

SAND HILL RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

February 14, 2019

1. **Attendance:** Chairman Stuart Christian called the February 14, 2019 meeting to order at 8:00 AM at the District Office. Other managers present were Clayton Bartz, JJ Hamre, Dan Vesledahl and Roger Hanson. One staff member was present April Swenby – Administrator. Others in attendance include and Zach Herrmann – Houston Engineering.
2. **Approval of the Agenda:** A **Motion** was made by Manager Hanson to approve the agenda as presented, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz, **Carried**.
3. **Minutes:** A **Motion** was made by Manager Bartz to approve the minutes from the January 8, 2019 meeting, **Seconded** by Manager Vesledahl, **Carried**.
4. **Treasurer's/Financial Report:** April Swenby read the Treasurer’s Report. A **Motion** was made by Manager Hamre to approve the Treasurer’s Report for January, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz, **Carried**.

The managers reviewed their expense reports and reported on activities for the month.

The following bills were reviewed:

	<u>TOTAL</u>
Anders Valley Publishing	97.50
Anderson, Bottrell, Sanden & Thompson	125.00
April J. Swenby	130.79
Brady & Martz	685.00
CISport	360.90
City of Fertile	39.00
Diligent	1,900.00
Garden Valley Telephone Company	241.41
Houston Engineering	19,210.00
MAWD	2,609.00
Minkota Technologies	1,006.77
Minkota Technologies	-187.94
Office Supplies Plus	193.26
Sarah Wise	77.00
US Geological Survey	6,266.00
Wild Rice Electric	130.88
TOTAL	<u><u>32,884.57</u></u>

Swenby noted that the following bills were paid January 30, 2019, to avoid late fees. Manager Bartz reviewed the bills.

First Community Credit Union	1181.28
Garden Valley Telephone	241.41
Ottertail Power Company	709.42
TOTAL	<u><u>2,132.11</u></u>

A **Motion** was made by Manager Vesledahl to approve and pay the bills, **Seconded** by Hamre, **Carried**.

Swenby noted that the subscription for e-file cabinet was due and they have asked for a credit card payment. A **Motion** was made by Manager Vesledahl to renew the annual e-file cabinet subscription for \$1645, **Seconded** by Manager Hanson, **Carried**.

Last month Manager Vesledahl asked Swenby to find out what the actual dollars received is for the tax levy, vs. what is delinquent. A report was presented to the board. The managers asked if the interest the county collects is passed through to the district for delinquencies.

5. Engineer's Report

Nielsville Ring Dike: A fact sheet was developed and was given to the managers for review. Swenby plans to bring this to the Legislative Breakfast for legislative review. Swenby has scheduled a time to meet during the MAWD Legislative Breakfast with Pat Lynch and Kent Lokkesmoe regarding the Nielsville Ring Dike.

Climax Ring Dike: Swenby has reached out to Dave Hauff several times, along with Tony Nordby regarding the status of the land transfers regarding the Climax Ring Dike. Hauff is working on drafting the documents for the land transfer.

Fish Passage and Grade Stabilization: Nicole from WPSWCD is planning a meeting with funding entities. Two locations are planned for side inlets along the Sand Hill Ditch.

Carlson Coulee (Targeted Watershed Grant): MN DNR has commented that the stream does not appear to be in bad shape and funds might be better spent upstream. Herrmann is working with East Polk SWCD to acquire documents from previous investigations. Last month, Herrmann added that he'd like to see beaver control in the area. Discussion was held regarding the responsibility of beaver removal and landowner permissions. Manager Vesledahl asked if removing the dams would create additional instability. Herrmann agreed, but stated that to have construction the beaver and dams need to be removed. Manager Vesledahl suggested waiting for the MnDNR permit before we trap the beaver. Herrmann suggested that it is easier to get to the area in the winter time vs. the spring time. A **Motion** was made by Manager Hanson to authorize beaver trapping in this area in relation to the project and blow or track hoe the dam when the beaver are trapped, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz, **Carried**. Swenby will communicate with the landowners.

Sand Hill Lake Outlet: "Option 1" was determined to be the preferred alternative by the SHRWD due to landowner concerns with rerouting Ditch 83. Houston Engineering is currently working with MNDNR to determine design modifications to accommodate a steeper channel slope.

