



1303 4TH Ave. NE
Barnesville, MN 56514
218-789-3100
www.brrwd.org

Board Meeting Minutes

Monday April 8, 2024

Managers Present: Peter Fjestad; Catherine Affield; John Hanson; Troy Larson; Gerald Van Amburg; Curtis Stubstad.

Managers Absent: William Davis.

Staff Present: Kristine Altrichter, Administrator; Matthew Schlauderaff, Watershed Specialist.

Consultants Present: Bennett Uhler, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI).

Others Attending: Paul Krabbenhoft, Clay County Commission; John Braton, Wilkin County Commission; William Steffl.

President Fjestad called meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Agenda: Additions to agenda:

Clean Water Fund (CWF) Contract for South Branch Buffalo River Watershed Phase 1,
Lower Otter Tail River Land Acquisition Discussion,
Redetermination of Benefits Prioritization,
Project Tour Discussion,

Motion to approve agenda with additions by Affield, **Seconded** by Stubstad. **Approved.**

Citizens to be Heard:

None.

Consent Agenda: **Motion** to approve consent agenda items:

March 11, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2024 Clay County Ditch No. 10 Informational Meeting Minutes

Financial Report

Permit Nos.

- 24-014, Peter Aasness – tiling, NE ¼, Section 20, Orwell Township, Otter Tail County with conditions,
- 24-015, Steve Thompson – tiling, SW ¼, Section 5, Barnesville Township, Clay County with conditions,
- 24-016, Steve Thompson – tiling, SE ¼, Section 10, Alliance Township, Clay County with conditions,
- 24-017, Bryan Oberg – tiling, SW ¼, Section 25, Oakport Township, Clay County with conditions,
- 24-018, Bryan Oberg – tiling, SE ¼, Section 19, Morken Township, Clay County with conditions,
- 24-019, James Myers – culvert installation and ditch cleaning, NE ¼, Section 1, Oakport Township, Clay County with conditions,
- 24-020, David Herbranson – culvert installation, SE ¼, Section 21, Elkton Township, Clay County with conditions,
- 24-021, Dakota Carrier Network – utility installation, SW ¼, Section 15, Moorhead Township, Clay County with conditions,
- 24-022, Ross Johnson – tiling, NE ¼, Section 35, Prairie View Township, Wilkin County with conditions,
- 24-023, Farm in the Dell c/o Glen Urlacher – approach removal and installation and culvert installation, SW ¼, Section 11, Oakport Township, Clay County with conditions,
- 24-024, Chris Watterud – tiling, NW ¼, Section 35, Prairie View Township, Wilkin County with conditions,
- 24-025, Michael Aamodt – utility installation, surface drainage, new ditch, SE ¼, Section 5, Moorhead Township, Clay County,
- 24-025, Michael Aamodt – surface drainage, new ditch, SE ¼, Section 3, Moorhead Township, Clay County,
- 24-026, Jim Lindholm – tiling, SW ¼, Section 14, Prairie View Township, Wilkin County with conditions

Project No. 81 – Whiskey Creek Enhancement Phase 3 Pay Estimate No. 6, by Affield **Seconded** by Hanson.

Approved.

April 8, 2024

1

Permits for Discussion:

Permit No. 23-049, Jeff Lavigne. Operation of Tile Pump. BRRWD Rule 5.3e. states “Applicant is responsible to ensure that the pump(s) not be operated during freezing conditions to cause downstream icing conditions” and permit conditions which states “pumped outlets must not be operated during times of downstream flooding or if freezing of downstream structures is occurring,” Lavigne has requested to operate his tile pump located in SW ¼, Section 33, Humboldt Township, Clay County when freezing conditions were anticipated in the 10 day forecast. Lavigne requested an exemption from BRRWD Rules 5.3e. and above cited permit condition if he receives approval from the downstream landowner. Board of Managers discussed request and determined that Lavigne should operate his system within the confines of BRRWD Rules and permit conditions.

Projects:

Lower Otter Tail River Restoration. Land Acquisition Discussion. Staff are working with landowners to start land acquisition for Lower Otter Tail Restoration. Previously, Board of Managers approved an incentive payment of 20 percent of the Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) payment to landowners that enroll land needed for project in RIM Program. Wilkin Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is working with landowners to enroll land in RIM Program. Staff recommended Board of Managers approve executing option to purchase permanent easement and paying 20 percent incentive when RIM easement closes. **Motion** to execute option to purchase permanent easements and pay landowners 20 percent incentive once RIM easement closes as presented, by Stubstad, **Seconded** by Larson. **Approved.**

Project No. 81 – Whiskey Creek Enhancement Project. Wilkin County Ditch No. 6A Tributary Extension. Land Acquisition Discussion. **Motion** to pay landowners flat rate of \$250 when they sign an option agreement, if all landowners on project corridor sign option agreement and project moves forward, BRRWD will execute option to purchase temporary and/or permanent easements by Stubstad, **Seconded** by Van Amburg. **Approved.**

