

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Managers
Of the Two Rivers Watershed District
Held: Thursday, March 10, 2022 @ 8:00 a.m.**

The Board of Managers of the Two Rivers Watershed District held their regular meeting beginning at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 10, 2022. The meeting was held in the District office in the Kittson County Courthouse, 410 S. 5th Street, Hallock, MN.

Managers present included President Rick Sikorski, Vice President Roger Anderson, Secretary Daryl Klegstad, Treasurer Gerald Olsonawski, Bruce Anderson, Scott Klein and Paul Johnson. None were absent.

Others present included District Administrator Dan Money, District Technician Tyler Coffield, Attorney Kaitlyn Bjornson (Brink Lawyers), Engineer Jake Huwe (HDR Engineering), Engineer Blake Carlson (Widseth), Erica Halstensgard (HEI), and landowner Kurt Kraulik.

The meeting was called to order by President Sikorski. Sikorski then called for any additions or corrections to the proposed meeting agenda and the regular meeting minutes from February 3, 2022. Today's meeting agenda and the minutes of the February 3, 2022 regular meeting were approved upon a **motion** by Olsonawski, **second** by R. Anderson, and **unanimous vote** of the Managers.

Treasurer's Report:

Money presented the treasurer's report including the fund balances, accounts listing, and deposit detail. It was noted that checks written for the month include check numbers 9560 through 9577 and electronic funds transfers to PERA, MN Dept. of Revenue, and Electronic Federal Tax Payment System, as reported and contained within the report.

The treasurer's report was then approved upon a **motion** by B. Anderson, a **second** by Klegstad, and a **unanimous vote** by the Board.

Administrator's Report:

District Administrator Money gave a report on the following and distributed a handout:

Program Report:

Overall Plan Update: As was discussed at last month's meeting, the District's current overall plan will expire this year and needs to be updated and approved by the Board of Water & Soil Resources. Money provided information on the process, and specifically gathering public input. He suggested holding a public meeting/open house, sending out questionnaires, and news releases in order to provide opportunities and collect information.

The Managers discussed how to move forward and indicated that questionnaires should be sent out to the Citizen's Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, and Township officials. It was noted that public information was gathered to an extent over the past year from participation in the One Watershed One Plan process. The Board decided not to hold any in person meetings but depending on the number and type of

responses received, a meeting could be held in the future. Money will tabulate and consider all responses and will begin updating the Overall Plan accordingly.

Employment Policy & Employee Benefits: A meeting of the Personnel Committee was held to discuss participation in the MN State Retirement System, specifically the deferred compensation plan and the health care savings plan. To utilize these programs, there would be no cost to the Watershed District, as these would strictly be deductions from employee salaries. The District's employment policy would need to be amended to indicate the level of participation and details of eligible contributions. Recommendations of the Committee and employees were to allow the following contributions to the health care savings plan: 2.5% of employee salary; Severance pay; unused vacation pay at the end of each year; up to \$1,000 of the current health care benefit offered by the District. The choices for need to be flexible enough to suit the individual needs of each employee.

For the 457 deferred compensation plan, employees can choose the amount they want deducted from their salary. The District will forward the appropriate amounts to MSRS on behalf of each employee.

Upon a **motion** by Olsonawski, **second** by Klegstad, and **unanimous vote** of the Managers, it was approved to participate in the MSRS Deferred Compensation Plan and the Health Care Savings Plan. The District Administrator was directed to prepare and submit all necessary paperwork.

Survey Equipment: As discussed at last month's meeting, the Board of Managers considered quotes provided to update and upgrade the District's aging survey grade gps equipment. Quotes were received from Frontier Precision for 2 different configurations. Upon a **motion** by Klegstad, **second** by B. Anderson and **unanimous vote**, it was approved to purchase new equipment at the quoted price of \$34,623.00

Northcote Dam: The DNR – Fisheries has contacted the District about the possibilities of removing or modifying the dam on the North Branch Two Rivers, originally constructed by James J. Hill. They would like to hold a discussion with the TRWD, landowner, and other stakeholders regarding a possible project. The Board indicated that the District should be involved in the discussions, but most likely would not be the lead on such a project. Money will participate in any meetings or discussions on the matter.

2022 MN Legislature: The MN Association of Watershed Districts will hold its annual legislative briefing and breakfast on March 16 – 17 2022 in St. Paul. Money was directed to attend. There were no Managers interested in attending. Money indicated there are at least two bills the TRWD is slated to receive funding for the Klondike Clean Water Retention Project. One is through the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council and the other is through a DNR Flood Hazard Mitigation program as a part of the bonding bill. It will be very important to contact legislators in support of these bills. In addition, the RRWMB will hold a meeting with regional legislators on the morning of the 17th, after the MAWD breakfast.

Twin Lakes WMA: The DNR has provided a draft management plan for Twin Lakes near the City of Karlstad, MN and has asked for comments. It was noted that the District has met with the DNR, City, and county staff in the recent past. Money was directed to provide comments to the DNR. It may be feasible to reconvene the working group to discuss the management plan.

2022 Snow Survey: District staff performed the annual snow survey to collect snow depths and snow water contents at 11 sites throughout the watershed district. Based on this information and information from the National Weather Service we can expect slightly higher than average flooding during the spring of 2022. There are of course several variables that will affect flooding conditions including the rate of melt and future precipitation. The District will monitor river elevations and stream flows and coordinate with local, state and federal agencies during the flood.

