

RED LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT  
Board of Manager's Minutes  
February 25, 2021

President Dale M. Nelson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District Office, Thief River Falls, MN.

Present: Managers Dale M. Nelson, Allan Page, LeRoy Ose, Terry Sorenson, Gene Tiedemann, Tom Anderson, and Brian Dwight. Staff Present: Myron Jesme and Tammy Audette, and Legal Counsel, Delray Sparby.

The Board reviewed the agenda. A motion was made by Ose, seconded by Page, and passed by unanimous vote that the Board approve the agenda. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the February 11, 2021 minutes. Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Anderson, to approve the February 11, 2021 Board meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the Financial Report dated February 24, 2021. Motion by Tiedemann, seconded by Page, to approve the Financial Report dated February 24, 2021. Motion carried.

Hearing notices and legal advertisements have been finalized for the Pine Lake FDR and Fish Habitat Project, RLWD Project No. 28B hearing to be held at 10:30 a.m. on March 11, 2021 at the District office. Manager Anderson questioned who received hearing notices? Notices were sent to landowners within the benefitted area and downstream landowners adjacent to the Lost River to Gonvick.

Administrator Jesme stated that the District applied for and received a \$166,000 grant from the RRWMB and a \$250,000 BWSR Clean Water Funds Competitive Grant for construction of the Thief River Falls Oxbow Project, RLWD Project No. 46Q. The estimated project cost is \$500,000, with a remaining balance of needed funds in the amount \$84,000. Discussion was held on the administrative portion of the grants that the District will be required to complete for the Work Plans and various reporting requirements. Wayne Johnson, City of Thief River Falls, stated that in 2017 the city applied for a Storm Water Assessment Grant that identified 10 projects within the city limits. The city prioritized the projects, and applied for BWSR funding in 2018/2019, where three riverbank sloughing projects were funded and are currently being designed. The next priority project was the oxbow project. Johnson stated that the city hired HDR Engineering, Inc., to complete a preliminary design of the project, further stating that the city has spent approximately \$38,000 for design and survey. Jesme referenced invoices in the amount of \$42,769.25, that were included in the packet from HDR Engineering, Inc., that have not been paid yet for completion of the Environmental Assessment Worksheet. The City of Thief River Falls is requesting a partnership from the District for financial assistance in the amount of \$50,000. Staff member Corey Hanson discussed the benefits of the project, further stating that a Work Plan needs to be submitted by March 15, 2021. Manager Dwight inquired if any administrative costs are included in the grant applications. Hanson stated that he will look into the administrative portion of the grants. Motion by Dwight, seconded by Ose, to partner

with the City of Thief River Falls in the amount of \$50,000 for construction of the Thief River Falls Oxbow Project, RLWD Project No. 46Q. Motion carried. Motion by Ose, seconded by Sorenson, to authorize payment of invoices to HDR Engineering, Inc., in the amount of \$42,769.25, for the Thief River Falls Oxbow Project, RLWD Project No. 46Q. Motion carried.

Engineer Nate Dalager, HDR Engineering, Inc., stated that he has not heard from R.J. Zavoral & Sons, Inc., regarding Change Order No. 8 for the Thief River Falls Flood Damage Reduction Project, RLWD Project No. 178. A meeting with all the project partners will be held on February 26, 2021. Dalager will provide additional information at the March 11, 2021 Board meeting.

Administrator Jesme reviewed the November 12, 2020 RLWD Board meeting minutes, indicating that the Board motioned for a 50/50 ring dike cost share with the RRWMB. The landowner would pay 12.5% of the District's 50% share. Jesme stated that the RRWMB approved the cost share requested at their February 11, 2021 meeting. Executive Director Rob Sip, RRWMB, reaffirmed the RRWMB's Board's decision, further stating that the RRWMB was capped at \$100,000 per ring dike.

Engineer Tony Nordby, Houston Engineering, Inc., discussed the utilities meeting for the Black River Impoundment, RLWD Project No. 176. The meeting allowed for the coordination of construction between the utility companies and R.J. Zavoral & Sons, Inc. Nordby stated that Zavoral's will start on the south diversion ditch first. Dependent on the weather and frost conditions, construction is anticipated to be started around April 15, 2021. Notice will need to be given to Pennington County, as there will be one full county road closure. Administrator Jesme is working on landowner easements, with a majority of the south diversion ditch easements being sent out to the landowners. Jesme spoke with representatives from the Black River Church regarding planting of trees.

Staff member Nick Olson stated that the aeration system on Pine Lake, RLWD Project No. 35, began on February 16, 2021. Olson is required to inspect the system weekly. Very little fish kill is anticipated.

The Policy Committee for the Clearwater River One Watershed One Plan (1W1P) met for the first time on February 24, 2021 via virtual meeting. The Bylaws were approved by the Policy Committee. BWSR approved the Work Plan's proposed work. Houston Engineering, Inc., is the consultant and will assist on an as-needed basis.

