

# SAND HILL RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

## Minutes-March 9, 1994 Regular Board Meeting

1. **Attendance:** Roland Gullekson, President, called the March 9, 1994 meeting to order at 9:00 am. District Managers present were Ray Baatz, Roger Hanson, Francis LaVoi, and Dan Wilkens. Others in attendance were Wayne Goeken--SHRWD Executive Secretary and Jeff LeDoux-SHRWD Consulting Engineer. SHRWD Citizen Advisory Committee members in attendance included John Balstad, Orley Jevning, Rory Hamre, Ken Pederson, Allan Stromstad, Phillip Swenson, Steve Taylor, Jim Todahl, and Steve Vesledahl.
2. **Agenda Review:** No changes in the agenda were noted
3. **Minutes:** Motion by LaVoi and seconded by Baatz to adopt the minutes of the February 8, 1994 SHRWD Board meeting as mailed with the following correction—on page 3, #6.e. it should have noted that Hanson was also authorized to attend the MAWD legislative briefing in St. Paul. Motion carried unanimously.
4. **Treasurer's Report:**
  - a.) Wilkens handed out and reviewed the SHRWD financial reports covering the month of February, 1994. The past month's checking account transactions, current fund balances and investment portfolio were reviewed. After discussion of several accounts with negative fund balances, it was noted that funds should be transferred from the construction fund to the following accounts to offset the negative balance—Maple Creek-07; River Clean-up-09; and River Stabilization-09A. A billing will be prepared and sent to the City of Fertile for the West Mill investigation. Motion by Baatz and second by LaVoi to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, authorize transfer of revenues from the construction fund to the accounts noted above with negative fund balances, and authorize payment of the current months bills as presented below. Motion carried unanimously.

Dennis Habeck--tree cutting	\$3,735.00
First State Bank of Fertile- Soc. Sec. & Medicare	\$412.08
Lois M. Plante-custodial	39.25
Wayne Goeken—secretarial	323.23
Raymond Baatz-meeting & expenses	179.78
Roger Hanson-meeting & expenses	899.24
Francis LaVoi-meeting & expenses	62.68
Daniel Wilkens-meeting & expenses	712.22
U.S. Postal Service-3 rolls stamps	87.00
Fertile Community Club-dues	50.00
Fertile Journal—publication	2.77
Hartz Store-janitorial supplies	24.17
Otter Tail Power Co.-utilities & heat	419.10
Fertile Bakery-rolls-meeting	12.80
Garden Valley Telephone Co.-phone	140.48
MN Assa of Watershed Districts-annual dues	637.77
Business Agency Inc.-General Liability Ins.	1,918.00
Mac's Cafe—meals-Bd & Adv. Comm. meeting	84.00
Red River Watershed Management Board-Red River Fund	<u>1,040.54</u>
	<b>MONTHLY TOTAL \$10,880.11</b>

## **5. Project Reports**

- a.) Wilkens reported on wood cutting being done to clear tree snags along the Sand Hill River by Dennis Habeck. He has completed work in the Climax area and is now working upstream from the first drop structure west of Fertile.
- b.) It was noted that the Dewar Bridge near Alta Hermodson will be worked on. A permit was given in the past to do this work. The Polk County Highway Dept. notified the SHRWD regarding a change in the sizing of the structure.

## **6. Report on Meetings and Activities During the Past Month**

- a.) Hanson reported on the "Redefining Progress-MN Future" conference that he attended in the Twin Cities. A Commission was set up in 1992 with seven areas identified which strategies would be developed for to move towards a sustainable future without harming the environment. Some of these areas were agriculture, mining, transportation, population, community development, and recreation and tourism. The strategies were presented as a set way of achieving the goals as defined by these groups with agencies such as MN DNR and MN PCA ready to establish policies to make it happen. Small group discussions were not give and take sessions, but rather an introduction 'on what is going to happen and how it will done. There didn't seem to be much representation from the groups that would be impacted, e.g. of the 17 participants in the ag group, only 2 were farmers and in the group dealing with recreation, only 1 was a resort owner. The majority of the conference participants were agency representatives. Gov. Carlson addressed the conference noting that \$600 million will be committed to the environment in Minnesota in the next 10 years. Hanson noted that he has a guidebook from the conference identifying the Governor's initiative and the guidelines that state agencies will be trying to implement.

Gullekson posed the question of how watershed districts and farmers can be more vocal and organized in communicating local conditions and needs and the importance of agriculture and farmers as stewards of land and water resources. Rather than looking at agencies and some environmental groups in an "us versus them" perspective, common ground needs to be established and productive working relationships to allow progress to be made. It must be kept in mind that the whole watershed needs to be represented from farmers to city residents.

- b.) Gullekson and Wilkens reported on technology that could be cost-effective for Watershed Districts and others in certain situations. They had attended a meeting at the Garden Valley Telephone Company Office in Erskine which utilized interactive TV linkage to other sites in the State. The system allowed for good interaction between participants in the different locations. The cost for government users is estimated to be about \$330/hour which would be more than offset in many instances where travel costs and hourly rates of consultants, engineers and agency officials would far exceed this amount.

## **7. Upcoming Meetings and Other Business:**

- a.) Gullekson noted that a report on the Wetland Conservation Act has now been released and encouraged all Board members to read it and become familiar with its provisions.
- b.) All board members were urged to attend hearings regarding the Red River Valley Environmental Assessment to be held March 28th in Thief River Falls and March 29th in Moorhead.

## **8. Permits:**

One permit that came before the Board for review was approved as follows.

-1994-1 City of Winger. Install storm sewer on Wisconsin Avenue and Dakota Avenue to improve the surface drainage of the streets in this area.

## **9. SHRWD Citizen Advisory Committee**

The SHRWD Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) met on March 9th also and discussed the results of their meeting with the Board as follows. Several possible candidates for the Board to fill the positions of LaVoi and Gullekson were noted with several needing to be contacted to determine their interest. Some of the candidate options included Harold Vig, Tennis Balstad, Allan Stromstad, and Verdell Olsoa. The CAC will review and


confirm candidates and submit these to the Board at their next meeting.


Regarding priority issues to address, the CAC noted ditch maintenance as a high priority in the District. Emphasis was placed on making sure existing ditches are maintained and kept in repair before moving on to new ditching projects. It was noted that if no work is done on ditches for 5 years, the ditch can be considered abandoned and could be designated as a protected wetland if certain conditions such as specific vegetation became established. Thus, even if no work is needed, it is important to fill out a monitoring report noting such as evidence that the ditch has not been abandoned. It was noted that the SHRWD actually only has two ditches other than the Sand Hill Ditch. Most ditches are either private or county. There is confusion regarding who's responsible for what in regard to ditching and a need for information regarding how a citizen can proceed with ditch situations as problems arise. The SHRWD is proposing to update records for all ditches in the watershed similar to what the Wild Rice Watershed District has done which would record the history of the ditches, valuations, assessment data and other information which could then be easily retrieved when any questions arose regarding any ditch.

Beaver problems was another issue identified as a continuing concern. Liberty Township has tentatively approved the position that they will participate in a beaver control program if all the other townships also participate. They propose that a bounty of \$30 per beaver be paid with the township contributing 25% of the bounty. Prior to beaver removal, those interested in removing beaver would need to go to the township board to get approval and to receive information regarding the geographic areas where the bounty would apply. Claims would be made to the townships which would verify and make payment and then submit an annual claim for reimbursement for the non-township share to the SHRWD. Concerns were noted regarding beaver being taken from lakes and areas where they would be easiest to collect and probably not significantly contributing to trouble spots in the river. It was also noted that monitoring would need to be done to maintain a proper balance and not go overboard in trying to decimate the entire beaver population. A draft position paper will be prepared reflecting Liberty Township's proposal and will be reviewed with other townships in the District.

In regard to education, it was felt that more information needs to be provided regarding what the Watershed's role is in land and water stewardship. River monitoring, both in terms of water quality and quantity, was identified as a need in order to have good baseline information from which to make informed decisions. The status of other issues and activity areas were also reviewed. These will be taken up in more detail at the next CAC meeting in addition to further discussion on the items noted above.

10. **Adjournment:** The next regular meeting of the SHRWD will be 8:00 am. April 12, 1994. The SHRWD Citizen Advisory Committee will meet at this time also at the SHRWD office and will convene with the SHRWD Board later in the morning. As there was no further business to come before the Board, motion by Wilkens and seconded by Baatz to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

  
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Roger Hanson, Secretary

  
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Wayne R. Goeken, Executive Secretary