

March 6, 2023 (a)

APPROVED
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS OF THE
MIDDLE-SNAKE-TAMARAC RIVERS WATERSHED DISTRICT
HELD VIRTUALLY USING MICROSOFT TEAMS AND AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE
8:30 a.m. **March 3, 2023**

The Meeting was called to order by President Bill Petersen, Managers Bill Petersen, Eric Johnson, Robert Kovar, Brad Blawat, Joey McGregor and Lein Schiller were present. Mori Maher, Tyler Larson, Kyle Schlomann, Danny Omdahl, Tony Nordby, Rolland Miller, Jim Duckstad, Darin Moen, Steve Moen, Gordon Wetterlund and Tony Hamrick were also present. Jeff Hane and Nate Dalager attended the Meeting virtually.

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Brad Blawat to approve the agenda as amended to include letter from Minnesota Watersheds. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion by Mr. Joey McGregor, seconded by Mr. Eric Johnson to approve the Minutes of the February 27, 2023, Regular Board Meeting as presented. Motion unanimously carried.

Jared Sands joined the Meeting at approximately 8:40 a.m. (virtual).

Gordon Wetterlund is the new renter of the hay land along the PL-566 Diversion Ditch between the inlet structure and Hwy 75. Due to the age of alfalfa, he presented to the Board his plan for reseeding the property.

Motion by Mr. Brad Blawat, seconded by Mr. Joey McGregor to accept Gordon's plans for reseeding the alfalfa along the Diversion Ditch in Sections 31 McCrea and 6 McCrea Strip. His plan was included in his bid.

Motion unanimously carried.

Dillon Nelson joined the Meeting at approximately 8:47 a.m.

Motion by Mr. Joey McGregor, seconded by Mr. Eric Johnson to approve the following permit.

Permit 23-005 Brent Miller to install 144 acres of field drain tile in the W2 W2 Section 13 Vega Township with 1/4" drainage coefficient; 20' & 40' tile spacings; 2 gravity outlets to JD #20 Main (~Sta 312+10 & 318+10) & 1 gravity outlet to JD #20 Br A (~Sta 314+10)

Motion unanimously carried.

Dillon Nelson, with HDR Engineering, provided a recap to the Board on the JD 1 and JD 75 landowner meetings that were held in Alvarado on February 13th, 2023. He enquired if the Board wanted to continue with the study of the 2 systems. HDR was proposing to do detailed 2D HEC-RAS modeling to provide further information for potential improvement projects.

Motion by Mr. Joey McGregor, seconded by Mr. Eric Johnson to continue with the study and review an updated scope of work at an upcoming meeting.

Motion unanimously carried.

Darin and Steve Moen were in attendance to discuss with the Board removing trees from the NW4 Sec 24 Higdem Township, locally know as Valley Home. Darin is the new owner of the property and asked if JD #1 would assist financially in the removal of the trees. The trees are a known snow block and the area was identified by HDR as a problem during their initial study of the ditch system.

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Motion by Mr. Eric Johnson, seconded by Mr. Joey McGregor for JD #1 to cost share 50% but not to exceed \$10,000 in the removal of the trees based on the following findings:

- Valley Home is in a known snow block and a problem area of JD #1
- HDR identified Valley Home as a problem during their initial JD #1 study

Motion unanimously carried.

Gordon Wetterlund and Jared Sands left the meeting at 9:29 a.m.

Technicians Danny Omdahl and Tyler Larson presented information to the Board regarding the outlet of CD 175. They discussed the history of the ditch, past Redetermination of Benefits and the 2018 Ditch Improvement. Discussion was focused on the potential abandonment of the original outlet in Section 4 Esther Township. Following the construction of WD 5, only local water can drain into the original outlet. It was a consensus of the Board to reach out and contact the affected landowners.

Technicians Omdahl and Larson also presented information to the Board regarding the outlet of WD 7. They discussed the history of the ditch, and the maintenance needs of the original outlet. Discussion was focused on the potential abandonment of the original outlet in Section 9 Oak Park Strip. Following the construction of WD 7 Improved, only local water can drain into the original outlet. This reach is heavily forested, and any future maintenance would be very costly. It was a consensus of the Board to reach out and contact the affected landowners. Once the outlet is addressed, the Board would look into consolidating WD 7 and WD 7 Improved into 1 system.

Darian and Steve Moen left the meeting at 10:03 a.m.

Technician Omdahl stated that he had been in contact with Mike Larson about spraying needs for the upcoming year. In 2022, Mike had talked with the Board if there was interest in spraying for broadleaf weeds in the legal ditch Right of Way. If the Board was interested in having the weeds sprayed during 2023, he would need to purchase more chemicals ahead of the growing season. It was consensus of the Board to have staff work with Mike and include broadleaf spraying into the 2023 spraying schedule.

