

February 20, 2024 (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.** **February 20, 2024**

The Meeting was called to order by President Bill Petersen, Managers Bill Petersen, Brad Blawat, Keith Szczepanski, Robert Kovar, Joey McGregor and Lein Schiller were present. Mori Maher, Tyler Larson, Kyle Schlomann, Katrina Haugen, Glen Barrett, Anthony Pulkrabek, and Gunnar Bowman were also present. Kaitlyn Bjornson was in attendance virtually.

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Keith Szczepanski to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion by Mr. Joey McGregor, seconded by Mr. Brad Blawat to approve the Meeting Minutes from the February 5, 2024 Board of Managers Meeting as presented. Motion unanimously carried.

Tony Nordby joined the meeting at approximately 8:32 a.m.

It was announced that Jared Sands was appointed by the Marshall County Commissioners to be a District Manager. Sands reviewed and signed the Oath of Manager.

The Treasurer's Report was reviewed and filed for the Auditor

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Lein Schiller to pay the following bills: Payroll Checks # 7052-7056 & 7060-7082 in the amount of \$45,608.72; From Administrative Funds Checks #19853-19904 in the amount of \$108,308.88 including ACH withdrawal; From Project Funds Check #3487-3493 in the amount of \$111,713.08; From RRWMB Funds check #222-223 in the amount of \$10,932.03 From Ditch Funds check #3681-3684 in the amount of \$32,456.30. Motion unanimously carried.

Damon Stroble joined the meeting at approximately 8:59 a.m.

Motion by Mr. Joey McGregor, Seconded by Mr. Lein Schiller to approve the following Permits pending the receipt of an After-The-Fact Permit for the unpermitted dike West of the 36" centerline culvert located near the Easterly quarter corner of Section 18 Angus Township with a staff approved design.

Permit (24-001) Stroble Farms to install 151 acres of field pattern drain tile in the SW4 of Section 26 Middle River Township with ¼" drainage coefficient; 40' and 80' tile spacings; 7.5 HP (710 GPM) VFD pump to outlet to east ditch along 350<sup>th</sup> Ave NW.

Permit (24-002) Stroble Farms to install 165 acres of field drain tile in portions of the NW4, SW4 and SE4 of Section 4 Angus Township with ¼" drainage coefficient; 40' & 80' tile spacings; 7.5 HP (776 GPM) VFD pump to outlet to the Gjerde Coulee, East of the BNSF Railway.

Permit (24-003) Stroble Farms to install 311 acres of field pattern drain tile in the S2 of Section 18 Angus Township with a ¼" drainage coefficient; 40' tile spacings; 15 HP (1462 GPM) VFD pump outlet to the North ditch along 130<sup>th</sup> St NW.

Motion carried with Mr. Jared Sands abstaining.

Damon Stroble, Glen Barrett, Anthony Pulkrabek and Gunnar Bowman left the meeting at 9:04 a.m.

Operations Manager Danny Omdahl reviewed SD #3 and JD #28. SD #3 is undergoing a Redetermination of Benefits (RoB). Omdahl suggested having engineers draft an estimate for a complete repair of the ditch system. A repair should be done in a minimal amount of phases, utilizing a Bond.

**APPROVED**

Omdahl believes that waiting for the RoB to be completed and raising funds over multiple years would delay the Repair and the ditch would continue to deteriorate and decrease the amount of soil availability.

Concerning JD #28, Omdahl discussed that the trees and sediment inhibit flow and the maintenance is not adequate. He stated the Board ordered RoB, if continued, might allow for the State of MN to claim their lands don't benefit from the Ditch and insist the lands be removed from the Benefited Area.

Tony Nordby from Houston Engineering provided an update on discussions with the Board of Water and Soil Resources regarding wetlands impacted by the Swift Coulee Project. Houston will update the application to reflect a zero net loss. Administrator Maher has asked Mr. McGregor to help him contact the remaining landowners in the first phase of the Project to get them onboard.

The Joint Powers Agreement for Nelson Slough is still on hold as additional information is needed to determine who the road authority is for the 2 mile stretch of 425<sup>th</sup> St NW, to the outlet structure of Nelson Slough.

Discussion was held on progress of the Lilac Ridge Project, since the MN DNR made the determination that the original design would impact a calcareous fen community. Currently the project is on hold until more information is received from the DNR on what they will approve for a design.

Mr. Bill Petersen recessed the regular Board Meeting to reopen the Final Hearing on the City of Newfolden Flood Prevention Project for the purpose of opening bids.