Kittleson Creek Outlet: Plans will be completed by early next week and will be provided to the Polk County Highway Department.

Project # 5: Herrman is working on ROW establishments (payment, seeding maps and signage). A resolution is recommended from Dave Hauff to use construction fund monies to pay ROW.

Union Lake Pumping: Houston Engineering has reviewed a closed piping system to bypass the existing ditch channel. A 30" HDPE pipe is required to maintain the same efficiencies as the open channel. The pipe would be placed adjacent to the existing ditch with an estimated total cost of \$150,000. A meeting is suggested with the LID for direction.

The Ness property easement is completed. Hauff is preparing an easement agreement.

6. **Rules and Regulations Public Hearing:** A **Motion** was made by Manager Bartz to recess the regular meeting of the Sand Hill River Watershed District board of managers and open the public hearing for the Rules and Regulations at 9 AM, **Seconded** by Manager Vesledahl, **Carried**.

The floor was opened up to the public for comment. There was no public comment and no public was present.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Hanson to close the public hearing of the Rules and Regulations and reconvene the regular meeting of the Sand Hill River Watershed District board of managers at 9:15 AM, **Seconded** by Manager Vesledahl, **Carried**.

7. **Rules and Regulations Adoption:** A **Motion** was made by Manager Bartz to formally adopt the presented rules and regulations as of February 14, 2019, **Seconded** by Manager Hamre, **Carried**.

8. Administrator Report:

Calendar and February Work Plan: Swenby highlighted her calendar for February and presented a task list for February.

Drainage Work Group: Swenby attended the Drainage Work Group meeting January 10 via conference calling. Some conversations came in very clear and others were very hard to hear. Wilkens attended the meeting in person. The consensus of the group was to submit the bill for redetermination of benefits for repairs as agreed upon and advised the BdSWD to create a minority report stating their claims for not supporting the bill. Meeting highlights are attached. The next DWG meeting is scheduled for June 13, 2019.

Administrator's Meeting: Swenby will attend the Administrator's meeting on February 26, 2019 at the RLWD office.

RRBC Annual Conference: The RRBC Annual Conference was held January 15 – 17 at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks. Swenby and Manager Hanson attended.

MAWD Legislative Breakfast: Manager Hanson and Manager Vesledahl have been registered. Swenby will also attend.

FDRWG March Annual Conference: In conjunction with the March Annual Conference, a drainage conference will be held March 19, 2019 (agenda attached). The March Conference is planned for March 20-21, 2019. All will be held at the Courtyard by Marriott in Moorhead. Swenby has reserved 4 rooms starting March 18 - 21. Manager Hanson will attend. Manager Vesledahl will attend the drainage conference (one day)

RRMWB: Swenby and Manager Hanson attended the RRWMB meeting on January 15, 2018 in East Grand Forks. Meeting highlights can be found on the RRWMB web-site at www.rrwmb.org. Swenby met with Rob Sip during the RRBC conference. Sip clarified goals and objectives of the RRWMB regarding clean water funding and ditch projects. Sip is open to continue meeting with our board.

RRBC: Swenby and Manager Hanson attended the RRBC conference January 15 – 17.

FDRWG: Swenby will attend the Flood Damage Reduction Workgroup meeting on February 28 at

the Red Lake Watershed District Office.

MPCA biological assessment staff: Cary Hernandez, MPCA has requested a meeting in January with the biological assessment staff. The meeting was originally planned for January 24, 2019 following the Project Team meeting, but was postponed to due weather advisories. A new meeting was scheduled for March 7, 2019 at 1 PM.

Project Team Meetings: A Project Team meeting was scheduled for January 24, 2019 at 10 AM but was postponed to due weather advisories. A new meeting was scheduled for March 7, 2019 at 10 AM.

