

**SAND HILL RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT**  
March 7, 2011 Meeting Minutes

1. **Attendance:** Vice Chairman Roger Hanson called the March 7, 2011 meeting to order at 8:00 AM at the District Office. Other managers present were Scott Balstad, Bill Brekke, and Stuart Christian. Staff members present were Daniel Wilkens – Administrator, and April Swenby – Administrative Assistant. Others in attendance were Jeff Langen – Houston Engineering, Steve Green - Heier Township, Craig Bunes - Polk County Commissioner, 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 Christian to approve the minutes of the SHRWD regular board meeting conducted on February 1, 2011, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried**.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Brekke to approve the minutes of the SHRWD overall plan conducted on January 10, 2011, **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 February, **Seconded** by Manager Christian, **Carried**. Manager Hanson inquired about reimbursement for the ring dike projects. Wilkens informed the board that the funds should be coming shortly from NRCS. The managers discussed the high costs of the electric bill and the furnace issues.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Balstad 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.

For the April meeting, the managers asked April to see if she could prepare an expense report for the project team since 1998. Manager Brekke expressed concern that he had become a manager in 1998 and so far the project team process has not helped our district bring forth even one project that relates to flood control. Wilkens agreed, but said that our problems relating to on channel storage are being worked on by the Red River Retention Authority which Congressman Peterson is helping to promote. Our concerns are being voiced at the Federal Level with solutions being discussed. If the impediments to our projects relating to the wetland issues are ever going to be addressed it will be at this level. The report to Congressman Peterson's Committee is due in May. We are keeping on top of this because it is the major obstacle to our progress in flood damage reduction.

## 5. Engineer's Report

**Project # 24:** The EAW comment period ended February 15. Houston Engineering has submitted a list of ideas that will benefit the project and address mitigation of the wetland issues. Their proposal has been submitted to Gary Bennett in the DNR. When Woodbury returns, the interested parties will meet and prepare for the final hearing.

**TMDL:** Contracting is proceeding slowly; possibly May/June before the contracts will be approved.

**Nielsville/Climax Ring Dikes:** Soil borings have been scheduled.

**Ditch # 122:** Joyce Downs would like to know "why the district feels they can dump water on her" and commented that eminent domain cannot be enforced on a drainage ditch. She feels that this subject has gone on for

fourteen years and feels that is it harassment.

Manager Hanson explained that because of her concerns, the district is searching for other alternatives that do not include her property. The district is presently applying for a grant to eliminate erosion in ditch # 122 while addressing the water issues in the upstream area. Hanson stated that until a solution is found to address the water problems in the area, all options will need to be looked at, including hers. Manager Balstad said that applying for this grant will not happen until the next funding cycle which is this fall so we will not know if this is a viable option for some time. It is the district's obligation to review all feasible options to solve the problem and that a process of this nature takes time.

## 6. Dan's Monthly Report

**RRWMB:** The RRWMB met in Thief River Falls. Meeting highlights were given to the managers.

**RRBC Commission:** New board member training and board meeting at the Ramada Inn in Grand Forks

**LID:** Have received a draft petition to turn over the Pumping project. The inadequate description of the project is holding up the process at the moment. Wilkens is continuing to coordinate a proper description of the project. A **Motion** was made by Manager Balstad to table the LID's petition until the proper description is obtained, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried.**

**Boundary:** The Red Lake Watershed District met and negotiations are still in process. Both districts will be sending in their boundary requests and BWSR will have to mediate the areas in question. A **Motion** was made by Manager Brekke to present the boundary as presented to BWSR, **Seconded** by Manager Christian, **Carried.** Manager Balstad suggested meeting with the Red Lake Watershed District. Wilkens explained that for 10-15 years Loren Sanderson and himself have met and tried to arrive at the boundary. All along they have used the following guidelines. If the water runs to the Red Lake District it is their area. If it runs nowhere or some place other than the Red Lake River it goes to the Sand Hill District. The premise behind this is the Sand Hill District is 440 square miles and the Red Lake District is 6000 square miles. From an administrative budget, the Sand Hill District is so small it is on the border line of being viable, whereas the Red Lake District is the largest district in the state, so if the above assumptions are followed it would help the Sand Hill District and not affect the Red Lake District. Sanderson and Wilkens have worked on the boundary using the assumptions above. When the Lidar data became available the boundary issue could now be addressed with great accuracy. Houston Engineering prepared the map with Loren Sanderson present. Upon presentation to the Red Lake Board recently, Myron Jesme informed Wilkens they decided to use the same assumptions only in reverse. There has been a long time involved and board turn over has occurred which may explain the Red Lake reversal. Wilkens suggested that we submit our petition and let BWSR work on mediating the differences and ultimately making the final decision. The landowners affected would have the opportunity to voice their concerns as to which Watershed their land will be assessed in as part of the boundary process.

**Red River Retention Authority:** Information about the Red River Retention Authority and the various committees associated with it was distributed to the managers in their packet.

**FDRWG March Conference:** The FDRWG March Conference will be held at the Marriot in Moorhead. Manager Hanson and Wilkens are registered for this event.

**MAWD Legislative Breakfast:** Manager Hanson and Wilkens will attend on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of March.

## 7. Other Business:

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

**City of Fosston:** An improvement petition was presented to the managers. A **Motion** was made by Manager Christian to accept the petition as presented, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried**. The district will submit the petition to our attorney for his approval. Upon his approval, Wilkens will coordinate with the affected parities to schedule a hearing. Wilkens will verify with the attorney the legalities on notification and how many weeks in advance to advertise for the hearing.

Manager Balstad has conversed with Warren Affeldt who stated that the plans are to clean the entire area in question. Manager Brekke suggested that the act of cleaning the area should be addressed in writing. County Commissioner Bunes was not aware of plans to clean the ditch at this time.

Landowner Bartz downstream is concerned with the adequacy of the outlet. Langen confirmed that a complete preliminary engineers report should address and determine the adequacy of the outlet. If the outlet is determined adequate, an additional petition will be required to address the problems downstream, however it is determine inadequate, provisions will need to be included for the downstream area in conjunction with the existing petition.

Langen added that the adequacy of the outlet is required to be addressed in the preliminary engineers report.

**Polk County Fair:** A **Motion** was made by Manager Balstad to authorize Swenby to produce a DVD of the district for use during the fair, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried**. Manager Balstad suggested including images from the sediment basins.

**Advisory Committee:** The advisory committee list was read to the managers. Manager Balstad will be removed from the Committee. Along with Scott Balstad, the managers agreed to remove Helmer Homme, Jessica Voeller, and Joey Geiseke. Phillip Swenson, Roger Black, and Danny Grunhovd will be invited to join. Swenby will contact Todahl to initiate another meeting upcoming near the end of March.

**Heier Township:** The current culvert in place is plugged. Green would prefer to replace it with an 18" culvert; he is unsure what is currently in place. Woodbury is the engineer who has previously reviewed the area. The managers will wait until the snow melts and tour the area when the water is running. The permit has been placed on hold.

**8. Permits:** One permit was brought before the board.

2011-03 – Spokely Brothers - Clean existing ditch - Section 29, Scandia Township.

**9. Adjournment:** The next regular meeting of the SHRWD will be at 8 AM on Tuesday, April 5, 2011 As there was no further business to come before the board, a **Motion** was made by Manager Christian to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 AM, **Seconded** by Manager Balstad, **Carried**.