

SAND HILL RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Minutes—May 7, 1991 Regular Meeting

Due to a scheduled May 14 bond issue vote related to the City of Fertile's West Mill Recreation Area Project, the possible impact on the Sand Hill River of the project and the need for more discussion and exchange of information, the regular May 7, 1991 Sand Hill River Watershed meeting was designated and used as a public meeting to discuss the West Mill project with the meeting then being recessed and regular business of the Watershed being taken up at resumption of the meeting on May 14, 1991.

May 7, 1991:

1. Attendance: Roland Gullekson, President, called the May 7, 1991 meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. District Treasurer Roger Hanson was present as well as Exec. Sec. Wayne Goeken.

Others present included City of Fertile Mayor Duane Knutson and Councilman Mike Moore. Approximately 20 citizens, primarily from the downtown business community were present.

2. Proposed West Mill Recreation Area Project: Mike Moore, who has been involved with project planning over the past several years provided background information and current status of the project. Plans call for developing all season trails, modern and primitive campsites, a nature center/restrooms/changing rooms/concession building and restoration of the mill pond that was washed out in 1950. Development would occur along the Sand Hill River approximately 1 mile west of Fertile. The City applied for a grant for the project and qualified for \$135,450 (50%) of Federal and \$61,475 (22.6%) State funding which needs to be matched by \$73,975 (27.3%) in local funds. A portion of this money has been used to purchase land needed for the project. The proposed \$100,000 bond issue being voted on by city residents of Fertile would cover the local share of the project and costs to put in a water retention structure.

A key component of the project which is not covered by grant funds is construction of the water retention structure to re-create the reservoir. The most recent proposal by Fertile's consulting engineers is to construct a rock dam which would not be as costly and would not be subject to as much regulatory control as a larger dam structure. However, the rock dam would only create an estimated 50 acre feet of water which based on comments made by the public is not in keeping with public expectations of a reservoir of approximately 80 acres of surface area. Water based recreation such as swimming, canoeing, low impact boating and fishing are desired activities by the public and are viewed as necessary to draw outside visitors to make use of the facilities. These activities would be limited with the rock dam.

Gullekson noted that a dam to create the desired larger reservoir would need to be further studied, but could cost upwards of \$350,000 and take a minimum of three years to do by the time all the permits and regulatory conditions were met. However, there may be other funding sources to complete a project of this nature if additional multiple benefits are developed. The City of Fertile would need to petition the Watershed to get involved in exploring options for the dam and related river impacts.

It was noted that only voters in the city limits of Fertile can vote on the bond issue, but the project can be an asset to the entire area thus there needs to be a means to get broader involvement in the project from individuals and groups outside of Fertile. Further discussion ensued on other matters including timeframe before losing grant funds, maintenance of roads and park facilities, status and impact of Winger Dam, fisheries expectations, water quality factors and drawing radius and area economic impacts of such a project.

Recess; The meeting recessed at 10:25 a.m. until 8:00 a.m. May 14, 1991 at which time the SHRWD Board meeting will resume.

On May 14, 1991 the regular meeting of the SHRWD Board was resumed at 8:00 a.m. at the District's Office in Fertile. Board members present were Roland Gullekson, Roger Hanson, Francis LaVoi and Dan Wilkens. Also present were Executive Secretary Wayne Goeken and the District's Consulting Engineer Lawrence Woodbury.

3. Minutes: Motion by LaVoi, seconded by Hanson to approve the April 2, 1991 meeting minutes with a clarification being added on page 3 regarding a petition being circulated by Blanchard Krogstad. It will be noted that the petition being circulated was on behalf of The International Coalition in support of a proposed project to the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources-not in opposition to the Winger Project as noted in the April 2 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report; A Treasurer's Report was presented by Hanson. Motion by LaVoi and seconded by Wilkens that the current vouchers be paid. Motion carried unanimously.

