

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Managers  
Of the Two Rivers Watershed District  
Held: Thursday, December 12, 2024 @ 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, December 12, 2024. The meeting was held in the District office in the Kittson County Courthouse, 410 S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Hallock, MN.

Managers present included President Rick Sikorski, Vice President Roger Anderson, Secretary Daryl Klegstad, Treasurer Gerald Olsonawski, Bruce Anderson, and Mark Langehaug. Manager Scott Klein was absent.

Others present included District Administrator Dan Money, District Technician Tyler Coffield, Attorney Jeff Hane (Brink Lawyers), Engineer Nate Dalager (HDR Engineering), and Engineer Erik Jones (HEI Engineering).

The meeting was called to order by President Sikorski. Sikorski then called for any additions or corrections to the proposed meeting agenda, which was then approved upon a **motion** by Olsonawski, **second** by Klegstad and **unanimous vote** of the Managers. The regular meeting minutes from November 7, 2024, and the special meeting minutes of November 21, 2024, were reviewed and approved upon a **motion** by B. Anderson, **second** by Langehaug and **unanimous vote**.

**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 10296 through 10319 and electronic funds transfers for the months of October and November to PERA, MN Dept. of Revenue, Electronic Federal Tax Payment System, and MN State Retirement System as reported and contained within the report.

It was noted that a certificate of deposit at American Federal Bank is about to mature, and the Board of Managers directed Treasurer Olsonawski and Administrator Money to check with all banks within the district and re-invest it at the highest interest rate for a 6-month term. Other CD's will mature in January and February of 2025 and the same process will be taken to renew those. Money and Olsonawski will consider a strategy for upcoming construction projects that may need some of the funding.

The treasurer's report was then approved upon a **motion** by R. Anderson, a **second** by Olsonawski, 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:**

*Personnel Committee:* The Personnel Committee met in November 2024 to discuss the annual employee reviews and stipends for 2025. Information was presented regarding employee activities during the course of 2024 and salary projections for

2025. The Committee indicated the performances for 2024 were very good and recommended to the Board of Managers a wage increase of 4% along with an increase in the insurance benefit of an additional \$100 per month. A **motion** was made by R. Anderson, **seconded** by Langehaug and **unanimously voted** to approve the recommendation of the Personnel Committee.

The Committee also discussed creating a new staff position of administrative assistant. This was advertised in 2024, however only 1 applicant applied, and the Board did not make a hire. It would be a part-time, 16 hours/week position with the primary duties of bookkeeping, records management, grant reporting, and other duties as determined by the Administrator. The Board of Managers directed the Administrator to advertise on the District's website and locally in area newspapers. The position will remain open until filled.

*Annual Meeting:* The Annual Meeting of the Two Rivers Watershed District was set for 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 2, 2025. The managers will elect board officers, make appointments to the citizen's and technical advisory committees, make appointments to various committees and organizations, consider fees for services, set meeting dates and consider any other administrative decisions for the upcoming year.

*Land Rental Request:* A request has been received from a current renter wanting to pasture land located at the Ross #7 impoundment. The parcel is currently vacant and is located inside the impoundment. It was noted that in the past lands within the impoundment were not preferable for pasture in case the gates needed to be closed, and the land flooded. The Board discussed the request and noted that the location of this particular parcel is outside of the first areas to flood. Discussion was held regarding any liability if cattle are lost or stressed due to flooding, and it was determined that the land could be pastured if several conditions are met and stated in the agreement. These include no liability to TRWD, the TRWD is not bound to notify the renter if the gates need to be closed, any fencing or other materials can be installed by the renter, however upon termination of the lease they must be removed by the renter. Other conditions may apply. Upon a **motion** by Olsonawski, **second** by Klegstad and **unanimous vote**, the Board approved the rental idea. However, they directed attorney Hane and administrator Money to put together a rental agreement with the conditions and go over it with the renter. A 3-year lease term was approved and the rental price for pasture was set at \$20/acre.

*MN Watersheds:* R. Anderson, Money and Coffield attended the MN Watersheds annual conference in Nisswa, MN. The conference included a business meeting, voting on 2025 resolutions, technical conferences, plenary sessions and 2024 awards.

