

RED LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT
Board of Manager's Minutes
March 23, 2023

Secretary, LeRoy Ose, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District Office, Thief River Falls, MN.

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

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

The Board reviewed the March 9, 2023, minutes. A motion by Page, seconded by Anderson, to approve the March 9, 2023, Board meeting as presented. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the Financial Report dated March 22, 2023. Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Anderson, to approve the Financial Report dated March 22, 2023, as presented. Motion carried.

Administrator Jesme and Engineer Tony Nordby, Houston Engineering, Inc., discussed a Technical Memorandum, reviewing trigger elevations on the Elm Lake Project, RLWD Project No. 52. Jesme stated that a meeting was held with staff from the MnDNR and USFWS due to the potential flood forecast. Jesme stated that the MnDNR operates the Lost River Pool, RLWD Project No. 17, with the USFWS operating the Elm Lake Project, RLWD Project No. 52. Flows released from the Lost River Pool enter the Elm Lake Project, which outlets into the Thief River. According to the operating plan, in the event of an anticipated Spring flood with snowpack water content of 4 inches or more, the pools will be lowered to a level below maximum winter surface elevation to provide additional storage for Spring flood. Nordby developed a chart that was more user friendly, with less confusion for all agencies, along with changing the datum from 1929 datum to 1988 datum. Although the MnDNR and USFWS operate the structures, under flood situations the District can direct them to operate the gates. Discussion was held on the condition of the outlet structure on the Lost River Pool and the potential to replace the structure in the near future which will allow better options for operating in less than favorable winter conditions. Discussion was also had on potential funding options such as the Conservation Partners Grant provided by the MnDNR through their grants' programs. Jesme indicated that the USFWS is releasing water from the Farnes Pool/Elm Lake Project and at this point MnDNR is unable to open the structure on the Lost River Pool or pull stop logs due to ice and snow. Further investigation will be had with District and MnDNR staff to release water from the Lost River Pool.

The Board reviewed a proposal for the purchase of a Sonde in the amount of \$6,896.94 and two Van Dorn samplers in the amount of \$1,106.00 for the Thief River SWAG Project, RLWD Project No. 168A. Administrator Jesme stated that the Thief River SWAG grant provided by the

MPCA will pay for the purchase of the needed equipment. It was also mentioned that the Pennington SWCD will assist with retrieving water quality samples for the project. Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Page, to approve the purchase of a Sonde and two Van Dorn samplers, to be paid for by the Thief River SWAG Project, RLWD Project No. 168A. Motion carried.

Staff member Tammy Audette stated that the District received \$114,904.53 as reimbursement for Category C-Roads and Culverts from FEMA for damages during the 2022 Spring rain event. Additional reimbursements will be forthcoming.

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Page, to grant a one-year extension for RLWD Permit No. 22004, Burlington Northern Railroad. Motion carried.

Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Page, to grant a one-year extension for RLWD Permit No. 21045, Thief River Falls Regional Airport. Motion carried.

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Page, to table the following permits for further review: No. 23016, Blair Holthusen, River Falls Township, Pennington County; No. 23017, Rick and Lorae Roed, Hill River Township, Polk County; and No. 23018, Rick and Lorae Roed, King Township, Polk County. Motion carried.

Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Page, to approve the following permits with conditions stated on the permit: No. 23019, Beltrami County Highway Department, Benville Township; and No. 23020, Beltrami County Highway Department, Hines Township. Motion carried.

Administrator Jesme stated that the Red Lake WMA is in the process of updating their plan, and that Manager Dwight participated in their meeting.

Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Page, to accept the resignation of Staff member, Christina Traner (Slowinski). Motion carried. The Board thanked Traner for her years of service, wishing her well with her future endeavor.

Administrator Jesme stated that we have narrowed our search to three candidates for the Natural Resource position that will be vacant with Staff member, Christina Traner's, resignation. Jesme will report back to the Board once a decision is made.

Administrators Update:

- Jesme and Manager Ose participated in the March 21, 2023 RRWMB meeting.
- Jesme attended the Drainage Workgroup meeting on March 20, 2023 in Alexandria.
- Traner (Slowinski) attended the River of Dreams meeting held at Challenger Elementary in TRF.
- BWSR has completed the financial reconciliation for the Red Lake River 1W1P.
- There will be a Clearwater River 1W1P Policy Committee meeting on March 29, 2023.
- The Thief River 1W1P Policy Committee met on March 13, 2023.

- Jesme and Hanson participated in the Clearwater River Wilton Trail technical meeting held on March 9th.
- Included in the packet was a Minnesota Watersheds' Legislative Update.

Manager Anderson stated that he will attend the Clearwater River 1W1P Policy Committee meeting on March 29, 2023 in Bagley.

Manager Anderson discussed an erosion site on the Clearwater River in Red Lake Falls near the hockey arena. Manager Page stated that he had spoken to the Mayor of Red Lake Falls regarding contacting the Red Lake SWCD to review the project area.

Discussion was held on the District's Advisory Committee meeting and member participation.

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



LeRoy Ose, Secretary