

> Red River Watershed Management Board

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Board of Managers

John Finney-Humboldt Farrell Erickson-Badger Harlev Younggren. Secretary-Hallock Ron Osowsld. Chairman-Oslo Vernon Johnson-Clearbrook Daniel Wilkens. Treasurer-Fertile Sanford Moen-Garv Curtis Nelson-Bamesville Jerome Deal-Wheaton Don Ogaard. Executive Director-Ada

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

April 21, 1998

Meadows Golf Course

Moorhead, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, April 21, 1998, at the Meadows Golf Course, Moorhead, Minnesota.

In the absence of the chairman and vice-chairman, Secretary Younggren called the meeting to order.

Members present were: Daniel Wilkens Sanford Moen
Farrell Erickson Curtis Nelson
Jerome Deal Vernon Johnson

Others present were: Don Ogaard, Executive Director
Naomi Jagol, Administrative Assistant, Sand Hill River WD
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Middle River-Snake River WD
Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering
Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
Nolan Baratono, MPCA-Basin Coordinator
Paul Suomala, TIC
Bob Wright, Wild Rice WD
Lowell Enerson, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Ray Bohn, MAWD
Michelle Winkis, Attorney, Buffalo-Red River WD
Bob Kloubec, Buffalo-Red River WD
Jerry Bennett, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
Rick St. Germain, Engineer, Houston Engineering
Pete Waller, BWSR

Additional items were added to the agenda. Vernon Johnson requested to update the Board on the most recent meeting he attended of the Board of Water and Soil Resources in St Paul. Daniel Wilkens requested to discuss the possibility of a contribution for an educational effort.

Minutes of the March 19, 1998, meeting were read and approved. **Motion** to approve the minutes by Manager Moen, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Nelson, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

A **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Erickson, **Seconded** by Manager Johnson, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Communication/Internet Committee Report- Daniel Wilkens

Manager Wilkens discussed the concept of creating a web page for the Red River Watershed Management Board and each individual member watershed district. Wilkens explained that Garden Valley Telephone Company, Erskine, MN, the local Internet provider for the Fertile area, has a specialist that designs and maintains web sites. A handout was distributed of a sample web site for the RRWMB along with one prepared for an individual district. Items included on the site were a history of the organization, current officers, a calendar of important dates, and minutes. The RRWMB page would also include suggested links to various groups or agencies including the nine member watershed districts. Wilkens explained that sites have been developed under the direction of the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts for the individual watershed districts and the RRWMB as well. Wilkens noted that the proposal of the committee was not an attempt to compete with MAWD regarding maintenance, but rather an effort to create a system that would allow for ease of maintenance due to the locality of the provider.

Manager Wilkens requested Ray Bohn of MAWD to share his view on this proposal. Bohn stated that the concept behind MAWD designing a home page was based on a five year plan to have every watershed district in the State of Minnesota possessing and maintaining their own web site with links to the MAWD page. Bohn explained that for reasons of convenience, the closer the group is to the individual providing maintenance, the easier it is to maintain accurate records. Bohn noted the importance of a commitment to maintain accurate and timely information on the web site. Bohn stated that the current rate for maintaining or updating a web site through MAWD is \$25.00 per hour.

Manager Wilkens inquired of individual districts about their opinions of the proposal. Lowell Enerson, Administrator-RLWD, stated the goal of the web site should be to establish credibility of watershed districts on a statewide basis. Enerson suggested the RRWMB sponsor training for the individual watershed districts on how to utilize the Internet for informational purposes. Jon Roeschlein, Administrator-BdSWD, stated he felt it was important to have the ability to maintain the web sites on a local basis. Roeschlein added that since the watershed districts will be expanding their usage of the Internet with regard to obtaining and providing information, it is vital to keep information current. Ray Bohn concurred that the Internet is both an external and internal tool and agreed that maintenance would be more cost effective done on a local basis.

Manager Deal added that the watershed districts within the Red River Watershed Management Board need to be pursuing the same goals and accessing and providing the same information. Deal noted that the implementation of a web page for the RRWMB with sites linking to all the participating watershed districts would be a way to facilitate communication not only within the districts, but to the public as well. Wilkens explained the significance of the RRWMB being a leader in the Red River Valley regarding water management and the importance of the Board remaining a cohesive organization. Wilkens stated the goal of the communication committee was to find the most effective means for enhancing this form of communication and it was determined to accomplish this, the system must be developed and maintained on a local basis. Wilkens recommended this proposal be tabled and discussed at the next regular meeting.

