



TITLE: REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

DATE: JANUARY 11, 2021

1. ATTENDANCE:

Chairman Stuart Christian called the January 11, 2021 meeting to order at 8:02 AM at the District Office. Other managers attending were Don Andringa, Clayton Bartz, Craig Engelstad, and JJ Hamre. One staff member was present April Swenby – Administrator and Donna Bjerk – Office Assistant. Others in attendance were Zach Herrmann – Houston Engineering.

Introductions were held for the new staff and board manager. Donna Bjerk was recognized as the new Office Assistant and was hired as of January 1, 2021. She along with the new board manager Don Andringa were welcomed to the district.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

A **Motion** was made by Manager Bartz to approve the agenda, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.**

3. OATH OF OFFICE:

Don Andringa was sworn in and took the Oath of Office as a Manager of the Sand Hill River Watershed District. A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to accept Manager Andringa's Oath of office, **Seconded** by Manager Hamre **Carried.**

4. REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD:

Annual reorganization of the Board was conducted. Chairman Christian turned the meeting over to Manager Hamre who asked for nominations for **Chairman of the Board**. Manager Engelstad nominated Manager Christian for Chair. Nominations were called for three times by Manager Hamre. No further nominations were made. **Motion** to cease nominations and have the secretary cast a unanimous ballot for Stuart Christian for Chairman by Manager Bartz **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad, **Carried.** Manager Hamre returned the chair to Chairman Christian.

Chairman Christian asked for nominations for **Vice Chairman** of the Board. Manager Bartz nominated Manager Andringa for Vice Chairman. Nominations were called for three times by Chairman Christian. No further nominations were made. **Motion** to cease nominations and have the Secretary cast a unanimous ballot for Andringa for Vice Chairman by Manager Bartz, **Seconded** by Manager Hamre, **Carried.**

Chairman Christian asked for nominations for **Secretary of the Board**. Manager Engelstad nominated Manager Hamre for Secretary. Nominations were called for three times by Chairman Christian. No further nominations were made. **Motion** to cease nominations and have the Secretary cast a unanimous ballot for Manager Hamre for Secretary by Manager Bartz, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad, **Carried.**

Chairman Christian asked for nominations for **Treasurer** of the Board. Manager Hamre nominated Manager Bartz for Treasurer. Nominations were called for three times by Chairman Christian. No further nominations were made. **Motion** to cease nominations and have the Secretary cast a

unanimous ballot for Manager Bartz for Treasurer by Manager Engelstad **Seconded** by Manager Hamre, **Carried**.

Manager Engelstad made a **Motion** for the following: That the Fertile Journal is designated as the official newspaper of the SHRWD. That the following financial institutions be designated as official depositories for SHRWD funds: Red River State Bank of Fertile and Bremer Bank, Detroit Lakes, MN. That the District's consulting engineering firm is Houston Engineering, PO Box 5054, Fargo, ND. That the attorney for the District is David Hauff, Firm of Anderson and Bottrell, PO Box 10247, Fargo, ND. That mileage for District business is reimbursable at a per mile rate coinciding with the allowable IRS mileage rate. That manager per diem is set at \$40 per hour with a maximum daily total of \$125.00 as prescribed by State law. **Seconded** by Manager Bartz, **Carried**.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to authorize Stuart Christian, Clayton Bartz, and April Swenby as the current financial and representative signers and adding Donna Bjerk to be a financial signer for the Red River State Bank account, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad, **Carried**.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to appoint April Swenby and Donna Bjerk as an authorized signer to the Business Rewards Credit card with FCCU giving Bjerk and Swenby the ability to use the assigned credit card on behalf of the district, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad, **Carried**. Credit card charges are always listed on the bills to be paid individually for the managers to review each month. Both meeting minutes and one signature are required for any future signature additions/removals to this credit card.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad authorizing the April Swenby and Clayton Bartz as authorized representatives regarding the Membership Savings account and credit card listing them on the entity authorization form, **Seconded** by Manager Hamre, **Carried**.

For informational purposes, Swenby reminded the managers of the following which are regulated by the credit card company:

5. One signature is required to withdraw funds from the Reward Savings account at First Community Credit Union.
6. One signature is also required to open/close any accounts with First Community Credit Union.
7. When new employees or new Treasurers represent the Sand Hill Watershed District, proper documentation will need to be reflected for the credit card.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa authorizing the April Swenby and Donna Bjerk as authorized representatives regarding the Sam's Club Credit card listing both of them on the entity authorization form, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad, **Carried**.

