

WILD RICE WATERSHED DISTRICT

11 Fifth Avenue East

Ada, MN 56510

Ph: 218-784-5501

SPECIAL MEETING

September 30, 2008

Approved Minutes

1. A special meeting of the Wild Rice Watershed District Board of Managers was held on Tuesday September 30, 2008. Managers in attendance include Diane Ista, Bob Wright, Warren Seykora, Mike Christensen, Don Vellenga, Joe Spaeth and Dave Vipond. Absent: None. In addition the following persons were in attendance: Administrator Dalen, Attorney Elroy Hanson, Engineer Jerry Bents, Tim Halle, Loretta Johnson, Brian Borgen, Duane Erickson, Curtis Borchert, Peter Borchert, Brian Dwight, Michele Puchalski, Curt Jacobson, John Austinson and Attorney Jerry Von Korff via teleconference.
2. Chairman Seykora called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.
3. Board Direction Jerry Von Korff. Attorney Jerry Von Korff, via teleconference discussed board direction, building consensus between board members, approaches that might be used in building consensus, how to focus on policy decisions, roles of the board members in terms of policy, what is micromanagement, policy disputes, and how to find a way to build consensus around having a long term evaluating process. He stated that you can't take anybody's system, put it in front of your board and make it work with your board, but if you have 2-3 people who you put your trust in, you could use them.

Chairman Seykora stated that he felt that the Board hires an administrator and staff to carry out the duties and direction of the board and micromanagement is a problem in other boards and this board. Von Korff stated that two ways people disagree is a policy dispute and micromanagement and each board member may answer those questions different; the only way to work through this is to have a dialogue with board members and get some consensus. Manager Vellenga stated that he doesn't want to micromanage but wants to have transparency, make sure that we are following policy and doing things right. Von Korff stated that the advantage of taking a day or two to discuss these things is that it takes more than a couple of hours. Manager Vellenga stated that as secretary his job is to take care of the minutes and he is going to be doing that. Von Korff said that having faith in the accuracy of the minutes is critical, you have to know as a Manager that the record of what has happened is fair and accurate and you can start a battle of whether the past minutes were accurate or not, or you can come to a consensus of what you expect of the minutes in the future and in the next three or four months focus on making things better rather than making sure of what has happened in the past. The idea of a continuous progress organization is difficult, but you need focus on how to do better. Administrator Dalen agreed and stated that he is striving every day to do better and look to the future. Dalen stated that the issue here is the board's overall direction and we need to try and get some consensus on a plan that the board can support in and out of meetings. Von Korff recommended asking a consultant to assist in making a strategic plan, so Managers know what is going to happen over the next one to two years. Manager Vipond stated that the issue he sees is that there are a lot of hard decisions to make on this board and everyone will not agree, but once the vote has been taken we have to agree with the decision and get that accomplished.

If a consultant can assist the board with this issue, he would be in favor of a consultant. Von Korff stated that it is not unusual for a board that is full of good people to work very hard to keep understanding each other. It is helpful to pick some things that you think can be done short term, get a consensus of how you are going to fix that and deal with it and get it done. Success breeds success.

