

SAND HILL RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

April 4, 2000 Meeting Minutes

1. **Attendance:** Chairman Hanson called the April 4, 2000 meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. at the District Office. Other managers present were Bill Brekke Jr., Stuart Christian, Harold Vig, and Jimmie Krogstad. Others in attendance were Daniel Wilkens-Administrator, Naomi Jagol-Administrative Assistant, Jim Larsen-Houston Engineering, Inc., Rudy Applequist, and Wayne Goeken.
2. **Agenda Review:** Wilkens stated that Wayne Goeken requested to be added to the agenda to discuss the River Watch program.
3. **Minutes:** **Motion** by Manager Christian to approve the minutes of the SHRWD regular Board meeting held on March 7, 2000 as mailed, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried**.
4. **Treasurer's Report:** Wilkens distributed the Treasurer's report. **Motion** by Manager Vig to approve the Treasurer's report as presented, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried**.

Wilkens reviewed the balances in each of the funds. He stated that the auditor had inquired whether the District would be transferring funds between accounts as of the end of the year (1999). He explained that the District has transferred funds in the past from the construction account to the Bear Park, River Stabilization, and River Clean-up projects in the amount of \$20,000 to each fund.

Manager Krogstad inquired about the Ogaard Impoundment Project. He suggested that Jim Larsen review the cost estimates at the next monthly meeting.

Manager Vig inquired where the funds for the Bear Park Project are received. Wilkens explained that the funds are transferred from the construction fund. Manager Krogstad inquired whether the spillway for the Bear Park Project had been inspected for damage following the Flood of 97. Wilkens explained that the benchmark was determined and several loads of gravel were paid for but the elevation had not been verified. Larsen stated that he would bring his survey equipment and check the spillway on the Bear Park Project.

Motion by Manager Vig to transfer \$10,000 from the construction account into the River Stabilization account, **Seconded** by Manager Krogstad, **Carried**. **Motion** by Manager Brekke to zero out the Maple Creek account, **Seconded** by Manager Christian, **Carried**.

Manager Krogstad inquired about the bill from Gaffaney's. Wilkens explained that it was for the new office chair. Manager Krogstad inquired about the new vacuum cleaner purchased. Wilkens modeled the new vacuum cleaner and also distributed the briefcases that had been purchased for the managers.

Wilkens reviewed the bills to be approved. The managers requested that the Visa bill be itemized for future reports. Manager Hanson inquired about the bill from ICS Agency. Wilkens explained that the bill was for manager liability coverage. **Motion** by Manager Krogstad to approve and pay bills, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

5. Project Reports:

- a. **Project #13, Reis-Scandia:** Larsen reported that right-of-way markers need to be reinstalled on the project.

- b. Project #11, Beltrami Flood Control & Diversion: Larsen stated that right-of-way markers need to be reinstalled on this project. Wilkens read a letter from a landowner within the project area stating that he would re-seed the right-of-way that was damaged last fall.

6. Upcoming Meetings and Other Business:

- a. Union Lake/Sarah – U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Hearing: Wilkens reported that the USFWS conducted a public hearing on March 28, 2000 on the proposed two-year pumping extension. The current 100-day permit runs out on May 15, 2000. Les Peterson, USFWS-Detroit Lakes office, gave a presentation on the history of the project.

Ned Euliss, Research Biologist, Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center, U.S. Geological Survey, Jamestown, ND reported on his findings relative to the wetland in question. He stated that ducks prefer to nest in areas where the water is approximately one-foot in depth, however, the wetland under study was determined to be eight feet deep which would not be considered ideal for ducks. He noted that the water would be displaced by pumping in 3.93 days at the 20-cfs rate thereby pulling nutrients out of the system which the ducklings need for food. He added that waterfowl production is at an all time high due to the high rainfall conditions which have produced a record number of wetlands in the region.

Paul Burke, Fish and Wildlife Biologist, Ecological Services, USFWS, Bloomington, MN discussed the process that is required to approve the 2-year pumping extension. Currently, the USFWS is doing an Environmental Assessment (EA) on the project and should the EA determine that more information is needed, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would need to be conducted. The question was raised regarding the responsible party for the costs incurred with conducting the EIS. Burke responded that the USFWS would be responsible for the EA, however, should more information be needed the Lake Improvement District would be required to pay for the EIS. He estimated the cost of the EIS to be approximately \$500,000 to \$800,000.

The LID is ordering a 15cfs electric pump which will cost ~ \$1200/month to run rather than \$775/day with the tractor pump. Manager Krogstad inquired whether the groundwater was too high in the area to get the lake level down. Manager Christian responded that after pumping ceased on December 31, 1999, the lake did not rise but rather went down a little more over winter and then rose about 4 inches this spring after snow melt. Manager Christian asked if the USFWS was included in the mediation process. Wilkens responded that they were included, however, they did not participate as fully as did all the other agencies.

- b. Union Lake/Sarah Improvement District (LID): The LID sent a letter requesting the Sand Hill River WD board furnish the LID with a sample petition regarding turning over the project to the District as was discussed at the meeting with Kurt Deter. Manager Hanson stated that he remembered the discussion that had occurred but thought that Kurt Deter was going to send them a sample petition if they so requested. Manager Hanson also stated that he felt it was not appropriate for the District to be involved with the petition at this stage. Wilkens stated that he would contact Kurt Deter and ask him to correspond directly with the LID regarding the petition issue.
- c. MAWD Legislative Update: Ray Bohn, Executive Director of the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) and also their lobbyist, sent an update on current activities in the legislature that affect watershed districts. The board reviewed the update and determined there was nothing that needed board attention at this time.

