



Red River Watershed Management Board

Board of Managers

John Finney, President-Humboldt LeRoy Carriere-Roseau Dan Money-Hallock Ron Osowski-Oslo
Orville Knott, Vice President-Red Lake Falls Daniel Wilkens, Treasurer-Fertile Greg Holmvik-Ada Jerome Deal, Secretary-Wheaton
Naomi Erickson, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING September 17, 2013 Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, September 17, 2013 at the Sand Hill River Watershed District, Fertile, Minnesota.

President John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were: LeRoy Carriere Dan Money
 Ron Osowski Orville Knott
 Daniel Wilkens Greg Holmvik
 Jerome Deal

Others present were: Naomi Erickson, Administrator
Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator
Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
Jerry Bents, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
Nate Dalager, Engineer, HDR Engineering, Inc.
Pat Downs, Executive Director, RRRRA
Kevin Ruud, Administrator, Wild Rice WD
Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
Joe Courneya, Assistant Executive Director/Program, RRBC
Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
Jim Zeigler, Unit Supervisor-MPCA
Brian Dwight, Clean Water Specialist, BWSR
Matt Fischer, Board Conservationist, BWSR
Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering, Inc.
Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
Wally Sparby, Congressman Peterson's office
Joe Belford

Motion by Manager Knott to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as written with minor corrections, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Money 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 Knott, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)

P. Downs distributed a monthly report of activities. A lawsuit was filed over the F-M Diversion on August 19, 2013 by the Joint Powers Authority of Wilkin and Richland counties against the USACE. The suit accuses diversion leaders of unnecessarily expanding the scope of the flood protection project. On September 13, 2013 the Diversion Authority (DA) decided to file a motion to intervene in the lawsuit against the F-M Diversion. By joining the suit, it allows the DA to ensure it makes its case for why the massive flood protection project should move forward.

P. Downs referred to Farm Bill 2014 and stated that conference committees are being established with the Senate having selected their conference committee members while the House has not yet done so.

Governing Documents Committee

Manager Deal reported that the Governing Documents Committee met on Thursday, September 12, 2013, at the RRRA office. The following committee members attended: J. Deal, D. Money, G. Holmvik, R. Osowski, and N. Erickson. Others in attendance included D. Thul, R. Harnack and L. Smith.

R. Harnack stated that prior to the Governing Documents Committee meeting, the Finance Committee met via conference call and continued discussion regarding developing draft criteria for individual watershed districts to levy less than the maximum levy. Manager Wilkens noted that should the board pass criteria to allow an individual watershed district to reduce their local levy it would be unfair to the other watershed districts as funds remitted to the board could theoretically be utilized to fund the resulting shortfall should the district that decided to reduce their local levy authorize a large construction project. Manager Wilkens further added that the Finance Committee agreed to table the issue.

Manager Knott noted his concern about developing the above-mentioned criteria as currently watershed districts are trying to achieve 20% mainstem reduction goals and to pursue developing criteria to reduce local levies would seem to contradict this objective. Manager Osowski concurred.

R. Harnack explained that he discussed adopting the criteria with L. Smith who indicated that this change would require a revision to the Joint Powers Agreement. He added that should the board decide to pursue developing the criteria, the revisions could be incorporated with the other proposed updates to the Governing Documents publication.

Manager Holmvik stated that the Wild Rice WD was interested in the possibility of developing the proposed criteria. He further noted that although their district may never be in a position to utilize the option, they would likely support developing the criteria in order to provide for flexibility in managing fund balances.

R. Harnack suggested that the board may want to consider developing the criteria and incorporating it into the Governing Documents publication in order to allow for future changes. He offered to coordinate with L. Smith and N. Erickson to develop language that would be general in nature to be incorporated into the Joint Powers Agreement. Manager Finney restated the Finance Committee's recommendation to table the issue and noted his apprehension toward revising the board's current legislation.

Water Quality Project Monitoring

C. Fritz distributed the IWI Monitoring and Education Activity Report. At the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group meeting conducted in August, a Water Quality Reporting Committee was established to steer and review analysis methods, report content, make monitoring recommendations, and guide next steps. The committee has a meeting scheduled on Thursday, September 19, 2013 to discuss the preliminary results of Project No. 60 (RLWD) and the North Ottawa Impoundment Project (BdSWD).

C. Fritz discussed the Red River Basin River Watch Clean Water Fund (CWF) Work Plan. The RRWMB previously agreed to sponsor the project with lead coordination and project management provided by the IWI. Funding of \$200,000 was provided by the Minnesota Legislative CWF to engage citizens in local watershed monitoring, work with regional partners to promote understanding and protection of watersheds, and organize and facilitate gathering of scientific data all for the benefit of water quality in the Red River Basin. The project duration is October 1, 2013 - June 30, 2016.

Motion by Manager Holmvik to approve the Red River Basin River Watch CWF Work Plan, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

Project Coordinator Report

R. Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. He explained that he assisted with the development of the Mustinka River Restoration application to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) submitted by the Bois de Sioux WD. The application was submitted in September by J. Roeschlein and H. VanOffelen. The LSOHC is scheduled to meet on September 20th to begin allocation discussions.