Legislative Report - Ray Bohn

Bohn distributed a handout of the MAWD Legislative Update recapping the legislative efforts this past session. Bohn commented on the passage of the Bois de Sioux legislation that was of particular importance to the RRWMB with the inclusion of the remaining four counties to their watershed. Manager Deal commended Bohn on the outstanding job he did to aid in the passage of the legislation and stated their district had tried for eight

years to get this bill passed. Bohn added that Senator Keith Langseth and Senator Roger Moe were instrumental in getting the legislation passed. Jon Roeschlein added that the Board of Water and Soil Resources agreed to facilitate an informational meeting to explain to interested parties what the passage of the BdSWD legislation means to the county commissioners and property owners within the Bois de Sioux Watershed District's jurisdictional area.

Bohn stated that Ron Harnack, Executive Director of BWSR, had been discussing drainage issues with legislators during the session. Bohn explained that Harnack had been expressing to legislators that there is no problem with the present drainage law. The problem with drainage is that the laws are not properly applied. Dan Thul stated his opinion that drainage will be the next significant issue to be discussed, not unlike the Environmental Impact Statement. Ogaard added that with regard to the issue of drainage, the RRWMB has historically taken a proactive approach toward being involved in discussions.

A new interim president was appointed to the MAWD Board. Bohn explained that the previous president, Woody Love, was not reappointed to the board of managers in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, therefore, he could not fulfill his obligation as president of MAWD. Bohn noted that Vernon Johnson, the board's vice president, assumed the vacant position.

The 1998 MAWD Summer Tour was discussed. Bohn stated the tour will take place in the Joe River, Two Rivers, and Roseau River Watershed Districts, and informational packages will be sent out within the next week to ten days.

Lowell Enerson commented on the passage of the beaver control legislation. Enerson encouraged all watershed districts to inform the counties within their district to prepare resolutions indicating they want to participate.

The bonding bill to provide for the construction of ring dikes was discussed by Lowell Enerson. Enerson stated that \$1.5 million is available in state funds and inquired whether the RRWMB would continue to provide funding assistance. Ogaard suggested discussing this issue under agenda item #12.

Vernon Johnson added that he had visited with Representatives Dee Long and Edgar Olson during the legislative session. They commented on the outstanding credibility associated with watershed districts.

District Reports;

- The Sand Hill River WD reported that Managers met with Wendy Pearson of the National Weather Service regarding the installation of a flood-warning gage in Beltrami. Pearson explained that a grant was approved by the State of Minnesota, FEMA, and the DNR to improve flood-forecasting techniques. The stations proposed to be installed are satellite oriented and equipped with phone capabilities if a jurisdiction would desire to hook up for their own data and warning system. The weather service would upload data every for hours from the satellite. Pearson stated that Beltrami was chosen as an installation site based on rating curve. The unit will be installed by USGS south of Beltrami at the bridge on Highway #9.
- The Wild Rice WD reported that at their April meeting, the Board of Managers approved making a request to the Minnesota Recovers Flood Task Force to consider providing funding assistance to study the potential for creating an off-channel levee system on the Upper Reaches Project area of the Wild Rice River. There has been a good deal of interest in a system of levees built back from the channel that would provide flood

Protection, solve many annual maintenance problems in the project area and enhance wildlife development within the levee system.

