

RED LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT
Board of Manager's Minutes
February 9, 2023

Vice President, Gene Tiedemann, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District Office, Thief River Falls, MN.

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

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

The Board reviewed the January 26, 2023, minutes. Manager Anderson stated that the cost share amount for the City of Thief River Falls Reservoir is inaccurate. The grant amount is \$153,600, with the District's portion being \$38,400. Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Anderson, to approve the January 26, 2023, Board meeting minutes with corrections. Motion carried.

Robyn Dwight, President, Upper Red Lake Association stated that Beltrami SWCD received a BWSR Legacy Partners Grant to secure funds for the 2023/2024 Upper Red Lake "Keep It Clean" partnership campaign in the amount of \$92,600. R. Dwight explained that they are looking to secure funds as a gap year until the 1W1P is up and running. The grant requires a 10% local match, with R. Dwight asking if the District would be willing to fund the match. Only non-governmental organizations are allowed to apply for this grant. The Beltrami SWCD will be the fiscal agent on the grant. After considerable discussion by the Board, motion by Ose, seconded by Anderson, to approve the request by the Beltrami SWCD and Upper Red Lake Association, that the District agrees to pay the 10% match to the BWSR Legacy Partners Grant, in the amount of \$9,260, with funds coming from the District's Water Quality funds, RLWD Project No. 46. Motion carried with Manager Dwight abstaining.

The Board reviewed the Financial Report dated February 8, 2023. Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Dwight, to approve the Financial Report dated February 8, 2023, as presented. Motion carried.

Staff member Ann Jopru reviewed the 2023 General Fund Budget as of January 31, 2023.

Administrator Jesme stated that the grant for the Clearwater River 1W1P, RLWD Project No. 149B, had the Clearwater SWCD currently listed as the Grantee. The Policy Committee will need to change it to recognize the District as the grantee, as the District would have the liability as the Fiscal Agent. Chester Powell, Clearwater SWCD, will be the Project Coordinator. Jesme indicated that the Board had previously authorized Houston Engineering, Inc., the authority to prepare a Feasibility Study, along with the District staff completing the initial survey of the area, along with a survey completed in 2014 by the MnDNR. This portion of the river channel had work done in the early 2000's. The Board reviewed a Services Agreement with Houston

Engineering, Inc., referred to as the Clearwater River Channel Stability Design Project, RLWD Project No. 149B, to complete modeling of the project, in order to put together a plan set. Engineer Tony Nordby, Houston Engineering, Inc., stated that the project concept would be to raise the elevation of the channel bottom bed which will introduce flows where there is erosion and introduce water into the floodplain quicker to slow down the velocity, along with stabilizing the outer bends. Motion by Manager Anderson, seconded by Manager Sorenson, to authorize the signature of the Client/Owner Services Agreement with Houston Engineering, Inc., for the Clearwater River Channel Stability Reconnaissance Project, RLWD Project No. 149B. Motion carried.

Administrator Jesme requested clarification on a motion made at the January 26, 2023 meeting, regarding the City of Thief River Falls Reservoir water intake reservoir investigation. Jesme indicated that this is not a water quality nor an erosion control project, so he was questioning which project the Board would like to cost share this project? Jesme informed the Board that the District had a previous project that was used for the dredging of the Thief River Reservoir Project, RLWD Project No. 63 and that he felt that project number could be used. Jesme indicated that in looking at the previous minutes, the grant was in the amount of \$153,600, and required a 50% cost share match. The City of Thief River Falls will pay for 25% of the match, requesting the District to pay the remaining 25%. Motion by Ose, seconded by Dwight, that the District cost share 50% of the required local match not to exceed \$38,400, with funds coming from the Thief River Falls Reservoir Project, RLWD Project No. 63. Motion carried.

Administrator Jesme indicated that the Board had previously made a motion to work with the Pennington SWCD to apply for a Clean Water Grant for the water quality portion of the Chief's Coulee Project. When they applied for the grant, the total cost of the project was \$1.6 million dollars, the cost has now increased to \$1.8 million. The grant is in the amount of \$428,000, which requires a 25% match, and will expire on December 31, 2025. Jesme stated that the District now needs to accept the grant, but discussion should be held on where the remaining funds will come from. Engineer Nate Dalager, HDR Engineering, Inc., stated that they tried to break the project down into different categories. Discussion was held on the potential of Flood Damage Reduction (FDR) funding that could be pursued through the state, RRWMB or the District. Dalager did remind the Board that he was directed by them at a previous meeting to bring back a proposal for design. The Grantee for the Clean Water Grant is the Pennington SWCD, but the SWCD would rather that the District be the Fiscal Agent and Grantee. Manager Dwight asked about the potential of Red Lake River 1W1P funds for Technical and Engineering costs. Staff member Corey Hanson indicated that a majority of the 2022 funds are spoken for and all were located in high priority areas. Dalager indicated that the Clean Water Grants are a highly competitive grant, so receiving this amount is huge. Manager Dwight inquired if the City of Thief River Falls will apply for FDR funding? Discussion was held on quantifying the value of FDR. Jesme stated that the RRWMB 2023 fiscal budget only earmarked \$680,000 for water quality projects for all watersheds within the RRWMB and that amount would be distributed as a base funding and not competitive grants. Discussion was held on who will be the lead on the project? Manager Sorenson discussed his concern with the District administering the project and doing all the leg work should problems arise, such as land acquisition easements for right of way. The City of Thief River Falls is willing to do all the leg work on the project such as working with

