



**TITLE:** REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**DATE:** AUGUST 3, 2023

## 1. ATTENDANCE:

Chairman Stuart Christian called the August 3, 2023, meeting to order at 8:00 AM at the District Office. Other managers attending were Clayton Bartz, Craig Engelstad, Don Andringa and Shawn Brekke. Staff members present included April Swenby – Administrator and Donna Bjerk – Administrative Assistant. Others in attendance included Zach Herrmann – Houston Engineering and Bryan Murphy - H2over Viewers.

## 2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

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

## 3. MINUTES:

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to approve the minutes from the July 10, 2023, correcting a name in the attendance list, **Seconded** by Manager Engelstad. **The Motion was carried.**

## 4. FINANCIAL REPORT:

The Treasurer's Report for July was presented. A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to approve and dispense the reading of the Treasurer's Report for July, **Seconded** by Manager Andringa. **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	742.50
April J. Swenby	115.94
Brady & Martz	10,632.00
City of Fertile	54.85
East Polk Soil and Water District	1,135.70
EcoLab	53.57
Fertile Hardware Hank	32.95
First Community Credit Union	1,548.37
Garden Valley Telephone Company	336.26
Houston Engineering	15,998.21
JC & J Trucking, Inc.	1,000.00
Maynards Plumbing and Heating	292.07
Otter Tail Power Company	209.03
Polk County Taxpayer Service Center	46.00
Sarah Wise	48.00
Sletten Township	225.00

Wild Rice Electric  
TOTAL

221.01  
32,691.46

Swenby informed the managers that there is a balance of \$1391.64 Sam's Club bill. In June, she had updated QuickBooks and had to choose between the online version and the desktop version. She placed the online version on the Sam's card and the Desktop version on the First Community Card. She is awaiting a refund on the Online Version, after choosing the Desktop version. While she cancelled in June to avoid being charged, Intuit still has not yet refunded. She may have to make a payment on the Sam's card if the refund does not come through soon and she has been in contact with Intuit regarding the issue.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad to approve and pay the bills with a total of \$32,691.46 Seconded by Manager Brekke. **The Motion was carried.**

**Budget Hearing:** Swenby met with the Polk County Commissioner's who approved the three petitions discussed last month using MSA Statute 103.905. Throughout the month, Swenby and Manager Bartz met to review a proposed budget. A proposed budget was presented. A **Motion** was made by Manager Engelstad approve the preliminary budget for advertisement, and include the three petitions from the county for MSA statute 103.905, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz. **The Motion was carried.** The budget hearing was scheduled for September 7 at 8:30 AM.

## 5. ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

**One Watershed One Plan:** The Policy and the Advisory Committees met on July 11. The Steering Committee met on July 19. Currently, we are in the internal review of the plan until August 2. The next Policy and Advisory Committee meetings are August 8 starting at 1 PM.

**WRWD Project Team:** The WRWD Project Team meeting for July was cancelled to allow more time for the engineer to complete his tasks for a presentation of alternatives.

**Project Team Funding Changes:** Project team support funds will be awarded **per active project team**, rather than per watershed district. Swenby provided details that were directly from the FDRWG. The district has two project teams registered with the FDRWG, and Swenby has let them know of a potential one in the future, depending on what direction the WRWD.

**Drainage Work Group:** Swenby did not attend the last DWG Meeting due to a conflict in the schedule. She did participate in their request for comments regarding the timelines in statutes for all notices.

**Building Project:** The bid opening is scheduled for 2 PM on August 10, at the district office. After the opening, Swenby will e-mail the board the bid amounts, and make a recommendation regarding a special meeting to determine if it is warranted or if it can wait until the September board meeting.

**Polk County Commissioners:** Swenby met with Polk County this month and presented the 2022 Annual Report. The 2024 petitions were approved.

**Flood Impacts Survey:** Swenby provided a farmer/landowner survey that the Red River Retention Authority (RRRA) developed with the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) and the Red River Joint Water Resource District in North Dakota. The purpose of the survey is to gain insights and information into the concerns and needs of Red River Basin farmers related to flood issues. The survey was approved by the RRRA recently for distribution. The survey has been shared with 12 agricultural groups in the Red River Basin and it has been requested that these groups assist the RRRA with distribution. They asked if Swenby could post this in the district office and help with promotion, but due to limited traffic in our office, she is passing it onto the managers, and she has posted it on the district website.