- The Roseau River WD reported that the District will resume its ring dike program as soon as conditions permit. Construction will be completed on one dike, which was partially done last fall. Bids will be let for new dikes that were previously evaluated and found to have met the District's criteria for construction.
- The Buffalo-Red River WD reported that a meeting was held with the north region of the Board of Water and Soil Resources regarding the 10-year update to the overall plan. The regional representatives will make a recommendation to BWSR in St. Paul to approve the update.
- The Bois de Sioux WD reported that the RRWMB jurisdiction now includes all of the Bois de Sioux Watershed District. The Board of Managers discussed this legislation at their board meeting held on April 16, 1998, and agreed to certify the levy when the following conditions have been met. 1) The Flood Control Strategy that the staff are currently assigned to assemble is presented to the Board, and 2) One Public Information Meeting to be conducted by BWSR, is held in Herman, MN to discuss the Flood Control Strategy, the RRWMB Levy and its potential in implementing a flood control plan. The Flood Control Plan would be developed as one of the first steps to prioritizing and developing projects.
- The Red Lake WD reported that the District opened bids for the Louisville/Parnell Impoundment Project No 121. The bids were considerably lower than the engineer's estimate. The District anticipates all permits will be available so construction can begin when the weather permits.
- The Two Rivers WD reported that the District has been working with the Joe River and the Roseau River Watershed Districts to coordinate the 1998 MAWD Summer Tour, to be held June 25-26, 1998. The tour will highlight various projects within the three different Districts, ring dike programs, Red River flooding concerns, and concerns that arise when river systems are located within two countries. The unique terrain that makes up the Red River basin will also be highlighted. Former Ag Secretary Bob Berglund will be the featured speaker at a banquet to be held in Roseau after the tour.
- The Middle River-Snake River WD reported that the development of flood control works on the Snake River under Public Law 566 continues. The District is working with the City of Warren and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to develop a project to control floods on the Snake River. At this point, the project includes an off-channel impoundment with 100-year storage at approximately 7,000 acre feet and a diversion around the City of Warren. The details are currently being developed. It is thought that the procedures to establish the impoundment will begin late in 1998 or early in 1999.
- The Joe River WD had no report this month.

Red River Coordinator Report - Dan Thul

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met earlier this morning and addressed the modeling efforts completed to date and discussed where the committee should proceed. The committee agreed to move forward cautiously regarding modeling efforts and would like to see participation from the Corps of Engineers (COE).

The committee discussed the Maple River Dam Project in North Dakota. The TAC will attempt to determine, through utilizing a model, what effect the proposed Maple River Project would have had on the 1997 flood if it had been in place and functioning.

Thul discussed the proposal received from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service last month. Thul stated he had been in contact with Al Kean of BWSR. The TAC agreed to monitor the modeling effort to ensure it is moving forward as the RRWMB desires. Thul indicated the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is trying to schedule a meeting with agencies in an effort to bring together all the parties providing funding assistance. Thul stated that once the date is finalized, the RRWMB will be notified.

Pete Waller of BWSR addressed the TAC regarding technical guidelines for wetland restoration. Thul stated that once the committee has reviewed the STAR value method, a meeting will be scheduled with BWSR to discuss potential incentives for improved flood storage.

The UNET letter from Marshall County was reviewed by the TAC. Since no funds were requested regarding the completion of the model, no official action was taken by the committee.

TAC/RRWMB Discussion on Present and Future Work-load

A handout was distributed prepared by Don Ogaard regarding discussion issues for the RRWMB members, Technical Advisory Committee, and consultants. The topics for discussion included the following:

1. What planning is taking place in the WD's for future water retention projects?
2. Is the development of a hydrologic "model" for each district necessary?
3. Is an analysis of the existing drainage systems necessary to determine potential for design changes/enhancements to aid in the reduction of flood damages?
4. Should the existing auto-draw-down flood control structures be analyzed for the potential for being changed to gated/managed draw-down?
5. How can the WD's overcome the stigma caused by the EIS relative to the negative issues published therein?

The handout generated a lot of good discussion on the various topics. The Board directed the TAC to review the draft legislation to change the drainage law, define the issue for the Board and to make recommendations. The Managers agreed to discuss the handout with their respective districts and then these issues could be addressed again at the next monthly meeting.

Executive Director Report - Don Ogaard

Ogaard stated that a joint meeting was held in Grand Forks with the Netherlands Tour Group including members of the International Joint Commission (IJC) and the Red River Basin Board (RRBB). Ogaard explained the purpose of the meeting was to bring individuals together who attended the tour to discuss lessons learned on the trip and how to develop procedures to apply those practices here in the Red River Basin. Ogaard noted the significance of each individual's background in influencing what aspects of water management they found most interesting on the tour. Members from the IJC indicated the issue they were most interested in was the establishment and operation of the Rhine Commission. Ogaard explained this organization is made up of six countries along the Rhine River which practice water management through a process of consensus. Ogaard stated that due to his extensive involvement with watershed districts, he was particularly interested in the

local water boards. The operation of a particular water board, comparable in size to the Wild Rice WD, comprised of 2,000 square miles had an annual operating budget of \$50 million and 233 employees. Nolan Baratono, who also attended the meeting, added that all parties attending the tour did agree, however, that the process of planning was the most important aspect of project development.

