

SAND HILL RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

December 1, 2009 Meeting Minutes

- 1. Attendance:** Chairman Harold Vig called the December 1, 2009 meeting to order at 8:00 AM at the District Office. Other managers present were Bill Brekke, Stuart Christian, Roger Hanson and Gordon Sonstelie. Others in attendance were Bryan Paradis – LID, Daniel Wilkens-Administrator, April Swenby – Administrative Assistant, and Lawrence Woodbury-Houston Engineering. Jerry Bentz – Houston Engineering attended via phone conference.
- 2. Approval of the Agenda:** A **Motion** was made by Manager Hanson to approve the agenda as presented, **Seconded** by Manager Christian, **Carried**.
- 3. Minutes:** A **Motion** was made by Manager Christian to approve the minutes of the SHRWD regular board meeting conducted on November 4, 2009, **Seconded** by Manager Hanson, **Carried**
- 4. Treasurer's Report:** A **Motion** was made by Manager Brekke to approve the treasurer's report for November, **Seconded** by Manager Sonstelie, **Carried**.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Brekke to approve and pay bills **Seconded** by Manager Sonstelie, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

5. Engineer's Report

Project # 24: The surveying is complete. Woodbury will prepare for the preliminary hearing which is the next step.

Community Flood Control Improvements: Bents gave the managers examples of the process and funding being using by the Wild Rice Watershed District for the Community Flood Control Improvements. Bents reviewed the joint city ring dike meeting held in Nielsville for both communities.

A total of \$67,500, 50/50 cost share was approved through MN Recovers for each city (Nielsville and Climax). This funding was intended to be used to develop plans for flood protection improvements in each city. The local cost share can come from the watershed or the city. Bents explained that on other recent similar community projects (i.e. Oakport Township, East Grand Forks,...), the local cost for development and construction had been capped by the state at 2% of the total medium household income for each city.

Based on discussions he had previously with Pat Lynch at the DNR, he suggested doing the first phase (conceptual design phase) at the 50/50 cost share at the watershed cost. The money fronted by the district can be applied to the 2% cost share requirement if the project is completed. Once the first phase is completed, the watershed could then request additional funding for the future phases (Phase 2 - Final Design and Phase 3 - Construction/Land Acquisition) from the DNR following the 2010 Legislative Session.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Sonstelie to continue with Phase One (conceptual design phase) as suggested by Bents, **Seconded** by Manager Christian, **Carried**.

The district via Bents will send a letter to each city, or meet with them in person, to detail the process and how the funding will work for each phase.

Farmstead Ring Dikes: Of the four applicants for the farmstead ring dikes, three have had preliminary alignments done and the landowners have been contacted.

The Paulsrud ring dike will be laid to rest due to site complications and site instability. Funding from the NRCS includes 75% of the construction costs and \$9,000 - \$10,000 for the design and observation process. It will not cover the cost of the additional geotechnical research which is needed to go forward at this point.

6. Dan's Monthly Report:

Project Team: The project team met on November 10th at 10:30 am. Meeting highlights were given to the managers. Garden Slough will not be built in conjunction with Norman County road # 1 rebuild, due to the permitting delays. Five thousand dollars needs to be applied for through the Flood Damage Reduction Workgroup to assist in additional information gathering. The project team will continue to explore other alternatives and continue to fine-tune the purpose and need statement for the said area.

RRWMB: Met in TRF 17th. Meeting highlights were given to the managers.

RRBC Commission: The executive committee along with the technical committee meets on Wednesday at 1:30 pm.

LID: The Board of Directors for the Union Lake Sarah Improvement District will meet on Wednesday, December 9, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the back room of the Ness Cafe in Erskine, MN.

Mowing: The mowing is complete for all systems under watershed jurisdiction.

Project # 20: Willard Swenby Construction procured culverts from Fargo and installed them over Thanksgiving weekend. J and S Gravel, and Higher Ground visited the site and said they would be unable to do the project this fall. JC&J Trucking will be moving in equipment on Monday and will start to move dirt on Tuesday.