The Regular Board Meeting was recessed at 10:00 a.m.

Mr. Bill Petersen Opened the Hearing at 10:00 a.m. Those in attendance included Managers Bill Petersen, Robert Kovar, Brad Blawat, Lein Schiller, Joey McGregor, Keith Szczepanski and Jared Sands, employees and representatives from KGM Contractors Inc, Gladen Construction, Spruce Valley, RJ Zavoral & Sons, and Davidson Construction, Tammy Hanson, Mori Maher, Danny Omdahl, Kyle Schломann, Tyler Larson, Katrina Haugen, Dillon Nelson, Tony Nordby and Kaitlyn Bjornson.

The following bids were opened and publicly read:

<b>Contractor</b>	<b>Amount</b>
KGM Contractors Inc	\$7,327,616.45
Gladen Construction	\$7,604,794.18
Spruce Valley	\$8,352,976.85
RJ Zavoral & Sons	\$7,216,816.95
Davidson Construction	\$6,432,161.95

Motion by Mr. Robert Kovar, seconded by Mr. Joey McGregor to accept the apparent low bid submitted by Davidson Construction in the amount of \$6,432,161.95, pending an audit of all bids received and verification of submitted bonds. Motion unanimously carried.

Motion by Mr. Brad Blawat, seconded by Mr. Keith Szczepanski to close the Final Hearing for the City of Newfolden Flood Prevention Project. Motion unanimously carried.

The Final Hearing was closed at 10:09 a.m.

Administrator Maher reviewed questions that had been received from Mike Novacek and answered by Tony Nordby from Houston Engineering on the plans to finish the 2015 repair of JD#75 in Section 2 of Tabor Township. It was the consensus of the Board to proceed with the Engineer's suggestions.

APPROVED

Administrator Maher provided an update on the proposed office renovations. Widseth Architects estimated an initial quote of \$732,000 for office improvements and a 980 Sq Ft addition. The Board expressed some concern with the cost and asked Maher to contact Argyle Building Center for an estimate as well.

Discussions were held regarding the interest rate that is charged to ditch systems that borrow funds from other systems, when they have a negative balance.

Motion by Mr. Brad Blawat, seconded by Mr. Joey McGregor to charge 5% interest to any ditch that has to borrow funds from another ditch starting January 1, 2024. Interest will be calculated at the end of the year based on the yearly average balance. Motion unanimously carried.

Discussion was held regarding different options for calculating outlet fees when lands are petitioned into the benefited area of a ditch system. Administrator Maher provided 5 examples including what the District has historically used to calculate outlet fees. Maher was asked to provide more examples of different drainage systems to present to the Board so that they can see what the impact would be across the District.

Motion By Mr. Joey McGregor, seconded by Mr. Keith Szczepanski to authorize Secretary Brad Blawat to sign the notice for Equipment Rental rates and set the date to open them for March 29, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

The Personnel Committee stated that they had met with Administrator Maher to discuss personnel evaluations and they had no recommendations for the Board at this time.

Manager Bill Petersen stated he would be attending the MN Watershed Legislative Event in St. Paul March 6 & 7. Arrangements for attendance and lodging have already been made by the RRWMB.

Administrative Assistant Haugen provided a list of vendors that will be paid by auto pay instead of issuing checks for. The vendors are: Department of Treasury, ND State, MN State, Public Employees Retirement Fund, VSP Insurance, Delta Dental Insurance, Medica Insurance, Cintas, Garden Valley, and Verizon.

Administrator Maher discussed additional funds that were requested for the Watershed based Implementation Funding. \$431,509 was approved and that includes funds for SD #3 and CD #45 for Marshall County. Discussion on how the funds will be divided will take place at the next One Watershed One Plan Steering Committee and Policy Committee meetings to be held in March.

Tony Nordby provided an update on the cost estimates for CD#43. Maher will ask for estimates from contractors with a deadline of 9:00 a.m. on March 18, 2024.

The following meetings were announced:

1. MSTRWD Regular Board of Managers Meeting Monday, March 4, 2024 at 8:30 a.m. at the District office in Warren, MN.
2. Legislative Breakfast March 6 – 8<sup>th</sup> in St. Paul, MN.
3. JD #1 / JD #75 Landowners meeting March 7, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. at the Alvarado Community Center.

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

The Meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:21 p.m.

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Katrina Haugen  
Recording Secretary

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Brad Blawat  
Secretary