8. MINUTES:

A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to approve the minutes from the December 7, 2020, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz. **The Motion was carried.**

9. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Swenby read the Treasurer's Report. A **Motion** was made by Manager Hamre to approve the Treasurer's Report for December, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried**

The managers reviewed their expense reports and reported on activities for the month. The following bills were reviewed:

Anderson, Bottrell, Sanden & Thompson

435.00

April J. Swenby	219.06
EcoLab	53.57
First Community Credit Union	85.05
Garden Valley Telephone Company	209.23
Houston Engineering	2,395.50
Jason Benbo	300.00
JC & J Trucking, Inc.	23,224.00
Marco	183.12
Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust	3,945.00
Otter Tail Power Company	447.82
Sarah Wise	48.00
Stuhaug Sanitation	46.80
Todd's Landscaping	15.00
Wild Rice Electric	263.72
TOTAL	<u>31,870.87</u>

Additional bills not included in the bills to be paid report are as follows:

Anders Valley Publishing	150.40
City of Fertile	52.35
Office Supplies Plus	33.15
Opdahl's Donuts	5.00
Todd's Landscaping	135.00
TOTAL	<u>\$355.90</u>

Swenby noted that the following bills were paid December 31, 2020. She noted reimbursement request for the RCPP program, RRWMB Tax Levy reimbursements, receipts tied to the LSOHC grant, and the Project Team are date sensitive, thus the reason for cutting checks before the meeting. The checks were cut and held and will be mailed upon today's meeting approval.

Houston Engineering – SH Lake Dam	171.00
Houston Engineering – Kittleson Creek	171.00
Houston Engineering – RCPP Planning	770.00
Houston Engineering – Poissant Bridge	4,782.75
Houston Engineering – Rock Riffles	171.00
RRWMB – Tax Levy Reimbursement thru 12/31/2020	168.79
TOTAL	<u>\$6,234.54</u>

A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to approve and pay the bills with a total of \$38,461.31, **Seconded** by Andringa. **The Motion was carried.**

10. ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Project #27 – Union Lake Pumping: The contractor was not able to get to the cleanout this year before freezing conditions. Swenby and Herrmann met with Bryan Boll in December to discuss options. Houston Engineering is developing cost estimates for materials for a couple of different scenarios. Andringa was given a history of the easement that the district is seeking, LID position

and landowner apprehension for the pipe proposal, and the managers discussed what is needed for the district to move forward.

Project # 32 – Ditch 80: A final pay request of \$39,335.70 was submitted. This request will close out the contract. There is a one-year warranty for workmanship and the perimeters of the warranty was discussed. Herrmann reviewed the purpose of Ditch #80 to bring new manager Andringa up to speed.

The final payment to Davidson Construction for Ditch 80 will be \$39,335.70. This will release all retainage, settle the last remaining pay quantities, withhold the \$61,000 in LDs, and finalize the project. A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to approve the final pay request for \$39,335.70 and issue payment to Davidson Construction, **Seconded** by Manager Hamre. **The Motion was carried.**

Rock Riffles (Phase 2): The work is substantially completed. The district continues to withhold retainage (5% = \$14,309.05). Herrmann anticipates releasing final payment in the spring of 2021.

Poissant Bridge Removal: The project is currently out for bid and a bid opening date is set for January 22, 2021. Herrmann reviewed the scope of the project to bring Manager Andringa up to speed.

RCPP: Houston Engineering is moving forward with a narrowed focus to Beltrami, MN.

MN Hwy 102 Boundary Revisions: The survey is completed and Houston Engineering is reviewing the data.

One Watershed One Plan: Swenby and Herrmann have a meeting scheduled with the SWCD's to begin the process for applying for the grant for the 1W1P. Herrmann and Swenby reviewed the benefits of the 1W1P, highlighting the funding benefits as the reason that the managers decided last spring to move forward with the application and plan for the district.

11. ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

RRBC: The RRBC Conference is scheduled for January 21, 2021. Swenby will be presenting on the Sand Hill Lake Dam project. Manager Christian will be attending.

FDRWG Meeting: The FDRWG meeting on December 9. Swenby was unable to attend due to medical appointments, but the agenda and minutes are provided to the managers.

RRWMB Meeting: Swenby attended the RRWMB meeting on December 15.

MAWA: The awards committee met on December 11 (a committee Swenby now serves on). Swenby will also be serving on the handbook committee, in addition to the finance committee.

MCIT: The district coverage is due for MCIT and was reflected in the bills to be paid. Swenby highlighted an increase in premium. The PC (property/casualty) rates increased 12%.

IRS Mileage Rates: IRS Mileage rates decreased to \$.56 per mile as of January 1, 2021.

Ditch 80: Swenby has submitted for the last reimbursement for the side inlets for Ditch #80 for the MDM grant. The amount to be reimbursed through the grant will be \$30,400.

Legislative Efforts: Swenby contacted both Mark Johnson and Deb Kiel to invite them for a visit at the watershed when they are passing through to give them an update on the district and the needs of the watershed. Both agreed to stop in January/February. Deb Kiel has offered to let Swenby follow her this upcoming session to learn a little more about how things operate legislatively.

