



## **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**

**July 21, 2009**

**The Blue Moose, East Grand Forks, Minnesota**

**held jointly with the**

**Red River Joint Water Resource Board**

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, July 21, 2009 at The Blue Moose, East Grand Forks, Minnesota.

In the absence of the President during his interview with Joel Heitkamp, KFGO Radio Fargo-Moorhead broadcasting from The Blue Moose, Orville Knott-Vice President called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

John Finney	Steve Lee
Dan Money	Ron Osowski
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
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers WD
- Joe Belford, Ramsey County Commissioner
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Lance Yohe, Executive Director, RRBC
- Julie Goehring, Communications Coordinator, RRBC
- Todd Miller, Roseau River WD
- Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering
- Henry VanOffelen, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
- Paul Wannarka, MNDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
- Roger Anderson, Two Rivers Watershed District
- Brian Dwight, Board of Water & Soil Resources
- Rob Sip, Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- Charlie Anderson, Engineer, JOR Engineering, Inc.

An update from Manager Ista regarding the establishment of an organized watershed district for the Otter Tail River was added to the agenda under *Other Issues / New Agenda Items*.

**Motion** by Manager Deal to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as written with minor corrections, **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 Money, **Carried**. A one-page handout of monthly bills to be approved was distributed. **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Lee, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

### **Otter Tail River Watershed**

Manager Ista reported that discussions have been occurring regarding the establishment an Otter Tail River Watershed District. Manager Deal added that an Otter Tail County Commissioner has been attending board meetings in the Bois de Sioux WD to observe the operations of the District.

**Motion** by Manager Deal to forward a letter of support to the Wilkin County Commission to offer assistance to the county boards within the Otter Tail River watershed regarding the development of an organized watershed district, **Seconded** by Manager Lee, **Carried**.

Manager Deal also added that a project is developing within Grant County which could involve the development of a retention structure located upstream from the Redpath Project of the Bois de Sioux WD. **Motion** by Manager Wilkens to draft a letter of support to the Grant County Commission in support of the project, **Seconded** by Manager Ista, **Carried**.

### **Water Quality Project Monitoring Report**

In the absence of Wayne Goeken, the project monitoring monthly report was distributed. A meeting of the River Watch Strategic Leadership Team was conducted on June 18<sup>th</sup> to review the River Watch legislation and discuss project outcomes, deliverables, work plan and evaluation needs. A follow-up session is planned for July 29<sup>th</sup>.

Manager Wilkens reported that the Water Quality Project Monitoring Committee met via conference call to discuss the future of the River Watch Program with regard to the new legislation. The committee agreed that a steering committee should be developed to further discuss the future of the initiatives currently administered by the RRWMB.

### **Red River Basin Commission**

Lance Yohe, Executive Director – RRBC, noted that the RRBC is gathering information from entities in the Red River Basin on recent and past flood issues. This information will assist in the development of a regional flood damage reduction strategy. The Minnesota and North Dakota legislatures recently each appropriated \$500,000 to the RRBC to develop, in consultation and cooperation with boards and commissions involved in water management and flood prevention and control in the Red River Basin, a recommendation for a plan of action to address, mitigate, and respond to flooding issues in the Red River watershed. A draft report will be ready January 15, 2010.

The RRBC will be hosting a series of face-to-face forums to receive public input on flood issues and solutions.

### **Red River Coordinator/TAC Report**

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) did not meet this month. He reported that he attended the RRBC's Red River Flood Prevention Planning study committee meeting conducted on July 20<sup>th</sup>. The committee is developing Phase I of the work plan.

Charlie Anderson noted that he has been discussing his concerns regarding the final draft of the Agricultural Tile Drainage Study with Dr. Gary Sands of the University of Minnesota. Anderson stated that he would distribute a report outlining his concerns at the next board meeting.

Thul referenced the letter of support that was authorized at the previous monthly meeting to the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) regarding the proposal presented to the board at their May board meeting by Henry VanOffelen. He noted that he would work in conjunction with H. VanOffelen and N. Erickson to develop the letter.

### **Tax Levy Rate Determination**

The Board discussed the tax levy rate determination. **Motion** by Manager Deal to maintain the levy at 100% for FY 2010, **Seconded** by Manager Finney, **Carried**.