City of Georgetown Flood Protection. Appraiser Engagement. **Motion** to approve agreement with Natwick Appraisals to conduct appraisal work for the City of Georgetown Flood Protection Project for \$5,500.00 by Hanson, **Seconded** by Affield. **Approved.**

South Branch Buffalo River Restoration. Phase 2 Archaeological Survey. Review and Approve. **Motion** to approve agreement with In Situ Archaeological Consulting to complete archaeological survey for Phase 2 of South Branch Buffalo River Restoration for \$21,513.00 by Van Amburg, **Seconded** by Larson. **Approved.**

Project No. 54 – Whisky Creek Restoration Repair. Award Contract. **Motion** to award contract to apparent lowest bidder, ACM, LLC for \$192,826.70 by Hanson **Seconded** by Affield. **Approved.**

Snakey Creek (Clay County Ditch No. 41) Outlet Repair. Award Contract. **Motion** to award contract to apparent lowest bidder, Tunheim Construction, LLC for \$306,100.00 by Stubstad, **Seconded** by Van Amburg. **Approved.**

Ditches:

Redetermination of Benefits Prioritization. Altrichter presented proposed prioritization for redetermining benefits for drainage systems. Priority based on year benefits were established, account balance, and general review of accuracy of benefit area. **Motion** to direct staff to initiate process for redetermine benefits for Clay County Ditch No. 22 and Clay County Ditch No. 23 by Stubstad, **Seconded** by Affield. **Approved.**

Repair Recommendations.

Drainage	Township	Section	Problem/Proposed Work	Estimated Cost
Pj. 16, Stinking Lake Detention	Highland Grove	35	Erosion along approach	\$1,500
Wilkin County Ditch No. 31	Andrea	15	Failing 171" x 110" x 42' corrugated metal pipe arch (cmpa). Replace with 137" x 87" x 50' cmpa.	\$50,000 - \$60,000

Motion to authorize repairs as presented, by Hanson, **Seconded** by Affield. **Approved.**

Other:

CWF Contract for South Branch Buffalo River Watershed Phase 1. BRRWD, in partnership with Wilkin SWCD, is the grantee of a CWF grant for South Branch Buffalo River Watershed. **Motion** to approve contract up to \$50,390.20 in CWF grant funds for the South Branch Buffalo River Watershed to cost-share on a \$104,878.00 contract for water and sediment control basins in Section 23, Prairie View Township, Wilkin County by Stubstad, **Seconded** by Van Amburg. **Approved.**

Project Tour Discussion. Board of Managers discussed hosting project tour August 15, 2024 from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

International Water Institute (IWI). 2024 Water Quality Monitoring Agreement. **Motion** to approve agreement with IWI to conduct water quality monitoring for 33 sites in 2024 for up to \$30,950.00 by Van Amburg, **Seconded** by Hanson. **Approved.**

2024 Legislative Session. Update: Legislative Summary for HF3389 & SF3684. At the March 11, 2024 Board Meeting Board of Managers authorized to contact lobbyist Joel Carlson to address concerns with proposed bills. Altrichter provided an update from Carlson.

Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting. Reschedule Meeting. Board of Managers discussed rescheduling the CAC meeting for Monday April 22, 2024 from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM.

Human Resources Committee (HR Committee). Salary Survey Recommendation. At the March 11, 2024 Board Meeting, Board of Managers approved an updated Salary Program and directed the HR Committee to review staff salaries to ensure all staff are in appropriate zone and present updated salaries to Board of Managers for approval. HR Committee found all positions were in appropriate zone except the administrator position. HR committee recommended adjusting salary of the administrator position by 15 percent effective July 1, 2024. This position would then be in the appropriate zone and eligible for potential annual increases in 2025 which would be determined at the Annual Budget Hearing. **Motion** to approve salary adjustment as recommended, by Stubstad, **Seconded** by Affield. **Approved.**

Bills. **Motion** to approve bills totaling \$411,077.15 by Van Amburg, **Seconded** by Larson. **Approved.**

William Steffl. Steffl asked about the timeline for the Upper Buffalo River Restoration and how much design was left to complete. Uhler stated design is relatively finalized with plans at 90 percent. Uhler stated there may be small adjustments based on conversations with landowners as BRRWD works with them on land acquisition. Uhler noted BRRWD anticipates receiving approximately \$3.5 million from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) which would be available in July 2025. Steffl asked when the methodology would be available for the water management district (wmd). Uhler noted BRRWD would likely follow a similar process to other channel restoration projects where the assessment is determined by change in land use. Uhler stated the wmd methodology would be available to landowners prior to the hearing. It is anticipated that most of the construction will be paid for by grants, so local assessment would cover long-term maintenance. Steffl asked how project would be engineered to ensure water flowed through historic channel. Uhler noted that a ditch block would be installed to prevent water from flowing through the cutoff channel. Cutoff channel has local drainage, so there are no plans to fill in the channel.

Next Regular Meeting. Monday May 13, 2024, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office. Agenda will be posted on BRRWD's website prior to meeting.

President Fjestad adjourned meeting at 8:14 PM.

John E. Hanson
Secretary