RRB). The Managers approved moving forward with opening accounts with Bell Bank, while leaving the current accounts open at Bremer Bank. In addition, current interest rate information was shared with the RRWMB Managers about investment tools and options at Bell Bank and Bremer Bank. It was determined that as upcoming CD's mature, the funds would likely be transferred to Bell Bank depending on interest rates.
- 4. RRWMB Historic Legislative Accomplishments Report:** Retired RRWMB Legislative Liaison and Project Coordinator Ron Harnack and RRWMB Executive Director Robert Sip co-presented a historic report about past legislative accomplishments. It was mentioned that the document also preserves history of the RRWMB and will be distributed to RRWMB membership along with partners and stakeholders. The Managers accepted the document, which will be finalized and distributed electronically.
- 5. Water Quality Program Discussion:** The RRWMB Managers heard information about current and historic funding commitments related to water quality efforts. Information was presented about RRWMB expenditures from 2013 to 2020, with the data indicating that approximately 13 percent is allocated annually towards water quality efforts of RRWMB member watershed districts. The Managers were informed that the River Watch Program allocations from 2013 to 2020 were included in the Water Quality Program expenditure calculations. The Managers also approved a minor change in the Water Quality Program that will require applicants to seek outside funding for water quality projects prior to requesting funds from the RRWMB. It was also agreed that unsuccessful applications for outside funding would not preclude or eliminate a member watershed district from receiving funding through the RRWMB for water quality projects.

- 6. Pine Lake Flood Damage Reduction (FDR) Project:** A Step 2 Submittal was reviewed with the RRWMB Managers for the Pine Lake FDR Project being developed by the Red Lake Watershed District (RLWD). It was indicated that no changes have been made from the Step 1 Submittal and that the RLWD would likely be applying for funding from outside funding sources for natural resources components of the Project. After brief discussion, the RRWMB Managers approved moving the Project to Step 2, which will enable the Project to be eligible for RRWMB funding.
- 7. LiDAR Updates:** The Managers were presented information from Sean Vaughn of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minnesota Geomatics Committee about LiDAR data collection costs and how the State of Minnesota coordinates collection efforts. Information was also shared about a recent review of need for an updated LiDAR collection for the Red River Basin by the RRWMB Technical Advisory Committee. The RRWMB held additional discussion and affirmed that the RRWMB should work with the State of Minnesota on a potential LiDAR data collect in 2021, introduce legislation during the 2021 legislative session to fund LiDAR collection, and to currently hold off on a Request for Proposals (RFP) for collecting data. The Managers also determined that an application would not be submitted for LiDAR funds through the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources.
- 8. Next RRWMB Meeting:** Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 9:00 AM to be held electronically.