R. Harnack referred to the Finance Committee conference call and reiterated that following considerable discussion, the committee agreed not to move forward with developing criteria for watershed districts to reduce their local levy.

Administrator Report

A) 2012 Annual Audit

N. Erickson reported that the 2012 annual audit has been completed by Brady, Martz & Associates. After receiving the completed financial information, the report will be published and distributed.

B) Governing Documents Committee Meeting

N. Erickson stated that the Governing Documents Committee met on Thursday, September 12, 2013, at the RRRRA office, West Fargo, ND. Members of the Governing Documents Committee

include: J. Deal, D. Money, G. Holmvik, R. Osowski, and N. Erickson. Others in attendance included D. Thul, R. Harnack and L. Smith.

The next meeting has been scheduled for Monday, November 18, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. at the RRRRA office, with the Rules & Regulations Committee to meet that afternoon following lunch.

C) Stream Gaging Cost-Share Program

The joint funding agreement between the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the RRWMB for fiscal year 2013 has been received. The amount of \$115,519 shall be contributed to cover all of the cost of the necessary field and analytical work directly related to the program.

D) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, October 16, 2013, Red Lake WD office, Thief River Falls, MN.
2. **Governing Documents Committee / Rules & Regulations Committee**, Monday, November 18, 2013, RRRRA office, West Fargo, ND.
3. **MAWD Annual Meeting & Trade Show**, December 5-7, 2013, Arrowwood Conference Center, Alexandria, MN.
4. **Red River Basin Commission's 31st Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference**, *The Pulse of the Basin: Getting to the Heart of the Issues*, January 14-16, 2014, Ramada Plaza Suites, Fargo, ND.

Red River Basin Commission

J. Courneya, Assistant Executive Director/Program, RRBC distributed a brochure for the 31st Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference, ***The Pulse of the Basin: Getting to the Heart of the Issues***. The conference will be conducted on January 14-16, 2014 at the Ramada Plaza Suites & Convention Center, Fargo, ND.

J. Courneya discussed the co-location proposal. Although originally the offices of the RRBC, IWI, RRRRA, River Keepers and potentially others were being considered for co-location, currently only the offices of the RRBC, IWI and River Keepers are proceeding with co-locating.

P. Downs referenced the RRRRA committee that was involved in the search to secure the current office space and suggested that this committee conduct a meeting prior to the next RRRRA meeting to develop a recommendation regarding office co-location.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

D. Thul reported that the HMS models developed upstream of Halstad are complete. Houston Engineering, Inc. plans to combine the results of the distributed detention efforts conducted in both Minnesota and North Dakota and assess the effects on the Red River.

D. Thul noted that J. Bents will consider improvements to the STar Value Method by using HEC-RAS models on the Red River to assess each project to determine available funding. J. Bents added that the results of the detention efforts on both sides of the river will be input into the HEC-RAS model to determine how various scenarios could affect flooding.

D. Thul discussed the MDNR Permitting and Reporting System (MPARS) which is a new online system for Water Appropriation Permits and Public Waters Works Permits. Plans are to transition from a paper-based system to an online system for water use reporting, permit applications and permit change requests. The system is being designed to benefit MDNR permit holders and applicants with a simple, convenient and easy-to-use system.

District Reports

- The Red Lake WD reported on the Grand Marais Creek Outlet Restoration Project. Although construction began two weeks ago, the contractor is currently trying to finish other projects that are nearing completion. The District hopes that following the completion of other projects, the contractor can proceed with this project full-time as the FDR grant for the project expires on December 31, 2013. The contractor has indicated that they plan to complete the majority of the project this fall with weather permitting. The Districts anticipates project completion by summer/fall of 2014.
- The Wild Rice WD reported on Goose Prairie Marsh. A draft operating plan from the MDNR was forwarded to the board regarding the potential project. Plans are for the MDNR to complete a hydraulic analysis and operating plan and to review relocating a crossing located on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service land prior to the September 25, 2013 project team meeting. The Ordinary High Water Level (OHWL) will be determined this fall or early winter by the MDNR.

District's Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

Other Issues

- Manager Wilkens reported that he attended the Drainage Work Group meeting conducted on September 12, 2013.
- J. Belford reported on the status of Devils Lake. He stated that he has been helping fight the Devils Lake flood since the water began rising in 1993. The funds spent to date on the flooding effort are ~ 1.6 billion dollars. The lake dropped by 2-3 feet this summer and currently the pumps are operating at 550 cfs.
- W. Sparby, Congressman Peterson's office, reported that the Congressman has met with the State Director of the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Rep. Jean Wagenius, Chair of the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Finance Committee to gain support for initiatives in the Red River basin.
- B. Dwight, Clean Water Specialist, BWSR, introduced M. Fischer, a new Board Conservationist with BWSR.

The next meeting will be on October 15, 2013, at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 11:55 a.m. following lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator