

SAND HILL RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

February 1, 2000 Meeting Minutes

1. **Attendance:** Chairman Hanson called the February 1, 2000 meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. at the District Office. Other managers present were Bill Brekke Jr., Stuart Christian, Jimmie Krogstad, and Harold Vig. Others in attendance were Daniel Wilkens-Administrator, Naomi Jagol-Administrative Assistant, Jim Larsen-Houston Engineering, Inc., Rudy Applequist, and Randy Hamre.
2. **Agenda Review:** Manager Vig requested to address the Board relative to personnel issues.
3. **Minutes:** Motion by Manager Christian to approve the minutes of the SHRWD regular Board meeting held on January 4, 2000 as mailed, Seconded by Manager Brekke, Carried.
4. **Treasurer's Report:** Wilkens handed out and reviewed the Treasurer's report. Wilkens explained that the report had been revised to include a fund allocation comparison from the current month to the corresponding month from the previous year. Jim Larsen suggested that a similar comparison be prepared for the fund balance report, but rather than using a yearly comparison, a monthly comparison could be used in order to monitor the project activity occurring each month. Motion by Manager Brekke to approve the Treasurer's report as presented, Seconded by Manager Krogstad, Carried.

Wilkens reviewed the monthly bills received. Wilkens stated that a bill had been forwarded from Bear Park Township regarding reimbursement in conjunction with the Beaver Damage Control Program. Manager Vig noted that funds for this program had been appropriated for the entire state last year, rather than just for northwestern Minnesota as had been done previously with no increase so they ran out much earlier. When state funds run out we go to our original agreement with cooperative funding with the townships. Motion by Manager Krogstad to approve and pay bills, Seconded by Manager Vig, Carried. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

5. Project Reports:

- a. Project #8, Ogaard Impoundment: Larsen reported that he had recently received a copy of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) permit for the Ogaard Impoundment. Following discussion, the Board agreed to discuss the permit with the USACE representative attending the Project Team meeting following the board meeting.

6. Upcoming Meetings and Other Business:

- a. Polk County Hwy #41 Re-build: Wilkens stated that he had attended a Hammond Township meeting at the request of township officials and discussed various alternatives for potential projects to be constructed in conjunction with the road re-build. He added that the landowners inquired about various specifications prior to making a decision on whether or not to proceed. He noted he would discuss the landowner concerns with the District engineer and also with the Polk County Highway Department prior to scheduling another meeting.

Jim Larsen, District engineer, explained that a cooperative effort between landowners, the watershed district, and the county has been proven to recognize a substantial cost savings with regard to project construction. He referred to the project west of Beltrami (Project #13-Reis-Scandia).

Manager Vig inquired about the District's involvement in this project. Manager Hanson explained that it is the responsibility of the District to make the affected landowners aware of various opportunities available with regard to joint efforts.

Manager Vig inquired about Wilkens involvement with Hammond Township. Wilkens explained that, although he was requested to present the various alternatives at a township meeting, the District could not become involved in the process until a petition was received by the landowners. Wilkens further noted that the SHRWD is obligated to provide information and offer guidance to the residents of the District.

Manager Vig noted his concern relative to the District becoming involved in various problem areas that do not materialize into projects. Manager Brekke added that the District should provide landowners various alternatives with regard to project feasibility. Brekke noted that the road re-build will be constructed whether or not the landowners present a petitioned project, however, they might not like the results should they not petition for a project. Manager Hanson concurred with Brekke that the District should present the opportunity to the landowners. Manager Vig stated that he does not disagree that the District should present the facts, however, he cautioned Wilkens about becoming overzealous in providing information.

Manager Hanson inquired about the cost of preparing preliminary information for the landowners. Larsen responded that estimates had been provided earlier to the landowners regarding various options and added that additional information could be developed at a minimal cost.

- b. Personnel Issues: Manager Vig inquired about the District's policy regarding staff attendance at meetings located outside of the District office. He stated that during the previous month, a landowner had contacted him and explained that he was not able to reach anyone in the District office. He added that he was not aware that the Board had authorized both staff members to attend the International Coalition meeting in Winnipeg, MB. Wilkens responded that the conference had been discussed at previous meetings, however, no specifics with regard to which managers or staff would be attending the meeting were discussed. Wilkens added that the District has always encouraged interested Board members and staff to attend conferences as an educational tool.

Manager Vig noted his concern that the office has part-time hours posted on the office door and inquired whether this meant that employees are only here part-time. Wilkens explained that prior to hiring full-time staff, the Board had determined that the office hours for the District would be of a part-time nature. The board has not changed the office hours since the District hired full-time staff. Staff is working a full-time schedule. Wilkens stated that special office hours are observed in other watershed district offices, which allows the public access to the office while giving staff sufficient time to accomplish their duties. Manager Hanson suggested that each manager develop a list of suggestions to be discussed at a future meeting.

