



**TITLE:** REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES

**DATE:** JUNE 1, 2023

## 1. ATTENDANCE:

Chairman Stuart Christian called the June 1, 2023, meeting to order at 8:00 AM at the District Office. Other managers attending were Clayton Bartz, Craig Engelstad, Don Andringa and Shawn Brekke. Staff members present included April Swenby – Administrator and Donna Bjerk – Administrative Assistant. Others in attendance included Zach Herrmann – Houston Engineering, Brian Fisher – Houston Engineering (remote attendance), and Brett Arne - BWSR.

## 2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

A **Motion** was made by Manager Bartz to approve the agenda, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.**

## 3. MINUTES:

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to approve the minutes from the May 4, 2023, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke. **The Motion was carried.**

## 4. FINANCIAL REPORT:

The Treasurer's Report for May was presented. A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to approve and dispense the reading of the Treasurer's Report for May, **Seconded** by Manager Andringa. **The Motion was carried.**

The managers reviewed their expense reports and reported on activities for the month. The following bills were reviewed:

City of Fertile	116.35
Ecolab	53.57
First Community Credit Union	539.33
Garden Valley Telephone Company	477.04
Houston Engineering	23,530.85
JC & J Trucking	1,964.60
Otter Tail Power Company	410.49
Polk County Fair – Sponsorship	500.00
Todd's Landscaping	120.00
Wild Rice Electric	180.27
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>27,892.50</u></b>

A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to approve and pay the bills with a total of \$27,892.50. **Seconded** by Manager Andringa. **The Motion was carried.**

## 5. ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

**One Watershed One Plan:** The Policy and the Advisory Committees met on May 9. The Steering Committee met on May 17. The Steering Committee met to discuss priorities and money allocation. The Sand Hill's top priority areas were designated towards the "Valley" planning region. The managers were given a calendar highlighting the timeline and the projected completion of the plan.

**Initial Damage Assessments:** Swenby submitted a damage assessment for Ditch 9 to Polk County Emergency Management for an Initial Damage Assessment (IDA) report for expenses that will be incurred from any flooding damages that impacted our jurisdiction after April 11th, 2023. The submitted IDA reports will be utilized by local, state, and federal officials to determine if the disaster related expenses could qualify for any State and/or Federal assistance.

**WRWD Project Team:** The May Project Team Meeting for the WRWD, relating to the Southern Boundary of the watershed was cancelled. The next meeting is planned for June 28.

**District Audit:** The district audit for 2022 is almost complete and is going through quality assurances.

**Project # 27/Union Lake Pumping:** Swenby has coordinated with Polk County Sherriff's diving team to inspect the underwater pump. They plan on diving to inspect on June 7.

**Polk County #44:** Landowners were sent letters to plug the culverts under Polk County # 44, and they were asked to let the district know their plan of action by July 1. Swenby has received calls from two landowners who intend to work together to plug the culverts.

**Bear Park:** Beaver Trappers have been scheduled to perform a spring scouting tour of the jurisdictional area. They have completed the area from the gravel pit and east and reported no beaver activity.

**Legislative Update:** The omnibus tax bill was approved by the House and Senate last week. This legislation includes the watershed district general levy increase! The bill is on its way to the governor for signature. A full legislative was provided to the managers, via the correspondence from Mn Watersheds.

**RIM Coordination – Letter of Support:** The managers were provided a letter drafted by Swenby from the Sand Hill River Watershed District to Support a coordinated approach for RIM Dollars for the Red River Basin.

**MN Watersheds Summer Tour:** The summer tour is in Albert Lea on June 20-21. Swenby asked the managers to let her know if they'd like to attend.

**Drainage Work Group:** The managers e-mailed a letter that is proposed, drafted by the RRWMB on behalf of all RRB watershed districts with recommendations regarding DWG 2024 discussion and priority items. The managers were asked to let her know if they had any additional comments or feedback.

**LiDAR:** The managers were provided an update on LiDAR,s highlighting the delays that have affected the delivery of the data.