Partnering Agencies:

- *Mahnomen County SWCD:* Swenby met with Mahnomen County SWCD on January 14
- *Norman County SWCD:* Swenby will meet with the Norman County SWCD on March 14.
- *EPSWCD:* Swenby will attend the EPSWCD meeting on April 18, 2019 at 9:30 AM.
- *WPSWCD:* Due to scheduling conflicts, Swenby will meet with WPSWCD on April 18, 2019 at 7 AM.
- *International Water Institute:* Swenby met with Danny Halvorson, River Watch Coordinator on January 14, 2019 to discuss a work plan and financial contributions that would be the Sand Hill's share. Swenby met with Chuck Fritz at the RRBC Conference to discuss options. Fritz offered Swenby a seat on the IWI board to help the Sand Hill continue to stay involved.
- *Polk County:* Swenby has reached out to Joan Lee to coordinate a lunch meeting February 25 in Fertile. Swenby met with Warren Strandell on January 29, 2019 at the Polk County Government Center.
- *Townships:* Swenby would like to send a letter of introduction to the townships and would like input for the board for content that represents them. Attached is a draft letter for review.

Building project: Swenby contacted the FSA office to get information for obtaining their building plans. The government was shut down, and was unable to reach anyone for plans to present to the Building Center.

Foundation estimates (rough numbers without exact plans/specs) 30' x 54' were determined to be about \$15,000 higher for a full 9' basement vs. a 5' frost wall/crawl space. Both have a finished floor. Both estimates use 8" ICF walls which will also provide insulation. A rough cost for a slab on grade 50' x 50' with floor heat and Styrofoam 4' out around the perimeter was about \$7,000-\$10,000 less expensive than adding on a 30' x 54' frost wall/crawl space to the existing building.

The outside structure (frame) for a 30' x 54' addition estimate is attached along with a 50' x 50' estimate for a new structure/building (and draft drawing for a new building). The difference between the two is about \$7,000. Building new is more expensive likely due to an additional wall (an addition only requires three walls).

Items to consider:

- The labor costs for remodeling/addition would be considerably higher than labor costs for new construction.
- Costs would also likely be more exact with new construction. Labor costs vary depending on what is found during renovations for remodeling the existing building.
- New construction provides the district with parking.
- District can subtract the sale of the existing district building to put towards the cost of building a new structure.
- Both cost estimates did not include interior finishing.

- Both scenarios require a new heating/cooling system and new plumbing. The board would like to see the plans on the FSA in McIntosh.

Investments: Swenby reached out to over 25 banks to solicit bids for investment options for the CD's that are due. The highest bidder was Unity Bank at 3% interest for 12 months. The lowest bid was 1.15%.

Service Learning – FB School: Swenby was recently informed of the Service learning program at the F-B school. There are a couple of students who are able to take on a “job”. In lieu of hiring an Administrative Assistant, Swenby proposes exploring this option. While it is not required that the students are paid, some of the employers pay minimum wage. The students come for 45 minutes per day during the school hours. Swenby proposes using a student for data entry, permit database, entering and scanning accounts payable billings, and permit data base entry. Depending on the student, the applicant may also have spreadsheet skills and web-site skills. One applicant was presented to the board for review. A **Motion** was made by Manager Vesledahl to hire Hallie Strem through the service learning program, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz, **Carried**. Swenby will look into the pay and the obligations of the district for using the service. Minimum wage was discussed along with the possibility of a financial contribution to the program. Chairman Christian delegated Swenby to determine the process for paying Strem.

Logo Shirts: Shirts that were ordered in November have been received and distributed to the managers to wear when they are representing the district.

2017 Annual Report: Brett Arne informed Swenby that there are deadlines on the Annual Report. The 2017 Annual Report was not completed nor submitted. Swenby created the report and attached it for review. To avoid late reports in the future she will set a calendar reminder to complete the previous year reports in the spring of each year. The board approved the report

Hosted Phone Services: Garden Valley presented the attached draft proposal. The new phone system will cost \$120.49 per month with a one-time fee of \$1077.65 for the hardware, installation and training. This is a more affordable option for the district monthly. Hosted phone systems were implemented early in February.

Calendar: Swenby implemented a full calendar feature for the web-site, synced with the district Exchange calendar, to help keep the public better informed of district meetings, conferences, and happenings.

Stream Gage: Swenby reached out Stephanie Klamm for cost sharing ideas for the gage at Climax as discussed during last month's meeting. Klamm forwarded the request to Greg Kruse in their monitoring unit.

Personnel Manual Updates: As per the discussion from January regarding policies for PTO and Comp hours, Swenby ask for board input and approval for attached revisions. A **Motion** was made by Manager Vesledahl to table this until the next meeting, **Seconded** by Manager Bartz, **Carried**.