landowners, etc. The Board reviewed the Preliminary Design Proposal-Task Oder No. 2 from HDR Engineering, Inc., in the amount of \$108,935. Jesme asked Wayne Johnson, Water Systems Superintendent City of Thief River Falls, if the City is willing to pay toward the design of the project. Johnson indicated that the city is acceptable to paying a portion of the design. Hanson indicated that the Clean Water Grant funds cannot be used for Technical and Engineering, further stating that he could request \$41,000 from the Red Lake River 1W1P, RLWD Project No. 149, Technical and Engineering category. Sparby discussed the potential development of a Memorandum of Agreement or Joint Powers Agreement that would indicate the responsibilities of the City of Thief River Falls and the District. Motion by Ose, seconded by Dwight, to accept the Clean Water Fund Grant from BWSR in the amount of \$428,000, which requires a 25% match, split between the District and the City of Thief River Falls. Motion carried. Motion by Ose, seconded by Dwight, to authorize the signature of the Preliminary Design Proposal-Task Oder No. 2 from HDR Engineering, Inc., in the amount of \$108,935. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed a cost proposal in the amount of \$7,000 from American Engineering Testing to complete soil borings on the Crookston Crescent Avenue Bank Stabilization Project, RLWD Project No. 149. Administrator Jesme indicated that he had met with landowners on the project regarding access to the site. Jesme stated that any damage to the driveway or yard, will be paid for by the project. Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Anderson, to authorize signing of the cost proposal for the Crookston Crescent Avenue Bank Stabilization Project, RLWD Project No. 149, in the amount of \$7,000 with American Engineering Testing. Motion carried.

Administrator Jesme referred to the landowner meeting held on February 2, 2023, at the Bagley Community Center for the Judicial Ditch No. 4, RLWD Project No. 101 system. Jesme stated that besides District staff and Manager Anderson, no landowners were in attendance. The Judicial Ditch 4 system runs through the Memorial Forest, with Clearwater County being the major landowner within the benefitted area. The District has jurisdiction over the project, which requires a statutory duty for maintenance on the system. The District could repair or abandon the system. Discussion was held on meeting with the Clearwater County Commissioners to receive their input as a landowner, along with confirming that the County Engineer will be present at the meeting. Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Anderson, to attend a Clearwater County Commissioners Board meeting for discussion on Judicial Ditch No. 4, RLWD Project No. 101. Motion carried.

Staff member Christina Traner stated that the GIS map viewer on the District's website is outdated, therefore recommending that we update the GIS map viewer to the current ESRI technology platforms. Traner indicated that Houston Engineering, Inc., provided an agreement for GIS Support to update the viewer in the amount of \$5,200. This cost would also include training of District staff members. Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Page, to approve signature of the agreement for GIS Support with Houston Engineering, Inc., in the amount of \$5,200. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the snow survey map prepared by District staff as of January 31, 2023.

Pennington SWCD submitted a request for a financial donation for the Area I Envirothon. The Area I Envirothon will be held on April 26, 2023, at Lake Bronson State Park. Motion by Page, seconded by Ose, to donate \$300 to the Area I Envirothon to promote education, and awareness of water quality issues. Motion carried.

Motion by Page, seconded by Sorenson, to approve a one-year extension to RLWD Permit No. 2021-180, Clearwater County Highway Department. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the permits for approval. Motion by Page, seconded by Sorenson, to approve RLWD Permit No. 23007, Red Lake County Highway Department, Poplar River Township, Red Lake County, with conditions stated on the permit. Motion carried.

Administrator Jesme updated the Board on the Pay Equity Non-Compliance notice from the office of Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB). Jesme stated that there are two options to be in compliance and they are as follows: Make the recommended salary adjustment now; or submit a letter to MMB indicating what the District plans are along with the timeline it would take to become compliant. Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Page, to make the salary adjustment now to bring the District into compliance. Motion carried. Manager Dwight discussed various points on the chart as a result of the Pay Equity Report, stating that he sees another item that should be on discussion for the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. Manager Dwight further made reference to the committee identified as the Budget/Salary Committee, questioning whether it should be referred to as, or include Personnel? Discussion was had on clarification by the Board on what the Budget/Salary committee's role is as at times there appears to be a Personnel Committee component too? Dwight along with Sorenson indicated they would just like to have clarification by the Board as to the role of the Budget/Salary committee.

Administrators Report:

- Jesme and Manager Tiedemann will participate in the February 21, 2023 RRWMB meeting held in Moorhead, MN, in conjunction with the RRWMB/FDRWG Joint Conference.
- Jesme will be participating in a Drainage Workgroup meeting on February 10, 2023.
- Staff members Hanson, Audette and Joppru participated in the Red Lake River 1W1P Advisory and Policy Committee meeting on February 8, 2023.
- Included in the packet was information on the River Watch Forum to be held on March 1, 2023, at the Alerus Center.
- Included in the packet was information on the appointment of Jan Voit as the Executive Director of Minnesota Watershed (aka MAWD). Jesme will be attending the Minnesota Watersheds Legislative Sessions in St. Paul on February 14th.
- District staff continues to work on data input for completed FEMA projects.
- Jesme will participate remotely for the February 17, 2023, Mud River Project Team meeting.

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Legal Counsel Sparby stated that the State of Minnesota recently approved Juneteenth as a legal holiday. Sparby indicated that since the Board already approved this holiday, there is no further action required.

Legal Counsel Sparby discussed approaching Minnesota Watersheds to amend portions of State Statute 103E, regarding the filing of a petition with the Watershed District rather than the County Auditor. Discussion was held on reaching out to Attorney Louis Smith to get something “drafted”, for clarification of the legislation. Sparby will draft up the information and submit it to both Attorneys John Kolb and Louis Smith for review.

Motion by Dwight, seconded by Anderson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.



LeRoy Ose, Secretary