



TITLE: DRAFT REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

DATE: OCTOBER 6, 2022

1. ATTENDANCE:

Chairman Stuart Christian called the October 6, 2022, meeting to order at 8:00 AM at the District Office. Other managers attending were Clayton Bartz, Don Andringa, and Craig Engelstad. Managers absent included JJ Hamre. Staff members present included April Swenby – Administrator and Donna Bjerck – Administrative Assistant. Others in attendance included Zach Herrmann – Houston Engineering, Margaret – YHR Partners and Steve Fuller – USGS (via conference calling).

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

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

3. MINUTES:

Clayton Bartz noted an attendance correction in the September 13, 2022, meeting minutes. A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to approve the minutes from the September 1 and September 13, 2022, meetings, including the attendance correction, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz. **The Motion was carried.**

4. FINANCIAL REPORT:

A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to dispense the reading and approve the August 2022 and the September 2022 Treasurer's Reports, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz. **The Motion was carried.**

The managers reviewed their expense reports and reported on activities for the month. The following bills were reviewed (additions to the bills to be paid report included City of Fertile, and True North Steel):

2022 BWSR Academy	165.00
Anders Valley Publishing	97.50
Anderson, Bottrell, Sanden & Thompson	450.00
April J. Swenby	304.72
City of Fertile	52.35
Diligent	2,113.56
EcoLab	53.57
Fertile Hardware Hank	27.96
First Community Credit Union	2,360.68
Houston Engineering	22,205.15
Larson Helicopters	7,920.50
Norman County Index	123.50
Sarah Wise	48.00
The 13 Towns	51.20
The Mahnomen Pioneer	90.40
True North Steel	6,215.60

TOTAL

42,279.69

A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to approve and pay the bills with a total of \$42,279.69, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz. **The Motion was carried.**

5. ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

Union Lake Pumping: The existing sandbags (which have been there since the establishment of the project) are deteriorating. The district is proposing to replace the sandbags with a rock-lined ditch plug, at the same elevation. Upon conversations with the MnDNR, they did not feel this is maintenance and have stated that maintenance would be returning to what was originally authorized or agreed upon; putting in the plug would be permanent where the sandbags were more temporary. As a result, Swenby has submitted a joint letter (the Sand Hill and the USLID) which highlights the proposed changes to the channel and provided that to the managers. The district received a response from the MnDNR to proceed forward. Joe Miller has been contacted to clean the channel between Lake Sarah and Union. Because Miller will be in that area cleaning the channel, Swenby plans on asking Joe to do the work to replace the sandbags that prevent flow into Bungham Lake. HEI will set the criteria for both projects, because of the MnDNR protected waterway.

FEMA Funding: An initial conference call with FEMA was held on September 29. Meetings are held weekly moving forward. They have asked the district to GPS all areas that were impacted by the spring flooding and have a spreadsheet that is required to show the areas. Before snow flies, an onsite inspection is planned.

Beaver Trapping: The trappers have been trapping at the crossing at Rich Johnson's property. They are confident that they have eliminated the beaver that were causing the issues. They have suggested a barrier upstream of the culvert. At this crossing, the beaver are building inside the culvert, making it difficult and labor intensive. A gate at the entrance would be helpful.

Ditch Spraying: A map of the areas that were sprayed this year was presented to the managers.

Dale Carnegie: Swenby completed and graduated from the Dale Carnegie classes. She expressed gratitude to the board for investing in her growth.

1W1P: Policy and Advisory Committee meetings were held on August 13. The Steering Committee will meet on October 19 to review public feedback and to discuss measurable goals. Manager Andringa will not be able to attend the policy committee meeting on November 8. Manager Engelstad is the alternate. Swenby will e-mail the MPCA link of impaired waters to the managers.

SH Ditch – Road Repair: JC & J Trucking started on September 26 and completed September 28. HEI was onsite.

SH Ditch culvert: Joe Miller replaced the 48" culvert in the Sand Hill Ditch in Beltrami on October 3. Dale Berhow seeded the area on October 5.

Ditch 9: Joe Miller leveled the spoil in September. Additionally, Dale Berhow seeded the spoil.

BWSR Academy: Swenby is registered to attend BWSR Academy. Agenda sessions were provided to the managers.

Project Team: Staff is tentatively planning a Project Team Meeting on November 3 after our regular board meeting.