PRAP: Nicole Bernd, WPSWD suggested to Swenby that a PRAP could be conducted for the district, to help Swenby prioritize, meet required deadlines and learn more about watershed district obligations. BWSR's Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP) assesses the performance of the units of government that constitute Minnesota's local delivery system for conservation of water and related land resources. The program goal is to assist local government partners to be the best they can be in their management of Minnesota's land and water resources. A

link with information about the program can be found here:

<http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/PRAP/index.html>

Swenby held a phone conference call with Brett Arne the district's BWSR board representative, who first offered to meet with Swenby at the office to review 103.D and 103.E. He'd also like to bring in a Wetland specialist to review the regulations regarding wetlands. Arne stated that he will also provide education on grant opportunities that could benefit the district. After some education with BWSR, Arne would be better equipped to determine if a PRAP is beneficial to the district. This education and assistance is of no cost to the district and is support that BWSR provides.

Building Signage: There are many people parking on the district parking lot. Between non-authorized parking and snow storage, the parking lot is often unable to be used by the district and its constituents. The current signs stating that the parking lot is reserved for the Sand Hill River Watershed or illegible and faded. Premier Signs measure measured our existing ones at 18"x72". They can create two new signs on polymetal signboard and anchor them to the wall and remove the old signs for \$400.00. A **Motion** was made by Manager Hanson to purchase signs, **Seconded** by Manager Vesledahl, **Carried.** The board asked Swenby to ask the city to be more pro-active moving the snow.

Polk County Fair Booth Budget: Swenby has ordered (no cost to the district) "Watershed Protection" and "Discover the Red River" booklets disbursement at the Polk County Fair and has arranged to pick them up in Grand Forks the end of the month. In the past the booth has been somewhat "generic" and she would like a budget to order a table cloth with the district logo, and some banners highlighting the district successes. Additionally, many hand out pens/or logo candy at trade booths. Swenby plans to try to be present at the booth this year during business hours. The drone footage will also continue to be displayed. A **Motion** was made by Manager Vesledahl to authorize a budget of up to \$1,000 to spend toward Public Relations, **Seconded** by Manager Hanson, **Carried.**

City Ring Dikes: Tony Nordby was able to get in touch with Dave Hauff. Hauff would like to visit a Quit Claim deed to transfer the property.

Nielsville Ring Dike: Swenby reached out to Emily Javens for joint flood hazard mitigation bonding requests. Lisa Frenette stated she cannot place this on the request for a joint flood hazard mitigation bonding request as ring dikes are not apart of bonding money and she suggested contacting Pat Lynch. Swenby has a phone call into Pat Lynch. Swenby also contacted Ron Harnack to get the history of the ring dike being denied in the first place and to ask his recommendations for getting funding for the ring dike, but has been unable to get a hold of him. She also held a phone conference with Senator Mark Johnson who asked for a history/maps of the area and was open to being involved with securing funding for the Nielsville Ring Dike. Swenby has scheduled a time to meet during the MAWD Legislative Breakfast with Pat Lynch and Kent Lokkesmoe regarding the Nielsville Ring Dike. Attached is a one-pager of the information that Swenby would present to Johnson and/or other legislative leads. Swenby asked for additional input from the managers.

Bear Park: A "one pager" fact sheet was developed to present to the legislatures next week at the Legislative Breakfast. Swenby asks for board feed back on the attached document.

River Clean Up: Swenby applied for CWF grants in December and the district was awarded the Clean Water Funds to utilize the services of Conservation Corps Minnesota crews for Phase 2 of the River Clean up Project starting near Rindahl and ending at PC #1. Fifteen days were granted to the district of Conservation Corps Crew labor. More details will be coming forth in the coming months.

Polk County # 1 Bridge Replacement: A meeting was held January 28, 2019 with Rich Sanders - PC Engineer, Dan Wilkens and Lisa Liden representing the City of Fertile. Sanders stated that Houston Engineering was drafting the engineering plans for the bridge replacement and stated that the county would be open to drafting a plan conducive to river recreation.

