



**TITLE:** REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**DATE:** DECEMBER 8, 2022

## 1. ATTENDANCE:

Chairman Stuart Christian called the December 8, 2022, meeting to order at 8:00 AM at the District Office. Other managers attending were Clayton Bartz, Don Andringa, Craig Engelstad and JJ Hamre. Staff members present included April Swenby – Administrator and Donna Bjerk – Administrator Assistant. Others in remote attendance included Zach Herrmann – Houston Engineering.

## 2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

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

## 3. MINUTES:

A **Motion** was made by Manager Hamre to approve the minutes from the November 3, 2022, meeting, **Seconded** by Manager Andringa. **The Motion was carried.**

## 4. FINANCIAL REPORT:

A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to dispense the reading and approve the November 2022 Treasurer Reports, **Seconded** by Manager Hamre. **The Motion was carried.**

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

April Swenby	428.63
Berhow Sodding	5,105.00
Brady & Martz	375.00
City of Fertile	108.46
EcoLab	53.57
First Community Credit Union	416.29
Garden Valley Telephone Company	226.79
Houston Engineering	2,701.50
JC & J Trucking Inc.	3,943.38
MAWD	2,988.00
Office Supplies Plus	119.98
Olson & Sons	395.00
Otter Tail Power Company	235.58
Sarah Wise	48.00
Houston Engineering	<u>12,905.16</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$30,050.34</b>

A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to approve and pay the bills with a total of \$30,050.34, **Seconded** by Manager Andringa. **The Motion was carried.**

Swenby would like to clean up the Treasurer's Report Fund Balance. There are several accounts that are inactive and suggested finalizing their balances. Many would be paid using the historical construction fund dollars, or if it is a more recent class/account, petition fund allocations. The following includes a listing of inactive projects or projects that have been deemed complete:

- #34 PC 44 West (Petition Fund (Water Quality and Erosion)
- #29 Rock Riffles (Construction Fund)
- #19 Union Lake Erosion Control (Construction Fund)
- #09A River Stab (Construction Fund)
- #09 RiverClean (Construction Fund)
- LOMAS (Petition Fund (Water Management and Retention)
- #21 Fish Passage (Construction Fund)
- V Olson Dam (Petition Fund (Water Management and Retention)

As in prior years, Swenby suggests balancing the following to prepare for the new year, because they are accumulative accounts and are better represented as an annual total on the Treasurer's Report, for manager review benefit:

- Web-site, Permits DB and Mapping
- Beaver Bounty Program
- Technical Engineering and Legal
- Agency Support
- Monitoring

Swenby clarified by explaining that transactions in these accounts are not removed or deleted from the system. Journal Entries are performed to move money from parent accounts to it's sub-account. For example, the LOMA account will receive money from it's parent account "Water Management and Retention" to pay the balance of the account labeled LOMA. The district uses the parent accounts for the levy, and the sub-accounts are internal tracking accounts to help staff and managers manage the amount of money spent for each sub-account. When an account is inactive or completed, there is no purpose for maintain a balance on the records books. Items tracked on the fund balance report, tell the managers and staff the amount of money spent in each category and some are designed to track from project origination and some are designed to track on an annual basis. Ditch projects are an exception as they are always tracked from their origination, and require an accumulative total. Swenby added that the accountant doesn't require board approval for such journal entries, and only requires board action to move money from parent funds to another parent fund (example "admin fund" to "water management fund"). Swenby felt for checks and balances, she would like board approval despite accountant requirements.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to approve the suggested journal entries for 2022, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.**

## 5. ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

**FEMA Funding:** Scoping meetings continue to be held weekly. HEI is preparing a cost estimate to repair the channel to pre-disaster conditions. That will be compared to costs for mitigation.

**1W1P:** Steering Committee meetings were held on November 16. The next meeting is December 21, 2022.

**SH Ditch Alignment:** A meeting was held with the US Army Corp of Engineers to discuss the alignment of structures 1 and 2 on November 17. The process for the Corp to open the project back up again is not

impossible but it is likely it would not pass through the higher ups. The project was built as an ecosystem restoration project, and under that criterion, the project is functioning well. The unintended consequence is the erosion. The Corp does not offer “warranty”. To open the project back up, the cost would be 35% district, and it may not be likely that it would be approved. The Corp process is expensive and has a lot of requirements, and for a smaller project like this, cost vs. benefit may be an obstacle and, in the end, it will likely be cheaper for the district to fix on their own. Options for a larger project were discussed, pertaining to a 2-stage channel. Using 1135 funding a request from the watershed district is all it takes, and that cost share, in the end would be 75/25. This is a timely process. The district can also apply for flood plan management services through the Corp which are funded at 100% and through that outcome the district could hope to receive some modeling, and alternative analysis.

**MAWD:** The annual trade show was December 1 -3 at Arrowwood. Swenby attended. Swenby also attended the MAWA Meeting (November 30) and the Drainage Seminar (December 1). Learning a lot about the process (this was her first year attending as Administrator due to COVID and MAWD not holding the annual meetings), Swenby discovered that the district is highly underrepresented on committees and in Region 1. Region 1 Caucus met and there were several open spots for committees and knowing the district’s needs in the future, Swenby suggested that the resolutions committee would be a good fit for our district, and the members of Region 1 agreed to allow the Sand Hill a seat on that committee, even though there was not Sand Hill manager representation at the caucus meeting. Don Andringa volunteered to sit on that committee, and Swenby suggested Manager Engelstad as an alternate, Swenby is serving on the Strategic Planning Committee as an Administrator and she still serves on the MAWD Handbook Committee.

