

SAND HILL RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

June 6, 2000 Meeting Minutes

1. **Attendance:** Chairman Hanson called the June 6, 2000 meeting to order at 7:00 a.m. at the District Office. Other managers present were Bill Brekke, Jr., Stuart Christian, Gordon Sonsteli, and Harold Vig. Others in attendance were Daniel Wilkens-Administrator, Naomi Jagol-Administrative Assistant, Jim Larsen-Houston Engineering, Inc., Craig Engelstad, and Rudy Applequist.
2. **Agenda Review:** No additional items were added to the agenda
3. **Minutes:** Motion by Manager Brekke to approve the minutes of the SHRWD regular Board meeting held on May 2, 2000 as mailed, Seconded by Manager Vig, Carried.

Manager Hanson inquired whether Wilkens had discussed with Ogaard what other districts include in their minutes. Wilkens responded that Ogaard indicated that the same level of detail is included as that in the Sand Hill River WD minutes.

4. **Treasurer's Report:** Wilkens distributed the Treasurer's report. Motion by Manager Brekke to approve the Treasurer's report as presented, Seconded by Manager Christian, Carried.

Wilkens reviewed the bills to be approved. Motion by Manager Vig to approve and pay bills, Seconded by Manager Brekke, Carried. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Manager Vig inquired about funds being secured when the District has investments in several financial institutions. Wilkens responded that FDIC covers up to \$100,000 per institution and any funds over that are covered by pledged securities at 110% of market value as per state statute. Manager Sonsteli inquired about how we raise funds for individual projects. Manager Hanson explained that the funds are levied on the assessed area as developed by the viewers at the time the project was established.

5. Project Reports:

- a. Project #01, Bear Park: Larsen distributed the survey results that he and Wilkens acquired last month. It shows only a small reduction in elevation on the spillway.
- b. Project #12, County Ditches 98 & 148: The ROW markers are installed and the contractor, Lyle Wilkens, Inc. has been given directions as to what seeding needs to be done. Larsen stated that it is his understanding that the ditch system will cover the costs of the markers and the seeding, but in the future any willful destruction of the ROW markers or destruction of the grass strips will be the landowner's responsibility. Grass fires burned off several markers but it was felt that changing to steel posts would be a hazard to farm machinery.

6. Upcoming Meetings and Other Business:

- a. Polk County #14-Scandia Church: At the previous monthly meeting, a cost share of 1/3 (District) - 2/3 (landowner) was approved to conduct an engineering study to develop recommendations to remedy the problem in this area. Wilkens contacted Randy Hamre and discussed the proposal. Hamre requested that the board reconsider the cost share proposal as he felt that this project affects several landowners.

Manager Vig had stated last month that he felt the individual should be responsible for the costs to evaluate a private system. Vig noted his concern about setting a precedent. Manager Brekke asked about more detail of the past history of this project. Wilkens referred to the map of Polk County #14 and explained that in 1984 the District gave permission to plug a culvert under Polk County #14 and divert the water north to the Sand Hill River. At that time, the water was doing a lot of damage as it went west and everyone concerned felt that this was the best solution. Two years ago Randy Hamre had asked the county to reopen the culvert to allow water to go west as he was having problems with water backing up against Polk County #14 and damaging his crops. Neither Polk county or Hamre remembered the 1984 permit and the culvert was opened up. After it was brought to the District's attention, the culvert was again plugged. Hamre has subsequently come before the Board of Managers on numerous occasions to help remedy the situation. Currently, if an engineering study with the corresponding recommendations for culvert sizing and depths is made available, the county highway department would quite likely install the appropriate culverts and Hamre has stated that he would do the necessary dirt work. Manager Christian asked what it would cost to do the surveying and engineering. Larsen estimated \$1,000 for the surveying with a total cost not to exceed \$3,000. Manager Vig said he is still negative about doing work for private landowners as it would set a precedent. Wilkens stated that this is not a private system. Manager Vig requested Wilkens to refrain from the discussion since he is not a board member, but rather an informational resource. **Motion** by Manager Brekke for the District to fund the project at 100%. The motion died for lack of a second. The cost share stands as per the motion made last month. Wilkens stated that he would be in contact with Hamre.