### **Project Coordinator Report**

Ron Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. An update on farmstead and rural ring dike programs was provided. The sign up period for EQIP funding for farmstead ring dikes closed on July 15, 2009. The most recent information indicates that 62 requests were received. The RRWMB's financial commitment to farmstead ring dikes qualifying for EQIP is limited to special requests from member watershed districts which would involve a unique situation where engineering or construction costs would be higher than what would qualify under EQIP. Under this scenario, the maximum RRWMB contribution would be 12.5% of costs.

An application was submitted to Minnesota Recovers for financial assistance for 50% of the costs of engineering and construction for 56 rural ring dikes. The state share of 50% will be funded by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) with both organizations forwarding funds to the RRWMB to serve as fiscal agent to reimburse the watersheds for costs incurred. Information received from applicants for the rural ring dike program indicates that the following ring dikes are ready to move forward with construction this year: Joe River WD – 1; Two Rivers WD – 3; Red Lake WD – 5; Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers – 6; Wild Rice WD – 6; Sand Hill River WD – 2; Bois de Sioux WD – 3; Buffalo-Red River WD – 6; and Otter Tail – 3 for a total of 35 of the 56 requested.

Harnack discussed the Wild Rice WD's CD No. 18 – Goose Prairie Water Management Project. The District has discussed terminating the project. A funding advance of \$600,000 was forwarded from the RRWMB to the District to facilitate timely land acquisition for the project. Based on recent

meetings, the DNR has agreed to reallocate previously appropriated state funding for CD No. 18 to the Upper Becker Dam Enhancement Project. Confirmation has not yet been received from the District regarding their decision to terminate the project.

### **Administrator Report**

#### **A) Funding Commitments Worksheet**

A revised funding commitments worksheet as of June 30<sup>th</sup> has been developed. Please refer to handout.

#### **B) U.S. Geological Survey**

Information regarding a proposed gaging station on the Red River, east of Enloe, North Dakota was distributed. N. Erickson stated that the purpose of the proposed gaging station located 4 miles south of Wolverton, MN would be to provide for an earlier and more complete flood forecast from the National Weather Service, for the cities of Fargo/Moorhead. Funding for the proposed gage would be accomplished by a rearrangement of funds by USGS and at no increase in cost to the RRWMB. **Motion** by Manager Money to approve the proposed gaging station on the Red River, east of Enloe, North Dakota, **Seconded** by Manager Lee, **Carried**.

### **Northwest Minnesota Foundation Grant Proposal**

Henry VanOffelen, MCEA stated a proposal has been developed to submit to the Northwest Minnesota Foundation for the continued participation of MCEA in the Red River Basin mediation process, specifically for active projects in the Wild Rice and Two Rivers Watershed Districts. Funding of \$25,000 over a two-year period is requested for salaries and related benefits and expenses for professional staff involved in the work described in the proposal. Without the funding, MCEA will not be engaged in these watershed projects.

VanOffelen explained that MCEA had been notified by the Northwest Minnesota Foundation that a grant advocate would be required to receive consideration for the request. Therefore, VanOffelen requested the Board of Managers consider applying for the grant with MCEA as a co-applicant.

Manager Money noted that the Two Rivers WD was approached with the same proposal, however, the board agreed not to offer their endorsement as MCEA is currently involved in litigation with Kittson County. Manager Ista added that VanOffelen had not presented the proposal to the Wild Rice WD for consideration.

Manager Deal urged the board to consider applying as a co-applicant with MCEA as they have supported several board initiatives at the legislature. VanOffelen added that it would be at no cost to the board to apply as a co-applicant, and the board would act only as the fiscal agent for the grant proceeds.

A **motion** was made by Manager Deal and **seconded** by Manager Wilkens to support the grant proposal of MCEA and apply as a co-applicant to the Northwest Minnesota Foundation for a grant of \$25,000 for a two-year period. **Carried with Managers Ista and Money opposed.**

**District's Funding Requests**

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

Nick Drees, Administrator, reported that negotiations are underway to purchase land for the above-referenced project. As state bonding funds are uncertain, various funding options were discussed. Manager Deal explained that for the North Ottawa Impoundment Project, the Bois de Sioux WD utilized a contract for deed for land acquisition. Drees stated that he would discuss purchasing the land in installments with the Board of Managers and landowner.

**District Reports**

No Watershed District reports were submitted this month.

The next meeting will be on August 18, 2009, at 9:30 a.m. at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jerome Deal  
Secretary

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Naomi L. Erickson  
Administrator