SH Ditch Alignment: The district has had issues below drop structures 1 and 2. Early this summer, staff submitted the drone footage that was taken just downstream of Drop Structure 2 and asked the Corp to compare it to the photo of the bank of drop structure. It was noted that erosion has accelerated rapidly. It was also noted staff observations, stating that it seems like this could be caused by two issues: 1) the alignment of the drop structures is pointing flows to the downstream bank and 2) there wasn't enough energy dissipation downstream of the rapids. Prior to the rapids, most of the energy dissipation was contained within the stilling basin of the drop structures. Post rapids, it's apparent that energy dissipation is much less controlled during

high flow rates. Staff asked if the USACE has a means to financially assist/lead repairs on CAP 1135 projects if there are any apparent design and/or construction issues that arise after installation. Swenby recently received a phone call from the Corp of Engineers. They do not acknowledge any design flaws and they are planning to send a response to our inquiry stating that vegetation would alleviate the concerns. In initial correspondence, it also appears that the MnDNR supports the conclusion that the USACE has come to. Swenby was also informed that our contact person, Joe Schroetter, will no longer be working for the Corp of Engineers.

Swenby stated that she explained to Schroetter that directly after the project completion, the district expressed concern in this area and our written correspondence direction was to “monitor” the area. Swenby requested another meeting with the “higher ups” at the Corp of Engineers to continue this discussion before they send their letter. Swenby was assured that before he steps down, Schroetter will contact his superiors to let them know of my request.

RRWMB: Swenby attended the RRWMB Meeting on September 20.

Mahnomen County Commissioners: Swenby met with the Mahnomen County Commissioners on September 27, 2022 and presented the district audit report and the 2021 Annual Report.

MAWD: The annual trade show is December 1 -3 at Arrowwood. Registration is planned for October.

Water Festival: Donna Bjerk represented the district at the Water Festival for the area 4th graders at the Polk County Fair Grounds.

MNPEIP: The district health plan for only medical insurance will increase from \$1,528.72, to \$2,170.78 (that is their cheapest offer – the Cadillac version went from \$2,185.30, to \$3,103.) per month. This is a \$600 a month increase. The Swenby has been talking to the other watershed districts about what their plans are, and she is exploring other options. After Swenby gets some options, she will converse with the Personnel Committee.

Project #17: Dwain Carlson stopped by with concerns regarding his 14 acres that are landlocked (Section 4 – Reis Township; North of Beltrami, along Highway 9). He states that his family historically had access to his land prior to Project # 17 being built. Swenby met with Carlson on-site. Before the ditch was built there was a road that used to be Highway 9. When highway 9 was built, this road (230th Avenue SW) was no longer utilized. Swenby has not been able to verify with the township when or if it was abandoned, but stated she was told by the folks who know the area well, that shortly before the ditch was built it was a mud farm road and unclear jurisdiction at the time the ditch was built.

Carlson states that historically, there was a wood crossing over the tracks adjacent to Highway 9 and then he would drive along old highway 9 road to the property. Upon looking at the site, if it is dry enough, he would still be able to access the land, with the railroad's permission, using their ROW adjacent to the tracks (west of the tracks, east of the ditch). Swenby has been in communication with the railroad. If Carlson cannot find resolve with the railroad, he would like to meet with the board.

6. BUILDING PROJECT – BID OPENING 10 AM

The meeting was handed over to Margaret Follingstad, YHR Partners and the consultant for the district. Others in attendance included Jon Otterstad and Theo Staggert, Bradbury Stamm Construction and Samantha Schrader YHR Partners. The mailbox was checked and only one bidder presented. The following bid was opened and presented to the board:

Bradbury Stamm Construction
Base Bid: \$1,335,000.00
Alternate one: \$29,000
Alternate two: \$11,500
Alternate three: \$88,000
Alternate four: \$78,000
Alternate five: \$17,500
Alternate six: **-\$900**

The managers were reminded that the managers have allotted fifteen days to act.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to reject all bids, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz. **The Motion was carried.**

YHR offered to follow up with the plan holders to determine why few bid on the project. The managers are planning to revisit rebidding this winter.

7. ENGINEER'S REPORT

Project # 17: Herrmann addressed the issue of 230th Ave township road overtopping and has discussed a alternatives with the landowner.

Project # 27: Herrmann has been assisting with the discussion with the MnDNR to replace the existing sandbags with a permanent structure.

As a review, Herrmann reminded the managers that the sandbag levee is deteriorating on the USFWS land. The cost analysis has indicated that an earthen levee with a controlled overflow elevation may be more cost feasible than sheet pile. Herrmann still plans to view with USFWS for concurrence and assistance on documentation required to modify the structure and to begin the NEPA process.

Sand Hill Ditch – Liberty Township repair: Houston Engineering was on-site during the project. A change order was made on-site, and more rock was needed.