Garden Valley Telephone Co. 945-3204	20.20
Otter Tail Power Co.	303.31
Hannaher's Inc.-Steelcase Chair-computer	616.00
Tony Dorn, Inc.	24.64
Fertile Sand & Gravel-snow removal	15.00
Dale Olson-beaver trapping	300.00
Betty Berhow-computerizing mailing list	36.00
Lois Plante-custodial	40.00
Wayne Goeken-Secretarial & expenses	359.48
Wayne Goeken-Consulting-Special Projects	375.00
Roland Gullekson-Meetings & expenses	628.86

(Monthly vouchers continued)

Roger Hanson-Meetings & expenses	331.81
Francis LaVoi-Meetings&expenses	63.80
Dan Wilkens	251.91

Monthly Total **\$3.366.01**

5. Winger Dam: Lawrence Woodbury handed out and reviewed changes made to the Operation and Maintenance Plan for the Winger Dam. Changes primarily reflected provisions to better regulate water discharge to control local flood conditions in addition to flood control on the main stem of the Red River of the North. Wilkens made a motion to adopt the operating plan as prepared by Woodbury and to forward copies to the MN DNR and other appropriate agencies. LaVoi seconded the motion which carried unanimously. The operating plan will be submitted to DNR Regional Hydrologist Gerald Paul and the Army Corp of Engineers.

Gullekson noted that he had called Paul Richert of the Army Corp on April 29 regarding the status of the Winger project. Richert noted that he had not had time to look at the file yet, thus nothing had been done. Pat Bloomgren at the MPCA was also supposed to have issued the conditional permit regarding water quality so the project could proceed, however this has not occurred either. It was questioned by the SHRWD Board whether conditions should be part of the permit at all as water quality standards had been met.

Gullekson reviewed a one-page summary showing the amount of each affected landowner's acreage by land type(waste, pasture, woodland and tillable) and amount of proposed payment for easements. The figures were based on easements to the 1200 foot elevation.

6. Permits:

- An irrigation permit from Grove Farms Inc. of Climax was received and will be filed. No Board action was needed.
- No ditching permits were received.

7. Other Business:

- Gullekson reported that Elveryn Gunderson called noting problems again with beaver dams in the river causing flooding of a cattail slough which he uses for pasture. Gunderson was requesting assistance in controlling the beaver. The Board discussed the situation noting that it's costing more to control the beaver than the land is worth as pasture. When the Bear Park structure was put in the Watershed had agreed to an ongoing beaver control program. However, this was meant to be a once a year inspection and action taken as needed—not an ongoing project throughout the year. It was also noted that this area may be a protected wetland which should be left as

- is. The Board will inspect the site and take action as needed at a future meeting.
- b. Slides were shown that were taken by Gullekson of potential wetland restoration projects identified for mitigation options for the Winger Dam project.
 - c. Wilkens reviewed activities and meetings of the past month regarding a bill in the Minnesota Legislature which would allow the four counties associated with the Bois de Sioux Watershed to be part of the Red River Management Board. Wilkens presented information at a MN Senate Natural Resources Committee hearing in St. Paul and at a public meeting of county commissioners in Wheaton.
 - d. Gullekson reported on the City of Fertile's West Mill project and bond issue (see Item # 2 above). Gullekson noted that water samples at the Ranz bridge west of Fertile were taken last month along with regular sampling being done for the Winger Dam.
 - e. River Clean-up. Wilkens was designated to organize the river clean-up effort this spring which is a continuation of last year's work in removing debris and tree snags from the river. Wilkens will inspect the river and contact Butch Olson regarding his availability with a backhoe.
 - f. The SHRWD provided a letter of support to The International Coalition for a grant proposal to the Northwest Minnesota Initiative Fund to do a "Regional Water Supply Project."
 - g. Goeken reported on the status of the Citizen Lake Monitoring Program. Options are being explored to cover costs for lab tests for nutrient analysis for Maple Lake, Union Lake and Lake Sarah as testing that was to be done by the U of M-Crookston didn't work out. The project may be able to utilize a dissolved oxygen meter from the City of Erskine, thereby freeing up money committed by the SHRWD for purchase of a DO meter which could then be used to help cover lab costs for lake water samples. More information will be brought to the Board at their June meeting.
 - h. Information related to the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts 1991 Summer Tour was discussed. Board members were encouraged to attend as their schedules permit and to make their own reservations.

8. Adjournment: As there was no further business to come before the Board, motion by Hanson and seconded by LaVoi to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Daniel Wilkens, Secretary

Wayne R. Goeken, Exec. Secretary