- b. Union Lake / Sarah: The USFWS has issued a special use permit allowing the Lake Improvement District (LID) to pump until December 31, 2001 with no restrictions during the nesting season. The LID is currently pumping with a diesel pump but will soon convert to an electric pump. This will substantially reduce their operating costs. The LID is still waiting for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) permit to pump at 15 cfs during the growing season. The rate is currently set at 10 cfs. The lake is down almost 3 ft. from the high but there is still almost 3 ft to go.

The LID conducted their spring meeting on May 19, 2000 with the subject of turning the project over to the District discussed. Wilkens discussed the cooperative effort that the WD and the LID have had. After a brief explanation by Dale Knotek, LID Chairman, of the need to have the WD take over the project upon its completion, a vote was taken to continue the effort. The vote passed unanimously.

- c. Tilden Farms Purchase/The Nature Conservancy (TNC): Wilkens reported on the meeting with Polk County commissioners with the county board, local townships, watershed districts, and the TNC. Ron Nargang representing TNC stated at the meeting that TNC fully intends to develop a system to be able to pay the real estate taxes and special assessments (ditch taxes). TNC is considering the establishment of an endowment fund to handle the necessary funds. Nargang further stated that early on, TNC realized that the local governmental units could not handle this property going tax exempt and that a method needed to be developed that would address these issues. TNC wants this area to eventually be a federal refuge. The land would be seeded to native grasses and the wetlands restored. Nargang requested that a local committee be developed to address the tax issue and another committee be established to address the drainage issues.

- d. Boundary Revision: Wilkens and Loren Sanderson-Red Lake WD (RLWD) have viewed the area from the Red River to the Maple Lake area. Several issues need further study before total agreement can be attained on this portion. Highway construction plans need to be reviewed along with ditch assessed areas to make final decisions on this portion. Work will continue on the easterly section at a later date.
- e. Ring Dike: Larsen stated that he would forward a ring dike application to Randy Hamre as soon as possible. The next meeting of the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) will consider how to distribute the limited funds to the districts for the ring dike program. The SHRWD will request funds for one ring dike for this year.
- f. Permit Expiration: Craig Engelstad had several permits that he has not completed in the one year time frame. He asked the board if he would need to reapply to complete the work requested. Manager Hanson asked if the work had been started. Engelstad responded that it had been started. Manager Hanson stated that the permits were for normal maintenance and felt that no new permits would be needed. Wilkens asked that Engelstad send in the completed form at the bottom of each permit as soon as the work is completed.
- g. Oath of Office: Gordon Sonsteliie was given the oath of office by Chairman Hanson and was congratulated on his being appointed to the Sand Hill River Watershed District Board of Managers.
- h. Rosebud Township: The District received a letter from Rosebud Township requesting a review of an alteration to a township ditch that runs along the west side of Section 16 in Rosebud Township on road T-537. The township felt that the ditch may have changed the flow of water to a different drainage area and they also asked if any permits were ever issued for this work. The Board requested Manager Vig to view this area and report back at the next meeting.
- i. IJC Task Force Report on the 1997 Flood: The board members had reviewed the report individually and discussed items of concern. Wilkens explained that the IJC had asked Don Ogaard to critique the document and report back to them.
- j. Administrator's and Administrative Assistant's Monthly Reports: Wilkens and Jagol distributed and reviewed monthly activity reports prepared for the month of May.
- k. Vesledahl Mitigation Land: The District received the permit to review. Larsen stated that he had reviewed the permit for the project and found everything to be in order. Manager Sonsteliie stated that there is a lot of water running through this system. In the past, Vesledahl's took care of the ditch and now Brateger's will be responsible to keep it up. There are two drainage systems that run through the property. An easement will need to be developed to prevent problems in the future. Wilkens stated that BWSR is surveying the ditches and after this is completed a meeting will be scheduled with area landowners sometime in August to see what can be developed. It has been discussed at previous meetings that a simple and fair solution would be that the future owners of the property (DNR) be required to maintain the ditch as the Vesledahl's did in the past. Manager Sonsteliie stated that around 500 acres is scheduled to be seeded this summer to native grasses at a cost of \$180,000.
- l. Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP): The CREP program is currently being promoted in the Minnesota River Valley to create financial incentives to retire critical lands from production to reduce erosion and improve water quality. Funding of \$160 million-federal and \$60 million-state is being made available. This is a two year effort which when concluded will then be promoted in the Red River Basin.