MN 102 Boundary Revisions: Herrmann is working through hydraulic modeling revisions based on plan revisions. When that is complete, he will provide updated documentation to MNDOT and PCHD.

Polk County # 44: The culvert inventory was completed this month. The goal was to provide a permanent record as to which culverts must be plugged to prevent unassessed lands flowing into Project #17, ultimately determining which crossings are Sand Hill Watershed District obligations. A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to authorize staff to move forward in the month of October, to seal the culverts required to protect the boundary of Project # 17, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was Carried.**

Ditch 80: On the upper end of Ditch 80, there is a side inlet that is higher than the original construction. The landowner has reported this, and the survey was completed.

8. ACTION ITEMS.

USGS Stream Gage: Steven Fuller, USGS presented a joint-funding agreement (23NTJFA0034) for the Dakota Water Science Center Water Resources Investigations project, operation and maintenance of the streamgage on the Sand Hill River at Climax, during the period October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023 in the amount of \$6,180. The U.S.Geological Survey contributions for this agreement are \$5,500 for a combined total of \$11,680. The gage is tried to be visited every 8 weeks, to ensure that maintenance is performed and the web-site is up to date. Manager Engelstad asked about other USGS gages in the district. Fuller did not have that answer but would look into it and report back to Swenby.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to approve the joint-funding agreement as presented in the amount of \$6,180.00, **Seconded** by Manager Andringa, **Carried.**

Data Privacy Policy: The PRAP indicated that our Data Privacy Policy hasn't been reviewed in over 5 years. A **Motion** was made by Manager Bartz to approve the data privacy policy as presented with no additional changes, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad, **Carried.**

PRAP Comments: Swenby provided a draft comment letter regarding the PRAP report. A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to approve the letter as presented, authorizing Swenby to submit, **Seconded** by Manager Andringa, **Carried.**

Digital Meeting Equipment: Due to the One Watershed One Plan meetings being held here and the need for virtual accessibility. Not only will this be helpful for the One Watershed One Plan process but moving forward all meetings and meetings of committees of the Sand Hill River Watershed District. Garden Valley has suggested the following.

- a. Owl – video and voice \$1369

- i. May require a \$500 minicomputer, but we will try the laptop and see how that works

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to approve the purchase of an OWL, and a minicomputer if needed, not to exceed \$2,500, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad, **Carried**.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

The managers received information from the MAWA, Drainage Work Group, and the Union Lake/Sarah Improvement District.

10. PERMITS:

22-050: Larry Olson, Section 21 of Reis Twp., Modify existing ditch

Herrmann reviewed the permit application 22-050 and recommends approval with the following contingencies:

1. The cross section of the improved channel must be equivalent or greater capacity as the existing channel.
2. Maintenance of the improved channel will be the applicant's responsibility. This includes (but is not limited to) removal of accumulated sediments and repair of erosion.
3. Approval from the West Polk SWCD to review WCA concerns.

22-051: Steven Hamre, Section 22 of Scandia Twp. Clean existing ditch

22-052: Joel Stola, Section 34 of Scandia Twp. Remove and replace culvert (longer)
Herrmann recommended approval.

22-053: Sletten Township, Section 20 of Sletten Twp. Add additional culvert
It is recommended that this application be tabled. The Township is working with FEMA and it is unclear what is required for FEMA. Herrmann would recommend a hydraulic capacity report to adequately size and determine impacts, however, if FEMA does not authorize funding for mitigation repair at this site, the Township will likely not replace.

22-054: Pederson Bros Farm, Section 7 of Bejou Twp. Install Erosion Control Structure
The project will slow peak flow rates by adding storage above the sed basin. The SWCD has been reminded that future applications should include more technical data in future, such as design calcs on sed basin sizing and more details of proposed ditching earthwork. Adjacent landowner permissions have been received. They have submitted a conceptual design in their application, and they will be notified that if anything changes, they must notify the district. Herrmann recommends approval

22-055: Eric Stock, Section 9 of Bear Park Twp. Install Erosion Control Structure
Adjacent landowner permissions have been received and Herrmann recommends approval.

22-056: Hubbard Township, Section 25 of Hubbard Twp., Install Culvert
Herrmann recommends approval.

22-057: MnDOT, Section 7, 17, 18, 20, 27 of Winger, Twp, Clan Ditch Install Culvert, wetland maintenance (after the fact)
Herrmann recommends tabling this permit. There is a substantial amount of information missing.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to approve the permits as presented and table permits 22-057 and permit 22-053, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz. **The Motion was carried.**

11. ADJOURNMENT:

The next regular meeting will be held Thursday, November 3, 2022, 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 10:48 AM, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.**