**Ditch Spraying Maintenance:** Larson Helicopters has been given a new map this year to do their touch up spraying on all legal systems. Swenby has included touch up spraying for Ditch 80 and the interconnect between Union Lake and Lake Sarah. He will begin in August.

**Riffles Site Tour:** On July 13, Swenby met for a presentation and on-site tour of the riffles project with BWSR BC's in the state of MN and the WPSWCD. The tour was an opportunity to show our BC and the Clean Water Specialist the areas of the channel that have excessive bank instability since the installation of the rifles and the dam removal. Contacts have been made and follow-up e-mails have been sent, looking for solutions for the areas of instability. Swenby will update as she is updated.

**Ditch 9 Slough:** Joe Miller placed another load of dirt on the berm and Dale Berhow has been contacted for seeding.

**MN 102 Boundary:** Swenby has made connection with MnDOT. They are reviewing the files.

**Vesledahl Wetland Banking site:** MnDOT will support establishing a legal ditch on the Vesledahl site. They will work with the district to help support whatever is needed throughout the process. Swenby has contacted a local landowner, and he is asking for information that is needed from landowners to begin the process. She suggested a landowner meeting after harvest to go through the process, and to ensure that there is still an appetite from landowners to establish this as a legal ditch.

**Project 27 – Sand Bag Structure.** Swenby has made contact with USFWS. USFWS will work up a permit this week. Herrmann is working out logistics with them for permissions and material that can be used onsite.

**Project #17:** Swenby and Herrmann will meet with Russia Township this afternoon to discuss the issues along 230<sup>th</sup> Avenue and a possible cost share approach as decided last month at the July board meeting.

## 6. ENGINEER'S REPORT.

**Project #12:** Last month the managers took action regarding a reported culvert along Project #17, that was missing a flap gate. Herrmann took a tour along Project # 12 on his way home last month, to inspect the culverts and found that there was only one missing flap gate.

**SH Ditch:** Herrmann was instructed last month to verify that the grades along County Road 232 have not changed before the board decided how to proceed forward with the survey results from last month. Herrmann will evaluate what happens to the south and report back to the board next month.

**Surveys along Hwy 9 (related to Project #17):** Herrmann drove to the site on his way home after the last meeting. He suggested that additional material be added to the east to deter future overflows away from the repair section. Swenby reported that this was completed.

## 7. H2OVERS VIEWERS PRESENTATION.

H2over Viewers presented before the board the array of services they provide, what the deliverables are, and the viewing process.

## 8. ACTION ITEMS.

**Project Team:** Swenby would like to continue to move forward with the project team process for the Liberty-Reis Erosion along the SH Ditch. Herrmann and Swenby had put those efforts on hold during

the FEMA application and appeal but given that process and the length of time and likelihood of dollars, it might be best to continue to move forward.

Swenby would like to propose taking advantage of the FDRWG facilitator . Swenby provided a listing of the pros of using a skilled facilitator thorough the project team process. In the past the district has used a facilitator one time, during the Garden Slough Project Team era. Swenby would like to implement this for this particular Project Team. In the current FY that just began on 7/1, the FDRWG budgeted \$30K in matching funds for facilitation. If the district uses a facilitator, the FDRWG would have four active PT's using facilitation, giving \$7500 for each of them in State matching funds. With the SHRWD matching that amount, the total services could go up to 15K at the 50/50 match. That would pay for about 80 hours of facilitator time, plus travel expenses. Swenby was told that 80 hours is probably good for about five meetings, including prep, debriefs, meeting notes, etc. A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to proceed forward with the application process for hiring of a facilitator through the FDRWG for the Liberty-Reis Erosion Project Team, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz. **The Motion was carried.**

**Employment Contract:** As per board action last month, Swenby has contacted the attorney for language for an appropriate employment contractor and kept Stuart in on the communication made between Swenby and the attorney. She sent him the WRWD and the RRWMB employment contract. The attorney preferred the RRWMB contract, as it clarified cause and was more specific. In the end he chose to use a little of both and made his own edits. Swenby has not made any edits to his language and accept as drafted. A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to table until next month's meeting, offering additional time for manager review, **Seconded** by Manger Brekke. **The Motion was carried.**

## 9. OTHER BUSINESS & PARTNERING INFORMATION

The managers were given information from Mn Watersheds, the FDRWG and the FDRWG Communications Committee that Swenby participates in, and the MN Association of Drainage Inspectors.

