

Sand Hill River Watershed District

219 North Mill Street, PO Box 584 Fertile, MN 56540
Phone: (218) 945-3204 Fax: (218) 945-3213 E-mail: shrwd@gvtel.com

Board of Managers

Bill Brekke, Jr.-Nielsville Stuart Christian-Erskine Roger Hanson-Beltrami Scott Balstad-Fosston Phillip Swenson-Fertile
Daniel Wilkens-Administrator April Swenby-Administrative Assistant

SAND HILL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

December 29, 2014

Attendance: Chairman Todahl called the December 29, 2014 meeting of the Sand Hill Advisory Committee (SHAC) to order at 8:00 a.m. at Erickson's Smokehouse in Fertile, MN. Other advisory members present were Wayne Goeken, Bruce Stromstad and Matt Erickson. Others in attendance were Craig Bunes – Polk County Commissioner, Scott Balstad -Sand Hill River Watershed District Manager, Daniel Wilkens – Administrator, and April Swenby – Administrative Assistant.

Minutes: A **Motion** to approve the minutes from March 27, 2014 was made by committee member Erickson, **Seconded** by committee member Bunes, **Carried**.

Board Reappointments: Chairman Todahl stated that the terms of Scott Balstad and Phillip Swenson are up for reappointment on January 1, 2015 (The board anniversary date was changed to the beginning of each calendar year). Todahl reviewed Swenson's role as a watershed board member. Todahl informed the advisory committee that he was assured he was fulfilling his duty as a Sand Hill River Watershed District Manager and his attendance is good. In addition to attending regular monthly board meetings, Swenson makes an effort to attend other meetings such as RRBC and MAWD and some RRWMB meetings. Swenson is willing to run another term. A **Motion** was made by committee member Erickson to recommend Phillip Swenson to the Polk County Commissioners for reappointment, **Seconded** by Bruce Stromstad, **Carried**.

Chairman Todahl reviewed the attendance of Manager Balstad. According to the district minutes, Balstad has missed five meetings in a calendar year. While manager Balstad is an informed manager, his attendance was deemed important and was discussed. Manager Balstad explained that the year 2014 was an unusual year for his livelihood and doesn't anticipate the upcoming years to follow suite. Manager Balstad is willing to run another term, but would step down if there is another person willing to run. No known landowners have expressed interest in the position, but Manager Balstad said he would ask around to see if there are interested parties. A **Motion** was made by committee member Stromstad to recommend Scott Balstad to the Polk County Commissioners for reappointment, **Seconded** by Erickson, **Carried**.

Chairman Todahl opened the floor for comments regarding the Sand Hill River Watershed District's board of managers. No negative comments were noted. In 2016, Stuart Christian will be up for reelection. The SHAC has asked for suggestions for advisory committee members on the West and the East end. JJ Hamre was suggested for the west end and Chuck Lucken was suggested for the east end. Swenby will bring these names to the board for their input and formal appointment to the SHAC.

SHAC attendance: The lack of attendance of the SHAC was discussed. Alternatives were discussed as to how to get more attendance within the SHAC. It was decided that the meeting notices for the next SHAC will contain a paragraph stating the importance of the SHAC and each individual member's attendance and will also ask for the resignation of those who cannot make a committed attendance record.

Riverwatch: Goeken reported the Riverwatch program is still active and successful with students from Climax, Win-E-Mac and Fertile monitoring the river. Sediment is still higher in the winger area. Goeken is closely monitoring any changes that are expected with the sediment basin program which is

being coordinated with the East Polk SWCD and the SHRWD. He explained that the lack of buffer strips is a contributing problem to the sediment found in the river.

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of the Riverwatch program, as it has been active since 1995. The RRWMB still funds the Riverwatch program.

District Activities: Wilkens gave an update on the following:

Project #24: Project # 24 is complete and a trash rack was the finishing touch. The district faced possible litigation with the contractor hired due to a dispute regarding reasonable payment for unrecorded change orders. The dispute was settled upon in mediation.

Personnel Manual: The district personnel manual was recently updated. Changes in healthcare law have brought forth many unknown changes for the district. The district has been working with auditor's, insurance advisors, and third party administrators to determine the best alternative for benefit packages.

Project Team: The district has suspended all project team efforts due to the lack of progress.

Fish Passage: The MN DNR has contributed a ¼ cost share. The US Army Corp will contribute the promised funds to finish the project. Construction is expected to begin fall of 2015.

Financial Report: Wilkens reviewed the fund balances of the district.

Adjournment: The next meeting of the SHAC will be at the call of the chair as needed. As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 AM.

April Swenby, Administrative Assistant