Drainage Records Modernization Grant: BWSR has received a signed grant agreement and the work plan and budget. We have received the grant money.

Liberty-Onstad Ditch: Houston Engineering has completed the survey. Wilkens checked with all three contractors and J C & J trucking gave us a bid and could start this fall if the weather cooperated. A **Motion** was made by Manager Hanson to approve the bid from J C & J Trucking, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried.**

Fish Passage: Tom Groshens notified us we did not make the first cut on the Sams Lessard Grant. The DNR is very concerned at the way the process is working and that the grant application was denied. We have a meeting with Luther Aadlund on December 14th at 1:00 pm.

Permits violation: It was discovered Gene Brekke, Hubbard Township, placed a culvert without a permit. Wilkens will send him a notice stating he is in violation of watershed law and that a permit was required prior to him installing the culvert.

Ditch responsibility: Brekke would like to meet with the Polk County board to develop a policy requiring landowners to be responsible for cleaning ditches that have filled in due to wind erosion. Hanson concurred that it is a problem in his area as well. Each year the same landowners work their fields into powder which is subject to wind erosion. It should not be the responsibility of the other landowners that prevent their land from blowing to cover the costs of those that do not.

Wilkens asked the board what to do with those landowners that continually farm into the ditch right of way. By state law the district must preserve the filter strip area for the purposes they were designed for. The ditch inspector is now required by law to inspect each ditch at least once every five years and if a right of way encroachment is found the inspection must take place every year until it is remedied. The state requires yearly reports of these violation activities. The inspection this fall showed many parcels were encroaching on ditch right

of way. We have sent out letters in duplicate to all landowners so they may give a copy to their renters asking for their cooperation in the past with some success. The board suggested that letters be sent out again only this time explaining that encroachment will not be allowed. If the landowner will not comply then the crop will be destroyed and appropriate cover reestablished with the expense billed to the landowner.

7. Other Business:

Public Relations: The managers reviewed possible public relations items. No new information was brought before the board.

LID: Bryan Paradis updated the managers regarding the screen and pipe. The pipe is currently being prepared to be installed. Paradis updated the managers on the upcoming costs and asked for the watershed's contribution as soon as possible to allow them to pay the necessary bills as they come due. A **Motion** was made to pay the LID \$85,000 for the districts share of the screen project as agreed to by prior motion at the August 13, 2009 special meeting.

Computer Purchase: A **Motion** was made to purchase a computer from Network Express for the said estimate by Manager Sonstelie, Seconded by Manager Christian, **Carried**.

Christmas Celebration: The party is planned for December 12 at the Sand Hill Supper Club and Lounge at 6 PM. Swenby will call for reservations.

Web-site Class: A **Motion** was made approving Swenby for an additional web-site class by Manager Brekke, Seconded by Manager Hanson, **Carried**. This class will be reimbursed 50% by the RRWMB.

Employee Evaluations: The managers reviewed the administrator's current salary, benefit package, and other agency compensations. A **Motion** was made by Manager Sonstelie to increase Wilkens salary by 3%, Seconded by Manager Hanson, **Carried**. The managers have chosen to leave the benefit package the same as the previous year. Swenby's wages were reviewed. It has been two years since her last pay increase. A **Motion** was made by Manager Sonstelie to authorize an additional \$1.50 per hour for Swenby, **Seconded** by Manager Christian, **Carried**.

8. **Permits:** The following permits were brought before the board. A **Motion** was made by Manager Hanson to approve the following permit, **Seconded** by Manager Sonstelie, **Carried**.

2009-56 Norman County Highway Department, Reconstruct CSAH # 1 in sections 4 thru 9 of Bear Park Twp.

9. **Adjournment:** The next regular meeting of the SHRWD will be at 8 AM on January 5, 2010. As there was no further business to come before the board, a **Motion** was made by Manager Brekke to adjourn the meeting at 10:33 AM, **Seconded** by Manager Sonstelie, **Carried**.

Gordon Sonstelie, Secretary

April Swenby, Administrative Assistant