

SAND HILL RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT
January 4, 2011 Meeting Minutes

1. **Attendance:** Chairman Harold Vig called the January 4, 2011 meeting to order at 8:00 AM at the District Office. Other managers present were Scott Balstad, Bill Brekke, and Stuart Christian. Daniel Wilkens – Administrator, April Swenby – Administrative Assistant, Lawrence Woodbury - Houston Engineering. Others in attendance were Steve Green – Heier Township, Eric Engelstad, Joyce Downs and Bill Downs - Landowners.
2. **Approval of the Agenda:** A **Motion** was made by Manager Christian to approve the agenda as presented, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried**.
3. **Minutes:** A **Motion** was made by Manager Brekke to approve the minutes of the SHRWD regular board meeting conducted on December 4, 2010, with changes requested by Downs and Christian, **Seconded** by Manager Christian, **Carried**.
4. **Treasurer's Report:** The managers reviewed their expense reports and reported on activities for the month. A **Motion** was made by Manager Brekke to approve the treasurer's report for December, **Seconded** by Manager Christian, **Carried**.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Christian 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. **Engineer's Report**

MN DOT Permit: Woodbury reviewed their permit and did not foresee any items of concern regarding the Sand Hill River Watershed District.

Project # 24: Gary Bennett, (DNR Hydrologist) has suggested extending the final EAW determination for the EIS for up to 30 days, as originally requested. Woodbury will converse with the DNR in the next 30 days to review any concerns they may have. A **Motion** was made by Manager Brekke to extend the EAW process for 30 days, **Seconded** by Manager Christian, **Carried**.

Fish Passage: Michael Wyatt, (USACOE) has requested (via e-mail) permission to enter two parcels of land to conduct a random Cultural Heritage study. Wilkens is unsure as to where he is regarding his request and will be in contact with him soon.

TMDL: The contracts are expected in February.

Sand Hill Restoration: Since the December meeting, Woodbury has requested and received from the EPA an official statement of their requests. Along with that, their approval has been received.

Red River Basin Reimbursement: A modeling study was conducted as per the RRBC request (with reimbursement of up to 50% or \$10,000 max.) and this evaluation was given to the managers. The evaluation was centered around the Bear Park project during the 1997 flood.

Boundary: The LIDAR information is now currently available for the entire district. By February, a recommended boundary change should be ready to be presented to the managers. A petition will then be drafted by the district and Red Lake WD requesting the BWSR conduct a hearing on the proposed boundary and make a final decision. Manager Balstad would like to see the areas of Sletten and Gregory Township near Mahnomen be reviewed in this

process.

Ditch # 122: Woodbury presented LIDAR maps of the area. After his analysis, Woodbury suggested focusing on repairing the existing ditch; trying to solve most of the water problems in the area in the most affordable way. Manager Balstad questioned whether or not there may be a grant available to fix the problem area in its entirety. Woodbury stated that because it's a legal ditch system, that alternative is not promising; however he will converse with BWSR and research the possibility of a grant. A **Motion** was made by Manager Balstad to authorize Woodbury to explore the opportunity (with Gary Lee and Brian Dwight) of grant money, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried**. Manager Christian chose to recuse himself from the discussion.

The landowners reviewed the pros and the cons for turning the ditch over to the watershed. Two alternatives were given to the landowners and the district: Hire Woodbury to proceed with further engineering or do nothing. The landowners would like to see construction costs before they can make a decision; However they felt the cost of engineering to decide what is cost feasible is out of their price range.

The district will see if there may be grants that could address this problem. The engineering cost to develop a preliminary engineers report is estimated to be about \$30,000. An improvement petition requires 26% of the landowners over which the ditch passes. The improvement petition also requires a bond to cover the costs. Because there are only four affected landowners, one person with enough land could proceed with a petition. The other option is to continue with a unanimous resolution of the board.

Overall Plan: The Watershed Management Plan draft # 1 was given to the managers. Woodbury reviewed with the managers the information they were given. A full day meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 10, 2011 at 9 a.m. to review in detail the presented management plan. Gary Lee will be invited to attend by Manager Balstad. Wilkens will have Wild Rice Watershed District's current rules and regulations. Swenby will post the notice of this special meeting on the door and on the web-site.

6. Dan's Monthly Report

RRWMB: The RRWMB met in Fertile. Meeting highlights were given to the board. The next RRWMB meeting has been scheduled for January 18 in Fargo.

RRBC Commission: A retreat and board meeting will be held on January 18-20th at the Ramada Inn in Fargo.

LID: The Union Lake Sarah Board of Directors met Wednesday, December 8, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the back room of the Ness Cafe in Erskine, MN.

7. Other Business:

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

Web-site: The new Sand Hill website is uploaded and fully functional.

City of Fosston: Chairman Vig and Manager Balstad asked about the status regarding the City of Fosston permit. Wilkens will be seeing Curt Deter this week. Currently, it is still in the hands of the attorney and no new communication has been made. The managers have asked Wilkens to make contact regarding the status.

Annual Report: The Annual Report for 2009 is completed and is available on the district web site. This report

was required by December 31, 2010 and it was submitted to Don Buckhout and Brian Dwight.

- 8. Permits:** Two permits were brought before the board. A **Motion** was made by Manager Christian to approve the following two permits, **Seconded** by Manager Balstad, **Carried**.

2011-01 – Department of Transportation – rebuild of highway 75 from Crookston to Climax

2011-02 – Bill Brekke Clean ditch an install culvert. Section 19-30 Hubbard Township.

- 9.** Steve Green was asked by the Heir township board to request the district perform a study on building the road up. The district does not build roads. Green will re-submit their permit at the February meeting, as the one that was initially submitted was not received (mail error?).

- 10. Adjournment:** The next regular meeting of the SHRWD will be at 8 AM on Monday, February 1, 2011. As there was no further business to come before the board, a **Motion** was made by Manager Christian to adjourn the meeting at 11:13 AM, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried**.

April Swenby, Administrative Assistant

Scott Balstad, Secretary