- c. Phone System: Wilkens stated that at the two previous monthly meetings, discussion had occurred regarding a proposal for various options available for a new phone system. Jagol distributed a handout which compared the current phone system to the proposed phone system and also a cost estimate. **Motion** to accept the proposal for a new phone system by Manager Christian, **Seconded** by Manager Vig. Discussion followed.

Manager Krogstad stated that he did not believe the number of phone calls coming into the office warranted a new phone system. Manager Vig added that currently the District has two lines coming into the office, one

for phone and one for fax. Jagol stated that the fax line is also used for obtaining email on the Internet. Manager Vig inquired about the frequency of use of the fax machine and the Internet. Wilkens responded that it varies each day, however, he explained that the fax line needs to be kept open and not used for phone calls in order for individuals to obtain access to the District.

Wilkens explained that due to the nature of the relationship with the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB), the accessibility of the District office is very important. He added that Jagol spends approximately half of her time working on duties for the RRWMB and often members from the RRWMB experience difficulties in reaching the District by phone.

As there was no further discussion, a vote was taken. Those voting in favor of the motion included Christian. Opposed included Krogstad and Vig. Manager Brekke abstained from voting. Motion defeated.

- d. Polk County #14-Scandia Church: Randy Hamre gave a presentation on the problem in his area. Several options and ideas were discussed. Going north one half-mile east of Randy's buildings would require a very deep cut, and crosses the gas pipeline. This option did not appear to be feasible. Manager Hanson suggested that the ditch east of Randy's buildings could be improved to bring the water from the south from Polk County Hwy #1 north into the Sand Hill River. This would help the water problem at Polk County Hwy #14. Wilkens suggested that Randy contact the Polk County Highway Department to inquire whether they would install another 36" culvert in the crossing and driveway to match the culvert size going into the river. Presently these two areas are acting as a restrictor. Randy was concerned about water on the south side of Polk County Hwy #1 in Section 25 running west to Polk County Hwy #14. Randy felt that the water in Section 25 should be diverted north into the Sand Hill River at the NW corner of Section 25 rather than letting it flow west. Randy indicated he would investigate the options discussed and report back to the board.
- e. Legislative Commission on Minnesota's Resources (LCMR) Grant Proposal: Wilkens distributed a handout regarding a grant proposal submitted by the DNR on behalf of the District to assess the Sand Hill Watershed drainage ditch system for hydrologic modeling purposes and to define impacts to agricultural lands and fisheries and wildlife habitat. Larsen added that the District should be notified in May or June regarding whether or not the funds have been approved.
- f. 2000 Annual Drainage and Wetland Conference: The 13th annual conference is scheduled for Thursday, February 3, 2000, at the St. Cloud Civic Center, St Cloud, MN. The Board authorized Manager Hanson to attend the conference.
- g. Bernie Youngquist Endowed Chair in Land and Water Management: Wilkens discussed the establishment of an endowed chair position at the University of Minnesota campus at Crookston. The individual would provide soil and water management, conservation engineering, and watershed instruction in the Natural Resources program of the College and develop a related research and outreach program through the Northwest Research and Outreach Center. The outreach component would strongly emphasize the coordination of land and water management efforts in the basin by connecting resource data and processes with user groups, conflict resolution, and the organization of decision-making systems. At least one graduate degree would be in watershed engineering and/or modeling. The board took no action at this time.
- h. Individual Watershed District RRWMB Representative/Alternate Resolutions: Wilkens explained that a resolution is needed from the District with regard to the official RRWMB representative and alternate. Manager Hanson stated that Dan Wilkens is the official RRWMB representative, and requested a volunteer for the alternate position. Manager Vig volunteered for the position. Wilkens stated that a letter would be forwarded to the RRWMB regarding the representative and alternate designations.

- i. Sand Hill Advisory Committee (SHAC): The Board determined that the advisory committee should schedule a meeting in March prior to field work. Currently two board members terms are up for reappointment, Jimmie Krogstad and Harold Vig. Wilkens was instructed to contact the chairman of the advisory committee and help arrange a meeting.

- j. Hubbard Township: The Board reviewed a letter forwarded to township officials in Hubbard township regarding a dump ground in the SW corner of Section 10, Hubbard township. The township was notified to contact Polk County Environmental Services (218-281-6445) in Crookston, Minnesota to obtain assistance in cleaning up this dump site along their township road.

- k. North Boundary Revision: Rudy Applequist stated that he had attended a meeting of the Red Lake Watershed District where he was notified that Dan Wilkens would be in charge of revising the boundary between the two watershed districts. Applequist distributed a map of an area west of his farmstead where a farmer had constructed a dike and was blocking a natural waterway. The obstruction was located on the current boundary line. Applequist noted that Loren Sanderson, Engineer from the RLWD, has reviewed the problem area. Wilkens stated that he would contact Sanderson to further discuss this issue.

7. Permits:

- a. No permits came before the Board this month for review.

- 8. Adjournment:** The next regular meeting of the SHRWD will be 8:00 a.m. Tuesday, March 7, 2000. As there was no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Robert Brekke, Jr., Secretary

Naomi L. Jagol, Administrative Assistant