Legal Ditch Report:

Kittson County Ditch #10: Engineer Blake Carlson handed out and discussed a status report on Kittson County Ditch 10. Widseth was hired by the TRWD in 2021 to perform a survey of the ditch and analysis on any needed maintenance. Carlson reported that information on the ditch including the 2021 survey, the original 1906 legal grade, soil boring information done in 1992, and a disaster repair that was done in 1996 was all used in the ditch evaluation. He recommended in his report that no maintenance is necessary at this time, but that a new/altered ditch grade and cross section should be used for future maintenance. This would include an adjusted grade based upon soil borings from station 2 to station 170, the original ditch plan profile from station 170 to 216, and the 1996 repair from station 216 to 371+23. The matter was referred to Attorney J. Hane for an opinion on whether a ditch public hearing would need to be held to make these changes to the legal ditch. The matter will be taken up at the April 7, 2022 Board meeting.

Kittson County Ditch #7 Improvement: Engineer Blake Carlson gave an update on the Engineer's Report that he is writing. He discussed the adequacy of the outlet and mentioned that several alternatives were looked at. The petitioners collectively decided to move forward with a set aback levy design so as not to increase peak flows in downstream areas. He noted that in order to deepen the ditch he looked into all of the utilities that cross the ditch. It appears there are several gas pipelines that may be in the way, and he has asked the pipeline companies to provide locates and depths of the pipe. His engineer's report cannot be completed until the utilities are located. This may become an impediment to the project, however more information will be forthcoming on this.

Landowner and petitioner Kurt Kraulik was in attendance and asked questions regarding the project design. He asked about the potentially high cost of the project with the set back levies, the storage component of the project and how it would be accomplished, and how flows will be affected and altered by the set back levies. He is skeptical of the set back levy design and would rather see an alternative to simply widen the ditch bottom and flatten the side slopes.

Carlson stated he will finish the engineer's report once he obtains the needed information from the pipelines. Discussion regarding the project bond was held and that only costs up to the amount of the bond can be paid. Carlson stated the engineering costs will not exceed the amount of the bond. The matter was tabled until such time that the engineer's report is submitted.

Hallock Dam Rehabilitation: Erica Halstengard from Houston Engineering attended the meeting and presented information on the work done at the Hallock dam to rehabilitate it and

provide fish passage. She detailed the project components including streambank stabilization, installation of a series of rock weirs and fishways, construction of a new bridge, and other project features. The Board thanked her for the information.

Permits:

The Board acted on the following permits. The review and comments of the permit committee were carefully considered and taken into consideration. Any comments provided by members of the committee, road authorities, or affected landowners have been recorded filed with the permit documentation in the District office. Conditions, if any, are listed on the permit sent to the individual.

<i>App. #</i>	<i>Applicant</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Action</i>
2022-01	Kittson Co Hwy Dept. Motion Klein, Second Klegstad – unanimous vote Conditions:	Co. Rd. 1 – 6 miles Station 0+79 Station 128+93 Station 159+83	Culverts/Bituminous in place 24” Condition 18” in place 36” Condition 18” in place 24” Condition 18”	APPROVED
Findings: 1) The proposes and conditional culvert sizes conform to the District Policy, 2) downstream outlets and their adequacy was taken into account, 3) farmstead flooding was taken into consideration.				
2022-04	DK Farms	Polonia 31	Tile Drainage	TABLED
<u>Permits Approved by Administrator / Review Group</u>				
2022-03	RJ Zavoral	Richardville 3	Gravel Pit Dredging	APPROVED

Permit Violations:

Permit number 1795 was discussed, which was issued to Matt Kuznia in 2018 for a tile drainage system. The permit was issued with a condition that the outlet pipe must have an air gap and the riser pipe must not exceed elevation 824.0, NAVD 88. As discussed at the January 4, 2022 meeting, the permittee is not in compliance with the outlet pipe conditions. TRWD engineer Carlson has discussed the situation with the contractor who installed the pipe. The contractor did not give a valid reason for not being in compliance.

After discussion regarding the matter, the Board of Managers found the work to be out of compliance with the conditions of the permit. The Managers ordered that the work must be made to comply with the conditions on or before May 31. If the conditions are not met by that date, the permit will be revoked and the applicant will be required to remove the pump and outlet pipe. Money was directed to send a letter to the permittee explaining the violation and the required action by the deadline.

Project Report:

Klondike Clean Water Retention Prj. #11:

- Engineering – Discussion was held regarding the Roseau overflows and the inlets at Laterals 6 and 8 of SD 72. Information was provided on the amount of water from the overflows that could be taken into the project, which is a significant amount. Manager Sikorski would like to see these numbers maximized even

further by enlarging the size of the inlet pipe at Lateral 8. The Board considered potential complications to make any changes because of permitting and cost. After considerable discussion on the matter, the Board directed HDR Engineering to study the problem and suggest a cost effective viable solution. Money was directed to research the history of permits at that location. Once all the data and information is compiled, if deemed economically and practically feasible the alterations could be implemented at phase 2 or phase 2A.

- Right of Way – Letters and information will be sent out to landowners regarding the right of way that is needed and offers from the District to obtain both temporary and permanent right of way. This will be coordinated between office staff, the district attorney, and the district engineer. Meetings will be scheduled with landowners as necessary.
- Permitting – Wetland permits continue to be worked on by Houston Engineering. The wetland mitigation site was recently changed as discussed at the last board meeting, and subsequently we are required to prepare a wetland mitigation plan for the site. This will require field work on site this spring. Information is being prepared and submitted to both state and federal permitting agencies.
- Funding – The District has received \$7.2 million from the RRWMB, \$2.8 million from the LSOHC, and is seeking \$13 million from the State’s Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant program. If funded, this would allow for construction of phase 1 and phase 2 and provide 27,500 acre feet of flood storage.

With no other matters to come before the Board of Managers, the meeting was adjourned.

Attest:


Daryl Klegstad, Secretary


Rick Sikorski, President