Ditch Mowing: Swenby asked Rich Sanders, Polk County Highway Department about sharing costs with their ditch mower for mowing district legal ditch systems. Sanders did not think they had enough staff to add additional miles to their ditches. A couple of names came up for possible mowers who may be interested in haying. Some landowners mow if it is adjacent to their property. Swenby would like direction for ditch mowing for the summer of 2019 and asks for input for problem areas.

Herrmann suggested making a ditch mowing policy by setting a date of mid July. Swenby will draft a policy for presentation to the board. Chairman Christian instructed Swenby to review the regulations for timing for waterfowl by talking to Richard Sanders.

Rock Riffles Signage: Swenby let Mark Johnson of the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council know of the board's decision to hold off on implementing signage until the additional riffles were in place. Johnson had additional feedback for the signage and his feedback will be implemented with a final draft presented to the managers after the riffles are completed this summer.

Beaver Bounty Program: Eight Townships have returned their contract to participate in the program. The web-site has been updated to reflect the changes and new participants.

Beaver Control: Swenby contacted the district beaver trapper. He stated that on Project 5 he set traps and did not trap any beaver but did see one dead one near the ditch, as if someone had shot it from the road. He will continue to monitor that area this spring for signs of beaver. He also stated that this spring he plans to monitor the Bear Park area with 3 guys to be proactive on the beaver in the area. He prefers to wait until the river opens so he can get to the beaver areas by boat.

Verdell Olson Dam: Garden Township called stating they do not meet until March, but verified they received our billing of \$602.64. They were told that we can wait until March to receive reimbursement.

Corp Drop Structures: Joe Schroetter, US Army Corp of Engineers will be e-mailing exit contracts and maintenance agreements for the drop structures. Swenby talked with Jamison Wendel, MN DNR regarding the process for inspections and the responsibility of monitoring the rocks. Swenby also discussed with Jamison the area with alignment questions and the responsibility for future maintenance in that area. It was suggested to lay out these terms and concerns in the agreement with the US Army Corp of Engineers.

Vesledahl Wetland Mitigation: Swenby reached out to Mark Johnson regarding the PILT payments to ensure that should the land be transferred to another entity, tax payments would continue to be forwarded to Polk County. Johnson has organized a meeting on February 20 between the district, MnDOT and BWSR at 2:30 PM to help move the project forward, coordinating this with the Legislative Breakfast. The meeting will be in the Minnesota Senate Building Room 2105, right across the street from the Capitol. The address is 95 University Ave W, St Paul, MN 55155. Swenby met with John Jaschke during the RRBC conference who stated he was open to hearing about the difficulties the landowners district has faced due to lack of maintenance and would be attending the meeting during the Legislative Breakfast. A discussion to develop a "one-pager" is advised for the

board.

Farmstead Ring Dikes: Pat Lynch contacted Swenby regarding money available for farmstead ring dikes. Swenby asked for input regarding the need for farmstead ring dikes.

Administrator Direction and future goals: Swenby and Herrmann developed a timeline for Project 5, Buffer Compliance, Ditch 80, LID Pumping Project, Vesledahl Wetland Banking, and the Verdell Olson Dam. To stay in communication to keep projects moving forward, Herrmann and Swenby will meet two weeks before every meeting via skype.

7. **Other Business:**

Public Comment: There was no public comment brought before the board.

RRBC: Swenby has also reached out to the RRBC, Ted Priester, Executive Director of the RRBC. The Sand Hill contributed to the RRBC via the RRWMB. At the RRWMB meeting a \$5,000 was noted as the Sand Hill's percentage of the district's share. The district expressed interest in continue to support the RRBC's goals and missions. Julie Goehring will presented to the board the benefits, goals, and successes of the RRBC. Goehring invited the board to any/all of the RRBC board meetings to provide an opportunity for networking.

A **Motion** was made by Manager Vesledahl to contribute \$5,000 to the RRBC, **Seconded** by Manager Hamre, **Carried**.

8. **Permits:** No permits were presented to the board.

9. **Adjournment:** The next regular meeting will be held Tuesday, March 5, 2019 at 8 AM. As there was no further business to come before the board, a **Motion** was made by Manager Hamre to adjourn the meeting at 10:56 AM, **Seconded** by Manager Hanson, **Carried**

April Swenby, Administrative Assistant

JJ Hamre, Secretary