Vesledahl Wetland: Swenby gave the managers a letter from MnDOT that was given to landowners suggesting that the district will be involved in “what’s next”. MnDOT also highlighted in the letter the changes relating to permits for obstructions. Swenby is working on a letter for landowners to sign that encourages legislative action towards easements before any land transfer takes place. Manager Engelstad and Manager Bartz offered to help Swenby obtain signatures. Swenby presented a history of the project and the district’s position for representing the landowners to bring Manager Andringa up to speed.

Christmas Party: The date was set for January 16. Bjerk will schedule with Erickson’s Smokehouse.

Ditch Mowing: Mike Larson reported that he was only able to mow about ten miles of ditch due to the conditions being unfavorable. He stated he would not be charging the district for what was done as he was unable to complete the job and minimal benefit would be seen for the amount he was able to complete.

Union Lake/Sarah Pumping: Swenby has continued to reach out to Collin Peterson’s office multiple times for records regarding the sand bag structure on the US Fish and Wild Life land and have asked for assistance in obtaining a permanent structure. Because she did not have luck, she reached out to LeRoy Stumpf to see if he could provide direction towards a contact. Swenby will be switching gears and contacting USFWS directly to see what can be done, and if that is a road block, she will Pursue Fitsbach’s office. Zach and Swenby met with Bryan Boll, and it is still his desire to have a closed system. We are exploring more definitive costs for this alternative. The board will be asked to take action towards negotiations in the upcoming months to secure an easement. Swenby is planning on asking Boll to attend the February or March board meeting, if she and Herrmann can get cost estimates secured by that time.

JC&J Trucking was unable to get to the clean out by Jack Doyle’s property this fall. The clean out will be placed on our “to do” list for next fall.

Project # 20: Paul Engelstad did not get to moving dirt this year. There are some more evaluations in the area that need to be reviewed.

Administrative Assistant: Donna Bjerk was hired as of January 1, 2021. She will receive \$14 per hour and is allocated up to 15 hours per week, as necessary depending on the work load. The committee suggests that Bjerk’s pay be re-evaluated in 6 months and suggests during that time the district pay for Bjerk to receive some computer classes and a QuickBooks class.

Poissant Bridge: Swenby attended the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council meeting on December 8 and a grant extension was approved. It will move through the legislature for final approval.

Union Lake Erosion Control: As discussed at prior meetings, the CRP ran out on this property in August. Swenby is told that in the past BWSR has done three way RIM agreements. Because there is no easement on the property, BWSR may enter into a RIM agreement with the watershed, who subsequently may enter into an agreement with a purchaser, so when the easement closes the land transfers to the purchaser. That way the easement exists before the land is transferred and then all responsibility for future maintenance is immediately passed to the new owner. Buffalo-Red has done this in the past, and this may be an option for the district to keep the goals of reducing erosion into the lake and not having a property to maintain.

Impoundments and Storage: The managers had a discussion regarding the goals and objectives of the district for storing water. The managers also discussed the obstacles with other agencies for storage.

Watershed Tour: The managers expressed interest in spring tour of the district. Swenby will try to organize a tour in mid-June.

Project # 17: Manager Andringa has asked Herrmann for education regarding the history of Project #17 and the ditches in his area. There was discussion regarding the flow of the water prior to Project 17, the current flow of the water, and the amount of improvements made upstream of the project. Manager Andringa has some questions regarding the adequacy of the outlet along Project # 17. A **Motion** was made by Manager Bartz to investigate the outlet adequacy of Project # 17 to determine if the system is still adequate to handle the volume of water, **Seconded** by Manager Andringa. **The Motion was carried.**

12. ACTION ITEMS.

E-file cabinet subscription: The E-file Cabinet subscription is due and Swenby highlighted some options. The district's current five year contract is up for renewal. The district has been paying \$1,465 annually. The district can chose to risk increased prices adjustments by only committing to reviewing this annually and pay \$1,645 for this year, or the district could lock in for the next five years at \$1545 annually (\$7,725). This software is essential to the district and Swenby recommends moving forward with five years at the discounted rate of \$1,545. A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to continue with E-file cabinet and enter into a contract for five years, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.**

13. OTHER BUSINESS

The managers were given written information/highlights relating to other agency meetings and upcoming events such as the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, Drainage Work Group, International Water Institute, Red River Basin Commission, and the Red River Watershed Management Board.

The mangers discussed the possibility of switching the meeting dates to the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Nothing was decided.

14. PERMITS:

There were no permits brought before the board.

15. ADJOURNMENT:

The next regular meeting will be held Wednesday, February 2, 2021 at 8 AM. As there was no further business to come before the board, a **Motion** was made by Manager Bartz to adjourn the meeting at 11:09 AM, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.**

April Swenby, Administrator

JJ Hamre, Secretary