Jan Voigt was hired as the new Executive Director (replacing Emily Javens). MAWD also is hereinafter called Minnesota Watersheds (new brand) as per the Strategic Plan.

**SHAC Meeting:** The Sand Hill Advisory Committee met on November 21 as the terms of JJ Hamre and Craig Engelstad are up for reappointment. Shawn Brekke was recommended to replace JJ Hamre, and the county has confirmed both of their appointments. Minutes from the Sand Hill Advisory Committee meeting were provided to the managers. Swenby provided the written activity summary report that she presented to the Advisory Committee.

**FDRWG Meeting:** There was a FDRWG meeting on December 7, 2022, in Grand Forks. Manager Andringa and Swenby attended.

**Southern Boundary:** In July 2022 the managers approved initial investigations on water management solutions on the southern border. Swenby is meeting with Tara Jensen, Wild Rice Watershed District Administrator on December 19 along with Herrmann and the WRWD engineer to begin the discussions about the water issues between the two districts and how they can be better managed.

**Drainage Work Group:** There is a Drainage Work Group meeting on December 8 at 11 AM. There is a lot of discussion about the DNR’s proposal for “early coordination” 103E, and this was a hot topic at MAWD. Swenby has received an e-mail from our lobbyist at MAWD, who stated they spoke with the DNR Commissioner, who assured them that the DNR would not pursue any legislation regarding early coordination without consensus of the Drainage Work Group. Another hot topic is the definition out “outlet adequacy”. Swenby invited the managers to listen in on the work group’s discussions, and if they are interested she offered to provide log in information.

**Debris Obstructions:** In October, a couple of reminder letters went out to landowners on Project # 24 reminding them of the district rules and regulations regarding obstructions, namely corn stalks. One landowner called and was very receptive and recognized that it was a problem and would coordinate with the district in the spring if there are plugging/obstructions. Swenby toured the area of Project # 17 with Manager Andringa to help identify landowners/renters. After reviewing the two systems, it was determined that the two systems are unique in their landscape. A general letter was sent to the landowners on Project # 17 reminding them to maintain the debris to help keep system costs down.

**Project Team Handbook Training:** Swenby attended the Project Team Handbook refresher/training in Fergus Falls. She provided to the managers the handbook and the presentation.

**Red River Basin Commission Annual Conference:** The 40<sup>th</sup> Annual RRB Land and water International Summit Conference will be held January 17 – 19 at Fort Garry in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Swenby provided conference materials to the managers. Currently, Swenby is not planning on attending this conference. She

reminded the managers to let her know if they are interested in attending so that she may register and obtain them lodging.

**District Christmas Party:** The Christmas party is scheduled for Friday, December 16, 2022, 6 PM at Erickson Smokehouse.

## 6. ENGINEER'S REPORT

**Project #27:** Hermann reported the plug to prevent overflows into Bungham lake with riprap plug has been completed. The cleanout between Union and Sarah Lake has been completed.

**Sand Hill Ditch:** Hermann and Swenby met with FEMA officials to discuss damage on Sand Hill Ditch from the 2022 Flood damage. Coordination with FEMA appears favorable for mitigation funding for a larger repair project. The first step is to complete a damages assessment LiDAR drone survey has been completed and will be provided to FEMA to determine damage inventory.

**Project #17 Outlet Stabilization (BWSR Clean Water Fund Grant)** A meeting was set up with funding sources and regulatory agencies.

**MN Highway 102 Area Boundary Revisions:** Hydraulic modeling revisions based on plan revisions is complete. Hermann will need to provide updated documentation to MNDOT and PCHD and plans on having this completed by the end of the month.

## 7. ACTION ITEMS.

**Employee Evaluations:** Managers discussed work performance, average wages, cost of living increase. All are pleased with the work performance. After employee evaluations A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to increase Bjerk's wage to \$20.00 per hour effective January 1, 2023, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.** A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to increase Swenby's wage by 7% effective January 1, 2023, **Seconded** by Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.**

**District Building Bidding:** The district approved an hourly contract with YHR Partners. When we bid on the project last time, it cost \$1,120. They do not anticipate that to change much during a rebid. However, it is suggested that the district consult with MBN Engineering for mechanical/electrical specifications. The original bid documents included only design build and performance specs for mechanical/electrical. MBN has provided an estimate of \$5,500. YHR would need to revise their specs for bidding to include the specs from MBN Engineering and that is estimated to be about \$2,000. The bidding process is estimated at \$1,200. The total would be about \$8,700. The plan to be prepared to open bids in February of 2023.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to move forward with bidding as outlined above with the estimated costs including MBN Engineering and YHR Partners. **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.**

## 8. OTHER BUSINESS

Look in board effect to see what they were given. Did you look in the Partnering Agency section to included all of the partnering information that was provided to the managers?

The managers received information from the MAWA, MAWD, MHMP Planning Teams, International Water Institute, Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, Drainage Work Group, and the Red River Basin Commission.

## 2. PERMITS:

No Permits were brought before the board.

## 3. ADJOURNMENT:

The next regular meeting will be held Thursday, January 5, 2023, at 8 AM. As there was no further business to come before the board, a **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to adjourn the meeting at 10:36 AM, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz. **The Motion was carried.**

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Donna Bjerk, Administrative Assistant

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Shawn Brekke, Secretary