

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Managers  
Of the Two Rivers Watershed District  
Held: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 @ 2:00 p.m.**

The Board of Managers of the Two Rivers Watershed District held a Special Meeting beginning at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 23, 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, Secretary Daryl Klegstad, Bruce Anderson and Mark Langehaug. Vice President Roger Anderson attended electronically (as such R. Anderson could not vote, as per open meeting law requirements). Treasurer Gerald Olsonawski and Manager Scott Klein were absent.

Others present included Citizen Advisory Committee members Jaime Sikorski and Rodney Sikorski, District Administrator Dan Money, District Technician Tyler Coffield and Attorney Jeff Hane (Brink Lawyers). Engineer Jake Huwe (HDR Engineering) attended electronically.

The meeting was called to order by President Sikorski. Sikorski noted that the main purpose of the meeting was to discuss items regarding the Klondike Clean Water Retention Project #11 and also any other items presented before the Board of Managers.

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

**Permits:**

Permit status was discussed. Approvals have been received with regard to the Environmental Assessment Worksheet, State Wetland Conservation Act, State 401 water quality certification regarding the Federal wetland law, State Historic Preservation Office, DNR Protected Waters, and alterations of several public roads. Permits are in progress to alter State Ditches #72 and #95, to alter Roseau Co. road 103, to alter roads in Juneberry Township and for the Federal 404 wetland law. Permits have not yet been submitted for the DNR dam safety permit and the MPCA National Pollutant Discharge System permit.

**Right of Way:**

Money explained that landowners have signed right of way easements for 7 parcels along the diked inlet. Another 3 parcels have been agreed to but not yet signed, and 14 parcels have neither agreed nor signed. Attorney Jeff Hane explained the process to obtain the parcels where agreements cannot be made. The TRWD has ordered and received appraisals on the 14 parcels. The next step is to make good faith offers to the owners. If the owners still do not agree, eminent domain proceedings can begin. Hane was directed to draft a letter to the landowners explaining the process and making an offer to meet with them and discuss an offer. He will have a draft available for review and discussion at the 2/1/24 meeting of the Board.

Money updated the Board on the status of the land exchange with DNR. There has been recent movement and DNR has indicated they will be asking for title opinions on the lands the TRWD owns. There was discussion about public road access for both the DNR

parcels and the TRWD parcels. It was noted that access should be carefully considered and documented prior to the exchange.

Right of way across DNR lands along the diked inlet will also need to be addressed. This process should move forward in the near future with an application to DNR.

### **Funding:**

Money presented a spreadsheet that breaks down the various cost share entities, the amounts they are contributing, what has been approved, and what still needs to be procured. Significant construction funding is still needed from the MN DNR Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Program through the legislative bonding cycle. Our application will be considered this legislative session, and Money noted that it would be good if one or more Board members could contact legislators and attend the MN Watersheds legislative day at the Capitol. \$17.2 million is being requested from the State.

Discussion was also held regarding long term funding to operate and maintain the project and to come up with the local share of construction funding. Various options include outlet fees to SD 72 and SD 95, establishment of a project benefitted area, establishment of a stormwater utility, utilizing the provision in state law of abatement of taxes, and other grants, loans and bonding. Manager Sikorski raised questions regarding costs to local taxpayers. It was noted that decisions about how to move forward with a plan or program to pay for the local TRWD costs will need to be decided in the next few coming months. Money will research and provide additional information at the next board meeting.

Red River Watershed Management Board funding was discussed. Each year the RRWMB sets their levy and it is collect by counties and given to the TRWD. TRWD is then required by law to keep ½ of the funds and send ½ to the RRWMB. The local funds can be used for flood control projects, and the RRWMB ½ goes to projects within the greater Red River valley. An analysis of this will be provided also at the next board meeting.

### **Plans and Specifications:**

- Jake Huwe discussed the various project components and plans for each. 12 fact sheets have been written that explain the diversion inlet, diked inlet, inlet gates at Laterals 6 & 8 of SD #72, the alterations to SD #95, the pilot channel, main dike, and outlet structures. Huwe discussed in detail specific plans for each of the 12 items.

- Operating Plan – Huwe and Money noted that a detailed operating plan is nearly complete and was written with significant input from the DNR and the MPCA. It details when gates will be closed to store water and when they will be opened to release water. There is also a low flow augmentation pool that will be held until mid to late summer and then be released for the purpose of fish habitat, low flow augmentation, and to enhance lake conditions at Lake Bronson State Park. Questions were raised regarding releases, downstream trigger points, and various operating aspects.

- Land Exchange
- Permitting
- Funding
- Natural Resources Enhancements


Other – Pay Equity:

Money reported to the Board that once every 3 years a “pay equity” report is required to be filed with the State of Minnesota. He handed out and presented the report to the Board. Upon a motion by B. Anderson, second by Klegstad and a 4-0 vote of the Board the report was accepted and Money was directed to file it with the State as required.

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

Attest:

  
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Daryl Klegstad, Secretary

  
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Rick Sikorski, President