The hearing for the re-determination of benefits for Judicial Ditch 72, RLWD Project No. 41 and State Ditch 61 will be held April 6, 2021, time to be determined, at the McIntosh Community Center.

The Board reviewed a petition from landowners Wayne and Debra Vettleson to allow drainage of a portion of the W1/2 SE1/4, Section 26 and the SE1/4, Section 35, Equality Township, Red Lake County, to be included into the Ditch No. 1, RLWD Project No. 115 benefitted area. Staff member Nick Olson stated that Vettleson submitted a tile permit, Permit No. 19181, in which a portion of that area currently drains into Ditch 1-Lateral B, RLWD Project No. 5. Legal Counsel

Sparby noted that the District would need to hold a hearing to allow Vettleson to drain into the Ditch 1, RLWD Project No. 115 benefitted area. Motion by Page, seconded by Tiedemann, to approve the Petition from Wayne and Debra Vettleson to Petition into the Ditch 1, RLWD Project No. 115 benefitted area as to form, and to hold a hearing on April 22, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. at the District office, for input regarding the requested inclusion of land into the Ditch 1, RLWD Project No. 115 benefitted area. Motion carried.

Motion by Tiedeman, seconded by Ose, to Table Permit No. 21001, Rolandsom Family, LLP, Smiley Township, Pennington County, for further review. Motion carried.

Motion by Tiedeman, seconded by Sorenson, to Table Permit No. 21002, Red Lake County Highway Department, Garnes Township, Red Lake County, for further review. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the permits for approval. Motion by Tiedemann, seconded by Page, to approve the following permits with conditions stated on the permit: No. 21003, Red Lake County Highway Department, Emardville Township, Red Lake County; No. 21004, Red Lake County Highway Department, Garnes Township, Red Lake County; and No. 21005, Curtis Swanson, Bray Township, Pennington County. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed correspondence from the MnDNR regarding the Snegirev Well Interference Investigation Report.

Discussion was held on postponing the scheduled March 15, 2021 RLWD Advisory Committee meeting due to the current COVID 19 pandemic. It was the consensus of the Board, to have Staff member Tammy Audette contact the Chairman of the RLWD Advisory Committee for his opinion on postponing the meeting.

Administrator Jesme reviewed some minor changes on the Engineering Senior/Hydro II job description regarding supervisory role. Motion by Ose, seconded by Dwight, for approval of the corrected changes. Motion carried.

Administrator Jesme reviewed the jobs postings for the Engineering Senior/Hydro II and the Ditch Inspector/Technician II positions. Jesme stated that if an applicant does not meet the qualifications of the position applied for, the District could hire the individual at a different position and work them up from there. The District has two positions open and three job descriptions that we could use.

Manager Dwight discussed items that came up at the Budget and Salary Committee meeting regarding recent staff exit interviews. Discussion was held on giving employees a Board member to go to, or the opportunity to sit down with the committee if the employee wishes to as they exit employment with the District. Manager Dwight stated that a policy would need to be set up to follow proper procedures. Manager Sorenson discussed employee performance behavior reviews to either help promote the employee or address corrective issues. Sparby indicated that staff should meet with the Administrator prior to meeting with the Board to allow the Administrator to first address and attempt to resolve any concerns. Manager Dwight stated that he would like to pursue it with procedural language and bring it back to the Board for

review. Sorenson referenced that reviews are also completed to retain employees and to review if any corrective issues need to be done. Discussion was held on completion of an annual review with Jesme.

Administrators update:

- Jesme and Manager Ose attended the February 16, 2021 RRWMB meeting.
- Jesme and Staff member Hanson attended the Clearwater River 1W1P Policy Committee meeting on February 24, 2021. The next meeting is scheduled for March 24 at 1:00 p.m.
- There was a Red Lake River 1W1P meeting on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, to discuss the upcoming RCPP/BWSR funding agreement, and if it would be an option for a 1W1P. No decision was made.
- A Planning Work Group meeting for the Thief River 1W1P will be held on March 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.
- Jesme and Manager Ose participated in the Red River Flood Damage Reduction Work Group meeting.
- Jesme, Manager Ose, and Staff member Olson will participate in the Moose River Interagency meeting on March 3 at 9:30 a.m.
- Included in the packet was correspondence from Anya Kaplan-Seem who is working on her PhD and plans on coming to the Red River Valley to complete some research.

Legal Counsel Sparby stated that the Appeal for Ditch 17, RLWD Project No. 179, will be held via Zoom on March 31st. Sparby stated that if anyone wishes to sit in on the meeting to notify him.

Motion by Ose, seconded by Sorenson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.



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LeRoy Ose, Secretary