## 10. PERMITS:

The following permits were presented to the board:

Permit 23—035: Paul Engelstad, Section 36, Reis Twp., Install Tile (amends Permit 22-06)

- **Recommend Approval:** The land appears to be assessed into the Sand Hill Ditch, so recommend approval for land proposed to be tiled south directly into the Sand Hill Ditch.
- Attach conditions for outletting tile into a SHRWD project.

Permit 23—036: Paul Engelstad, Section 36, Reis Twp., Install Tile, Outlet to SH Ditch (NW Corner)

- **Recommend Approval:** The land appears to be assessed into the Sand Hill Ditch, so recommend approval for the 8-10 acres proposed to be tiled north. Since it's connecting to an existing tile system that outlets directly into the SH Ditch, Hermann has no concern for downstream landowners.
- Advise Paul Engelstad that he'll need a permit from WRWD as well.

Permit 23—037: Ryan Gast, Section 23 & 24, Reis Twp., Install Tile

- **Recommend Approval:** The land appears to be assessed into the Sand Hill Ditch, so recommend approval for land proposed to be tiled south directly into the Sand Hill Ditch.
- Attach conditions for outletting tile into a SHRWD project.

Permit 23—038: Ryan Gast, Section 23 & 24, Reis Twp., Install Tile

- **Recommend Approval:** The land appears to be assessed into the Sand Hill Ditch, so recommend approval for land proposed to be tiled south directly into the Sand Hill Ditch.
- Attach conditions for outletting tile into a SHRWD project.

Permit 23-039: Paul Engelstad, Section 24, Reis Township, Install culvert, clean ditch,

- **Recommend Approval:** Reviewed the permit based on drainage area and results of the SHRWD HEC-RAS hydraulic model (RCPP). The drainage area is approximately 700 acres to the culvert. The LiDAR and hydraulic model suggest that the channel only conveys a limited amount of flow before breaking out. Based on this, Hermann is comfortable with the proposal as-is with a 30" CMP culvert.
- This a Public Waters, so Swenby would advise Paul Engelstad to discuss with Stephanie about the need for a MN DNR permit.

Permit 23-040: Craig Engelstad, Section 3, Liberty Township, Install grade stab, clean ditches, new ditch. (resubmitting approved/expired permits 15-27,20-56, and 20-02)

- **Recommend Approval:**

Permit 23-42: Paul Engelstad, Section 5, Liberty Township, Install two 60" culverts/field crossing.

- **Recommend Approval:** Based on prior review. Hermann thinks we reviewed this permit is 2020?
- This a Public Waters – Engelstad was verbally informed and stated he'd work with Stephanie Klamm.

Permit 23-41: Nick Horab, Section 27, Reis Township, Install culvert with flap gate.

- **Recommend Approval:** The land appears to be assessed into the Sand Hill Ditch.
- Add conditions for outletting into a SHRWD project.
- Applicant has asked for board consideration to pay for the culvert. There doesn't appear to be an existing culvert at this location, and we haven't paid for other culverts into the Sand Hill Ditch.
- Hermann suggested a county permit is needed as well.
- Manager Andringa would approve permit but not SHRWD not pay for it. Manager Engelstad agreed.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Andringa to approve Permits 23-035 through permit 23-042 (with noted contingencies where applicable and as listed above), **Seconded** by Manager Brekke. **The Motion was carried.** Manager Engelstad abstained from voting.

## 11. ADJOURNMENT:

The next regular meeting will be held Thursday, September 7, 2023, 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 12:20 PM, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke. **The Motion was carried.**

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Donna Bjerk, Administrative Assistant

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Shawn Brekke, Secretary