*Project Work Teams:* The Juneberry Project Work Team is scheduled to meet in Roseau MN on Thursday January 9<sup>th</sup>. The Lake Bronson Sediment Project Work Team does not have any meetings scheduled.

Juneberry PWT: Erik Jones of Houston Engineering was in attendance to present information regarding the Roseau River restoration activities. President Sikorski had brought up concerns he and area landowners have with the proposed project and that it may have negative effects regarding Roseau River overflow flooding that enters the Two Rivers. Jones is the project engineer, and provided information on

the pre project modelling, project components, and other details. He indicated that from on the ground surveys, lidar, computer modelling, and on-site reconnaissance that it is not expected that the project will make the overflow flooding any worse than it is now and will not substantially flows and channel capacities. Outflows to Two Rivers and to Canada will not significantly change. The timeline for construction is most likely to begin in winter of 2025-2026. Permits and funding are being sought now. The Board indicated a good time for a joint meeting with the Roseau River WD would be this winter to discuss this and other projects of each District.

**Legal Ditch Report:**

*Kittson CD 7 Improvement:* Engineer B. Carlson indicated that he has not completed the final engineer's report. He is conducting modeling on the downstream outlet to determine the extent of impacts. This information will be provided to the Viewers as they need it to complete their report. Once the Engineer's Report and the Viewers Report are completed, the District will need to prepare a Property Owners report, then schedule and hold a public hearing. More information will be disseminated when these reports are submitted.

*Kittson CD 13 Improvement:* Houston Engineering is working on the engineer's report and the H2Overviewers have been hired to do the viewers report. The same process under MN Statute 103E will be followed as for KCD #7.

**Project Report:**

*Horseshoe/Skull Lake dam replacement:* As reported previously, HDR Engineering has prepared materials for the bidding process. Ads for bids have been placed on trade websites and in local newspapers. Bids from contractors will be opened at 3:00 pm on February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025, tabulated and presented to the Board on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, for consideration and action.

*Klondike Clean Water Retention Prj. #11:*

- Engineering – Nate Dalager discussed a memo from HDR for potential bidding in 2025 for partial construction of phase 1. This would include the west outlet, southwest outlet, and the northwest levee dike to elevation 1016.5 from station 1865 to station 1954. The estimate for these items is \$3,082,919 and funding from the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council will be utilized for construction of these items.
  - Construction – these items could feasibly be put out for bids in the near future; however several items will need to be completed first. These include securing the USACE wetland permit and the DNR dam safety permit. While the District owns the land where these structures will go, there is still right of way needed upstream on the diked inlet and including the pending land exchange with DNR.
- Right of Way – All right of way from private individuals has been secured except for 2. As authorized previously, if these landowners do not accept the District's offer, eminent domain proceedings will be initiated.
- Land Exchange – Attorney Hane is working to address items that are contained within a memo from the MN DNR.
- Permitting – the USACE wetland permit is 98% completed. The DNR dam safety permit has not been submitted but HDR has been meeting preliminarily with DNR.
- Funding – discussion was held regarding how to proceed. Bonding funding will once again be sought through the legislature and the RRWMB step 2 application is being

revised. Further information regarding available and potential funding sources including levies, bond funds, RRWMB, and stormwater utilities will be presented at a future meeting.

- Land Holdings – D. Money distributed a map of lands owned by the TRWD that is near the KCWRP but located outside of the impoundment. These lands will not have any construction on them and are not needed for the project. Most of the land is idle, some is in the federal wetland reserve program, some could be used for pasture or hunting, and some is rented out. There is approximately 2,100 acres of land that could be sold. Discussion on whether to sell these parcels was held, and the Board directed Money to contact a few land companies to see what their rates would be to handle sale of these parcels.
- Legal Process – The project is following the process required by MN Statute 103D. J. Hane discussed some of the process and said that once the construction plans are prepared and we have the necessary permits in hand, a public hearing will need to be held. The Board at that time will need to consider any comments received and make findings of fact and order the construction phase to proceed.


**Permits:**

There were no permit applications at this time.

With no other matters to come before the Board of Managers, the meeting was adjourned at 12:20 pm.

Attest:

  
Daryl Klegstad, Secretary

  
Rick Sikorski, President