## 6. ONE WATERSHED ONE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION:

Brett Arne, BWSR presented to the board an overview of agreements and scenarios for implementing the watershed based implantation funding that will directed through the One Watershed One Plan.

The legislature approved watershed based implementation funding (WBIF) and subsequently the BWSR board approves biennial disbursements of funds. Funding will be in the form of a base (currently \$250K) plus additional funding based on a weighted percentage of:

- 90% weight given to private land ratio in the watershed
- 10% weight given to public waters

Funding amounts are tied to specific appropriations. This biennium BWSR was appropriated approx. \$56 million for WBIF.

Arne highlighted three basic ways to implement WBIF.

- Individual grant agreements with the state based on a workplan.
- A revision or construction of a new formal agreement with a designated fiscal agent
- Forming a new entity, most likely under a Joint Powers Agreement

**A Motion** was made by Manager Brekke to move forward with a revision or construction of a new formal agreement with a designated fiscal agent (otherwise know as collaboration or MOA), **Seconded** by Manager Andringa. **The Motion was carried.** The managers agreed that it would be best for the watershed district to become the fiscal agent.

Arne highlighted a few key legislative updates that included the secured clean water fund money which is good through 2025, the general fund levy increase to \$500,000, and an increase in funding for accelerated water storage and treatment (\$17 million).

## 7. ENGINEER'S REPORT.

**Project # 20 – Section 14/15 Reis Township:** A landowner has questioned the size of a side inlet pipe in the west road ditch of County Road 213 and has asked the watershed district to evaluate the pipe size in relation to Project #20. The current in place culvert is a 24" CMP on both sides of County Road 213, that jointly appears to service approximately 350 acres of field drainage. Herrmann noted that most of the field drainage is serviced by the 24" CMP on the west side of County Road 213. During high water, the landowner does not feel this is sufficient and would like to increase the size. Herrmann estimates the following drainage coefficient for the 350-acre field drainage:

1. Project 20 is low/normal summer operation: 1.2 inches/day.
2. Project 20 is high/flood flow operation: 0.5 inches/day.

It was determined that the culvert was adequately sized for the ditch's 10 year design. Swenby will send a letter to the landowner.

**Project # 20 – Section 9/Reis Township Breakout:** For the second year in a row, a landowner has reported high water break out flows in the NW Section of Section 9 in Reis Township. Last year, during inspections, we noted that we would continue to watch the area and communicated with the landowner. We acknowledged evidence of high water from the spring 2022 flood. Our visual inspection noted that the box culvert through 410<sup>th</sup> Street SW and the downs stream ditch channel did not appear to be plugged or have impeding flows that could have caused high waters south of 410<sup>th</sup> Street SW.

Because the landowner is still expressing concern, Swenby asked Herrmann to do a survey of the spoil alignment to check heights and compare to the design elevations from the detailed engineers report. The following elevations were observed:

1. Spoil south of Project 20/east of breakout: 898.6

2. Spoil at breakout location: 897.6
3. Centerline of Co Rd 51 along spoil alignment: 901.2
4. 100-year headwater for Co Rd 51 culvert: 897.5

The breakout elevation appears to be at/above the 100-year flood elevation. However, the 100-year flood elevation does not consider snow plugging during spring events. A letter will be sent to the landowner concerned with this location.

**SH Ditch:** This spring, Swenby received a few reports regarding the overtopping of County Road 232. It was noted that upon visual inspection, the South side of the Sand Hill Ditch is too high, and it is not at the elevation of the original ditch design, possibly causing the water to break out to the north, rather than the south during high water. Swenby asked Herrmann to survey the top of the spoil and the top of County Road 232 to gather more information.

**Project 17 Outlet Stabilization (Moen Erosion and Clean Water) (BWSR Clean Water Fund Grant):** A meeting with the partners will be held in June. No date has been set.