Technician Omdahl discussed with the Board the maintenance needs of JD #28. He noted that the entire ditch needs to be surveyed as most of the system needs sediment and tree removal. He also mentioned several locations that need a side water inlet culvert to improve access for inspection. It was also stated that the ditch is set to undergo a Redetermination of Benefits in 2023.

Omdahl then briefly discussed WD 2. The system is only 1 mile long and is in a good state of repair. The ditch had sediment removed in 2015 and the outlet culvert was replaced in 2018.

A contract for the March Property repair was reviewed. Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Joey McGregor approving the contract with Higher Ground and authorizing Bill Petersen to sign.

Motion carried unanimously.

Updates on the following projects were provided.

- **Swift Coulee** – Administrator Maher stated he was still working on getting the remaining landowners in phase 1 to submit RIM applications prior to the March 31st deadline.
- **Newfolden** – Maher stated that the Bridge Replacement is expected to be completed by April 1st after recent weather delays. He also mentioned that the WCA permit was submitted last week.
- **Brandt Angus Coulee & Off Channel Storage Site** – Technician Omdahl discussed lands that will be advertised for hay rental.

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Nate Dalager left the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

Administrator Maher discussed with the Board a request from the JD #19 Joint Ditch Authority for an additional gauge monitoring site located near Florian Park as part of the Nelson Slough Project. Maher stated that he is unsure as to what the benefit would be to the project as there is an existing gauge 1 mile upstream of Florian on CSAH #1. A discussion was held regarding the proposed O&M and the gauging stations that will be utilized. Rolland Miller, Marshall County Commissioner, stated the County will be discussing gauging stations at their next meeting. No action was taken by the Board at this time and will wait for more information to come from the County.

Tony Nordby, Houston Engineering, addressed the Board regarding the proposed design changes to the outlet structure at Nelson Slough. He stated that with the changes to the structure, there is a need for additional soil borings to occur. Motion by Mr. Eric Johnson, seconded by Mr. Joey McGregor to have Terracon perform the addition soil boring tests.

Motion unanimously carried.

Administrator Maher reviewed information provided by Attorney Jeff Hane related to interest rates for deficit ditch accounts. Following discussion, it was consensus of the Board to set the rate during the annual budget meeting and to apply the interest at the end of the fiscal year.

Dillon Nelson left the meeting at 11:43 a.m.

Administrator Maher provided an update on the current legislative session and the annual MAWD legislative breakfast. He encouraged that some Board members attend the event in the future.

The Board reviewed communication provided by Minnesota Watersheds in regards to the a proposed BWSR drainage portal. Following discussion, there was a motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Lein Schiller to have the District send a letter opposing the proposed drainage registry legislation.

Motion unanimously carried.

Administrator Maher stated that through the District Health Insurance, members of the staff are able to enroll in Health Saving Accounts. He enquired if the District would be interested in paying the administrative costs of the accounts or matching employee contributions. Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to not contribute financially to any HSA at this time.

The 2022 financial reports were distributed to the Board, if they had any questions they were directed to contact the staff.

Administrator Maher shared communication received from Pay Equity enquiring about the changes from the 2020 report. He stated Administrative Assistant Haugen had drafted and sent a response on behalf of the District.

Manager Bill Petersen provided an update on recent activities from the Red River Management Board and highlighted Technician Omdahl's presentation at the recent Joint Conference in Moorhead.

Attorney Jeff Hane provided information regarding the open meeting laws for the Board.

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The February 23rd flood outlook from the National Weather Service was shared. It was announced that the next spring flood update will occur on March 9th.

Technician Schlomann asked the Board to clarify its findings for denying Permit 23-003. It was clarified that the Board's concern was that due to the steep grade of the North CSAH #67 ditch they wanted to see what effects removing of the 15" culvert would have. They also had a concern of what the potential effects would be in the CD #35 system by increasing all of the culverts from 18" to 24".

Jim Duckstad left the meeting at 1:28 p.m.

The following meetings were announced:

1. MSTRWD Regular Board of Managers Meeting Monday, March 20, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. in Warren, MN.
2. RRWMB meeting Tuesday, March 21, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. in Ada, MN
3. MSTRWD Regular Board of Managers Meeting Monday, April 3, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. in Warren, MN

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Brad Blawat to adjourn the Meeting. Motion unanimously carried.

The Meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:34 p.m.

Tyler Larson
Recording Secretary

Brad Blawat
Assistant Secretary