- d. Sand Hill Advisory Committee (SHAC): Wilkens read a letter of resignation from Dan Gronberg, member of the SHAC. Gronberg stated in the letter that he had changed employment and can no longer attend the SHAC meetings. The board accepted his resignation and wished him well in his new endeavors.
- e. Envirothon: The Board received a request from the East Polk County Soil & Water Conservation District to help sponsor the Envirothon this year. The District has helped sponsor this activity in the past. This year the event will be held at the Rydell Refuge. **Motion** by Manager Vig to sponsor the Envirothon with a \$100.00 donation, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried**.
- f. Region 1 Administrators: Wilkens distributed a handout which listed concerns that were brought before the Administrators group at their last meeting. He stated that the handout would be presented at the next Red River Watershed Management Board meeting. He noted that most of the concerns could be resolved with improved communication between the RRWMB and local watershed district offices. He added that the administrators agreed that they should all attend the monthly RRWMB meetings which would help with attaining better communication.
- g. Project Prioritization Worksheet: Wilkens distributed a Project Prioritization worksheet that had been developed by the RRWMB. He noted that basic criteria needed to be developed in order to provide guidance to the RRWMB regarding projects to be selected for funding by the RRWMB. He noted that the score would be used when determining which watershed district projects would be eligible for funding from the RRWMB and, ultimately, recommendations to the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group.
- h. Administrator's and Administrative Assistant's Monthly Reports: The board agreed that both reports were very informative and requested that they be prepared each month. The Board discussed authorizing expenses and Wilkens reiterated what had been agreed to earlier. All expenses will be approved at the monthly board meeting. For those items that need to be acted on between meetings, approval will be obtained from the chairman. New office hours were discussed. The board determined that new office hours would be discussed in the near future.
- i. Minnesota Association of Drainage Inspectors (MADI) Annual Meeting: Wilkens distributed a handout regarding the MADI conference attended by himself and Jagol. Manager Hanson inquired whether the meeting was beneficial. Wilkens responded that the meeting was very good with items of interest for himself and Jagol.

Manager Vig stated that he did not think it was necessary for two staff to attend the meeting for cost reasons and a lost day of work. Manager Krogstad noted that he had left the previous monthly meeting and thought it had adjourned shortly thereafter. Krogstad stated that he was not pleased to hear that Jagol had been authorized to attend after he had left the meeting. Manager Hanson explained that the discussion had been tabled regarding which staff would attend the meeting, and after Krogstad had left the meeting the topic was discussed again. Manager Hanson stated that the meeting adjourned some time after Krogstad had left and noted that a unanimous vote was taken by the board members remaining to send both Jagol and Wilkens to the meeting.

- j. River Watch Forum: Wayne Goeken, River Watch Coordinator, discussed the Sand Hill River Watch Forum scheduled for April 13, 2000 at the Rydell Refuge. He noted that this year's forum would review the data collected thus far to discern and discuss recurring patterns and/or abnormalities that may be evident. Projects that are underway or being proposed that impact the Sand Hill River will also be reviewed. He explained that review of the data and projects would help guide the future monitoring plans as the current sites are assessed and parameters are monitored. He added that the purpose of the forum is to not only provide opportunities to learn, but also to recognize contributions made by all for river stewardship.

Goeken invited all interested board members to attend the event. He stated that a morning and afternoon refreshment break would be provided along with a lunch at the Rydell Refuge. He noted that he would also like to provide a commemoration to the teachers that have been involved with the program. He explained that the program is also conducted through the summer months with teachers participating on their own and coordinating various activities with the students involved. He stated that he would like to recognize three teachers with gift certificates to Cabela's at \$100.00 each. He requested that the board consider sponsoring the event in the amount of \$1,000.00 in order to provide for the cost of the meals and the teacher commemoration. **Motion** by Manager Krogstad to authorize \$1,000.00 to sponsor the River Watch Forum, **Seconded** by Manager Vig, **Carried**.

- k. **Ring Dikes**: Larsen stated that Blaine Houston had inspected the farmsteads on Ditch #6 to determine cost estimates for potential ring dikes for the various landowners. The estimates have been prepared with the largest portion of the costs apportioned for excavation.
- l. **Polk County #41-Rebuild**: Larsen stated that a report has been prepared regarding the ditch outlet from Polk County #6. The report is divided into three sections including an area adjacent to the road, from the road to the north/south township road line, and then into the Sand Hill River. Erosion is only occurring at the end of the ditch. As the water proceeds to the river, the system needs to have the tree debris removed.

Wilkins stated that he had been in contact with Roger Diesen, Polk County engineer, and had discussed the erosion occurring in the last ½ to ¾ of a mile in ditch #6. It appears that erosion has occurred in this section, thereby lowering the ditch bottom which has caused the sides to cave in. Should the ditch bottom be raised back to slope design, the problem may be alleviated. This action would require an erosion control structure at the end of the ditch. He noted that he told Diesen that Jim Larsen, District engineer, would be in contact with Rich Sanders, Polk County engineer, regarding the necessary ditch slope.

Larsen estimated that approximately 50 hours would be needed to clean the outlet area of the ditch. He noted that the ditch cleaning would not address the erosion problem that is occurring in the upper area.

Larsen stated that he would have the estimates prepared regarding the various options available to the landowners along the ditch should they decide to present a petition to the District. He noted that he would try to schedule a meeting during the week of April 10th with the steering committee designated for the project.

7. Permits:

- a. One permit came before the Board for review and was approved as follows:
-2000-14 Polk County Highway Department – Install culvert in King township, Section 35.

8. **Adjournment**: The next regular meeting of the SHRWD will be 7:00 a.m. Tuesday, May 2, 2000. As there was no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Robert Brekke, Jr., Secretary

Naomi L. Jagol, Administrative Assistant