Ogaard gave an update on the status of the mediation process. Associates from CDR had contacted him and indicated that contracts have been signed for the continuation of Phase II which is the actual process of mediation and negotiation. Ogaard was notified that two additional candidates need to be selected and, ultimately, approved by DNR, to be included on the mediation panel. One candidate will represent the main-sterr **urban** community, while the other candidate will represent the rural community. The names of several individual' were suggested by the Board. The Board directed Ogaard to make inquires to appropriate individuals to request their participation.

Ogaard stated that a Conference on Planning sponsored by the Corps of Engineers is scheduled for April 28-30, 1998, in St. Paul. He is planning to attend along with Naomi Jagol who will be recording the meeting for the Red River Basin Board.

Notification of an insurance renewal for directors and/or officials of the RRWMB was presented to the Board for discussion. The annual insurance premium is \$3,290 which constitutes no increase from the previous years' premium. Ogaard explained that the company will not actually write the policy until they have received notice from the Board stating their intention of renewal. **Motion** by Wilkens to renew the insurance policy and authorize payment of the \$3,290 premium, **Seconded** by Erickson, **Carried**.

A video was prepared by Pro Video of the public informational meetings conducted by Susan Gilbert throughout the Red River Valley. Ogaard noted that 25 videos were prepared and encouraged each district to obtain one to bring back to their district and utilize as a public awareness tool. The remaining videos will remain on file with Ogaard to loan out to interested individuals and/or organizations. The video was viewed by the Board.

Ogaard stated that Sanford Moen did not seek reappointment on the Board of Managers for the Wild Rice Watershed District, and therefore would also be retiring from the RRWMB as well. Moen added that it was a privilege to serve on the RRWMB. He specifically thanked Don Ogaard for making an extra effort to increase his knowledge of watershed related issues when he first was appointed on the Board.

A letter was distributed by Ogaard as an example of correspondence to legislators who assisted in the passage of important legislation effecting water management in the Red River basin.

District's Funding Requests:

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

Board of Water and Soil Resources Update - Vernon Johnson

Vernon Johnson attended the regular monthly board meeting of BWSR in St. Paul. Johnson reported on several items of interest discussed at the meeting. Sharon Clark, Department of Agriculture, reported on a \$1.5M study to examine scab in wheat. Kelly Johnson, Department of Health, commented on the need for watersheds to

Pollution Control, concurred with promoting water quality and noted the need for samples in order to provide accurate data. Massey inquired on the possibility of MAWD providing assistance for this effort by sponsoring a seminar. Johnson stated that Kathy Gregor, Mark Deutschman, and Lowell Enerson agreed to form a committee to plan a seminar and will make a presentation to BWSR once details have been finalized.

Individual Farmstead Ring Dikes Funding Proposal

State funds of \$1.5 million were made available through the bonding bill passed in the recent legislative session. These funds are contingent upon 50% cost sharing with local governmental units. The total estimated maximum cost of the ring dike program is therefore established at \$2,250,000. After discussion, the board recommended to apportion the cost share percentage as follows: 50% State, 25% RRWMB, 12.5% landowner, and 12.5% local watershed district.

Motion by Manager Moen to fund an amount up to half of the local share up to \$750,000 contingent on the funds to be utilized for watershed district sponsored individual farmstead ring dikes, **Seconded** by Manager Erickson, **Carried**.

River Watch Program - Daniel Wilkens

A handout was distributed from the 1998 Water Planners Conference Planning Committee by Manager Wilkens. Manager Wilkens encouraged each district to submit a nomination for several awards that will be given at the State Water Planners Conference hosted this year at the University of Minnesota-Crookston.

Manager Wilkens proceeded to discuss an opportunity for the RRWMB to sponsor students from the Fosston High School on an exchange program to Russia. Wilkens explained that Wayne Goeken, River Watch Program Coordinator, is currently participating in a program that involves schools in the River Watch Program hosting students from Russia to compare and discuss methods for obtaining and analyzing data samples. Currently, students from Russia are visiting the Fosston School. Goeken requested funding assistance from the RRWMB in order to aid in the effort to reciprocate this experience by sending six students from Fosston and two chaperones to Russia this summer. Goeken stated that approximately \$12,000 will be needed to cover expenses associated with the trip and added that several fund raisers are scheduled throughout the Sand Hill River Watershed District to assist in this effort. After Board discussion, the Managers decided to make a recommendation at the next monthly meeting.

The next meeting will be on May 19, 1998, at 9:30 a.m. at the Sand Hill River WD office in Fertile, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m. Respectfully submitted,

E. Harley Younggren
Secretary

Naomi L. Jagol
Administrative Assistant