- m. North Dakota Consensus Council (NDCC) Report: The NDCC, a group dedicated to mediating disputes, forwarded correspondence about their efforts in the basin. They have been promoting the IFMI (International Flood Mitigation Initiative) which developed into a sub-group of the IJC (International Joint Commission) dealing with flood issues and future governance of water issues in the basin. This group will conclude this fall and will develop recommendations. A discussion was held about the greenway that is being proposed between Lake Winnipeg and Lake Traverse as a flood damage and recreational opportunity.
- n. North Dakota State Water Commission (NDSWC): Manager Brekke brought the board up to date on the initiative the District has undertaken to work with the NDSWC on a problem across the river from Nielsville. Wilkens and Brekke met on June 5, 2000 with Herman and Wayne Sondreal and Randy Gjestvang-NDSWC, and a meeting is being scheduled for June 26, 2000 at the Trail County Water Board to try to find solutions to the erosion problem.
- o. RRWMB Administrator's Group: Wilkens reported the administrators will be meeting on June 9, 2000 and have invited both Don Ogaard-Executive Director, and Dick Nelson-Financial Coordinator to attend.
- p. Minnesota Association of Watershed District's (MAWD) Manager Training and Summer Tour: Manager Sonsteli along with Naomi Jagol will attend the new manager training on Thursday June 22, 2000 in Detroit Lakes. The training is being held as part of the MAWD summer tour which will be held on Thursday evening and Friday and Saturday June 22-24, 2000. Manager Vig will also be attending the tour. Don Hultman, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) will be the keynote speaker.
- q. State Water Planner's Conference: Wilkens requested that himself and Naomi Jagol attend the State Water Planner's Conference which is being held on July 17-19 in Bemidji this year.

Manager Vig expressed his concern about both staff attending meetings and the office not being open. Manager Hanson spoke in favor of both staff attending as meetings of this kind usually have more sessions available than one person can attend and by splitting up more sessions can be attended which brings more information to the District. Wilkens stated that our office has very little local traffic. The District is involved more with developing policy and funding on a basin, state, and international level through the Red River Watershed Management Board, Red River Basin Board, Flood Damage Reduction Work Group, and others. Wilkens stated that there are a lot of groups out there that are working on issues that will eventually develop into policy, strategies, and law that will effect our citizens in the future. Wilkens noted that it is much easier to be involved up front with the District's concerns and input to get positive results to occur rather than try to repair damage after the fact. Wilkens added that Jagol's relationship with the RRWMB makes her a key component to this strategy and a tremendous resource person to these groups. By attending these types of meetings, Jagol has the opportunity to meet the people that she deals with and gains knowledge in a diverse area making her a more valued employee.

- r. Board and Staff Authorizations: **Motion** by Manager Brekke to authorize Sonsteli and Vig to attend the MAWD summer tour, **Seconded** by Manager Christian, **Carried**.

Motion by Manager Brekke to authorize Wilkens and Jagol the attend the MAWD summer tour and the State Water Planner's Conference, **Seconded** by Manager Christian, **Carried**. Manager Vig opposed to the motion.

- s. Computer Purchase: One computer has become very outdated and has had a severe malfunction recently. The computer needs to be replaced. **Motion** by Manager Vig to obtain proposals for a new computer to present at the next meeting, **Seconded** by Manager Brekke, **Carried**.

- t. Landowner Dispute: Wilkens has been working with landowners in Onstad Township to remedy a ditch dispute.
- u. Project Team Meeting: The next project team meeting is scheduled for July 11, 2000 at 10:00 a.m.

7. Permits:

- a. Five permits came before the Board for review and were approved as follows:
 - 2000-17 Woodside Township – Repair township road in Section 28.
 - 2000-18 Woodside Township – Repair township road in Woodside township, Section 32 and Garden township, Section 5.
 - 2000-19 Polk County Highway Department – Lower culvert in Godfrey township, Section 11.
 - 2000-20 Craig Engelstad – Clean existing ditch and construct new ditch in Liberty township, Section 23.
 - 2000-21 Polk County Highway Department – Install bridge and riprap in Vineland township, Section 29.

- 8. Adjournment:** The next regular meeting of the SHRWD will be held one week later due to the Fourth of July at 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 11, 2000. As there was no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Robert Brekke, Jr., Secretary

Naomi L. Jagol, Administrative Assistant