**Kittleson Creek Storage:** Last month, the managers asked Herrmann for additional information regarding the PIFR. He offered the following clarifications:

1. PIFR would only consist of looking at feasibility of a potential project, and will look at resource concerns, potential alternatives, and a rough benefit/cost estimate.
2. The SHRWD would not be bound to continue the process regardless of the PIFR outcomes.
3. The Planning phase is intended to identify a viable project.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Bartz to not move forward with the PIFR at this time, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.** The board can direct staff at a later time, should they decide to re-evaluate a project in this area. The project team for this area will not reconvene.

**Mn 102 Boundary:** A technical memo summarizing the impacts to MNDOT and PCHD was completed and submitted to Road Authorities. MNDOT had requested additional documentation for impacts within the R/W. This has been completed and will be submitted to MNDOT for review.

## 8. ACTION ITEMS.

**Pens:** Last year the district purchased 500 pens for PC Fair. Last year our price was \$1.08 per pen. Swenby noted that the last sale was just under \$.80 per pen. She was unsure of the price as of today but would like to have this again at the fair this year.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to move forward with the purchase of 500 pens, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke. **The Motion was carried.**

**Permit Database/Inspection Software/Culvert Inventory:** To modify our permit database to gather more information, a complete software upgrade is needed. The software/programming we have is ten years old. Additionally, we use field maps for our inspection software (began 3 years ago). During our FEMA issues, Swenby realized that there is not a good way to print an inspection report using our current system. She'd like to make that a feature we use as staff and would like to incorporate that into the district's database. Additionally, she'd like a layer added for all culverts that belong to our systems and keep a record of when they are updated and changed.

Brian Fisher, Houston Engineering presented a proposal for the upgrades needed to meet the needs of the district using MSForefront. The proposal includes a subscription to the software, the creation & implementation of a new permit data module, the transfer of historical permits, the creation &

implementation of a new inspection module, a GIS layer for culvert and side inlet inventories (and the insertion of data for the SH Ditch and Project 5), and a layer for GIS district with parcel ownership.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Brekke to table the discussion until next month, **Seconded** by Manager Andringa. **The Motion was carried.**

A **Motion** was made to rescind Manager Brekke's motion by Manager Andringa. **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.**

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to go ahead with upgrades to the permit and database software for \$22,000, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke. **The Motion was carried.**

**Petitions - MSA Statute (M.S.A.) 103D.905, Subd. 3:** Swenby will be meeting with the Polk County Commissioners in July to present the annual report for 2022 and present the proposed petitions. Last year the amount for each category of our petitions was \$105,266.92. The new capacity is \$110,852.62 for 2024. Swenby provided actual expenses in the district categories, and presented projected expenses for each category, which justified the levy. The managers reviewed each petition and category budget item.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Bartz to approve the three presented petitions at the new tax capacity of \$110,852.62 each, **Seconded** by Manager Andringa. **The Motion was carried.**

## 9. OTHER BUSINESS & PARTNERING INFORMATION

The managers were given information from Mn Watersheds, the FDRWG and the FDRWG Communications Committee that Swenby participates in, and the MN Association of Drainage Inspectors.

## 10. PERMITS:

The following permits were tabled last month and represented to the board:

### **Permit 2023- 28 Charles N Hawkins Trust, Section 32, Russia Township, Install Tile**

The hearing for the petition for this parcel to use Ditch 9 is June 6. Approved upon county approval.

### **Permit 2023-29 Polk County Highway Department, Section 25, Vineland Township, Bridge Installation**

Recommend Approval

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa approve Permits # 2023-28 (with noted contingencies) and # 2023-29, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.**

## 11. ADJOURNMENT:

Due to the holiday week and staff being present at the Polk County Fair booth during the first Thursday of the month, the next regular meeting will be held Monday, July 10, 2023, at 8 AM. As there was no further business to come before the board, a **Motion** was made by Manager Bartz to adjourn the meeting at 11:44 AM, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke. **The Motion was carried.**

Donna Bjerk, Administrative Assistant

Shawn Brekke, Secretary