Administrator Dalen discussed the proposal that he distributed from a consultant from Customer Connections and stated that identifying the issues would be the first step. Manager Vipond asked Attorney Hanson if it would be considered an open meeting when the entire board went to a retreat to work on these issues and board direction. Attorney Hanson replied that it would constitute an open meeting. Manager Ista asked Brian Dwight if BWSR provided these services and if so what would the cost be. He stated that their time is the only cost. Dwight stated that BWSR members along with Cliff Twedel developed a self assessment for SWCDs and Watershed Districts and has used this with three watershed districts and 5 SWCDs. They found it is a fairly good approach that first identifies the issues followed by BWSR assisting the District in identifying areas where these issues can be addressed. Dwight stated that it mirrors the self assessment portion provided by Customer Connections. Manager Vellenga asked if the consultant from Customer Connections worked with other watershed districts. Dalen stated that she had not, but felt that she is someone who can help the Managers become a fine oiled machine. Dalen stated that he had concerns about the BWSR and PRAP program ready to help the district in a timely manner. Manager Ista asked if reference of companies Customer Connections had worked with was available and how quickly BWSR could start if the District decided to use them. Manager Vipond requested that Dalen check for those references. Dwight stated that he couldn't say for sure, but felt it would be a quick turn around. Chairman Seykora stated that an assessment is a good thing and agreed that the BWSR mirrored the consultant but had concerns if the PRAP money did not become available. The goals and direction and what BWSR can do for the District would be in combination. Dwight stated that if BWSR works with the district the funding for the RPAP is different and there are individuals within BWSR who are there and can do it, stating if the Board is interested, he could give a presentation at the next meeting. Manager Vellenga asked if this also addresses broad perspective issues including board, staffing and administration and how long does it take to get from Phase A-Z. Dwight stated that it is broad based perspective and Phase 1 would take two to three months. Chairman Seykora wanted to go on the record stating that he is not a real promoter of assessments and he is nervous about the PRAP funding issue, and would like to move forward with something as quickly as possible. Manager Spaeth stated that if the cost for Customer Connections was \$6-7,000, and could assist the Managers in moving forward, it wouldn't be too costly in comparison to not getting things done. Manager Vellenga made a motion to go with the BWSR approach and ask Brian Dwight to expedite this as quickly as possible. Manager Ista seconded the motion. Manager Vipond stated that he would like to see backup information on Customer Connections. Administrator Dalen's recommendation was to go with a private business rather than BWSR as it may be more difficult for them to deal in a timely manner due to all of their other responsibilities, but recommended deferring until the October meeting. Managers Vellenga and Ista withdrew the motion. A motion was made by Manager Vipond authorizing staff to draft a formal request to BWSR for a Phase 1 Assessment requesting a timeline and to Customer Connections requesting references and a timeline. Manager Wright seconded the motion. Carried.

PERMIT APPLICATIONS

4. A motion was made by Manager Spaeth and seconded by Manager Christensen to approve the following permits with conditions. Carried.

- John Jossund, Section 32, Lee Township. Permit Application #9-30-08-1 to remove a field approach with a 24” pipe and install a field approach with a 30” pipe at a different location, with the condition that the pipe size in the new approach is the same size as the upstream pipe with applicant being responsible to verify the pipe sizes.
- Steve Braseth, Section 28, Ulen Township. Permit Application #9-30-08-2 to install a driveway with an 18” pipe.
- Lanae Harless, Section 27, Winchester Township. Permit Application #9-30-08-3 to install drainage tile in the south half of the SE quarter of the section, with the condition that the outlet will be installed no more than 24” above the ditch bottom and the applicant is responsible for erosion control measures at the outlet.
- Jay and Ann Tommerdahl, Section 3, Lee Township. Permit Application #9-30-08-5 to remove an existing 24” RCP from a field ditch.
- Mark Habedank, Section 32, Fossum Township. Permit Application #9-30-08-7 to install drain tile on the NE Quarter of the section with the condition that engineering staff review and approve the revised tiling plan.

5. Clement Erickson, Section 29, Lake Ida Township. A motion was made by Manager Ista and seconded by Manager Vipond to table Permit Application #9-30-08-4 of Clement Erickson to install drainage tile adjacent to a wetland/waterway in Section 29, Lake Ida Township. The permit will be considered when the NRCS and SWCD approvals are received. Carried.

6. Shane Sharpe, Section 19 and 30, Shelly Township. A motion was made by Manager Vipond and seconded by Manager Vellenga to return Permit Application #9-30-08-6 of Shane Sharpe to clean out the Highway #75 road ditch in Sections 19 and 20 of Shelly Township, informing Sharpe that a watershed district permit is not required for cleaning of ditches. Carried.

7. Drainage Record Modernization Grant Authorization. Engineer Bents reported that there is a new grant program available from BWSR for the purpose of modernizing drainage information across the state. Discussion was held regarding the district application or in combination with the county. A motion was made by Manager Vipond and seconded by Manager Vellenga authorizing Engineer Bents attendance at a workshop providing information on the grant on October 7, 2008, at Fergus Falls. Carried.

8. Permits/Complaints. Duane Erickson discussed the Vik violation that the SWCD has been working with in attempt to get it resolved. Engineer Bents recommended that when the SWCD has the plans completed, they provide them to Eugene Vik and he submit a permit application to the District for the work. Curtis Borchert also discussed working with NRCS and landowners in getting some relief for the continued flooding in the area of Tufte, Heitman, Vik and others. A motion was made by Manager Vipond and seconded by Manager Vellenga authorizing the District to send correspondence to the Natural Resource Conservation Service, requesting that they assist landowners in developing a plan. Carried.

9. There being no further business to come before the Board of Managers, a motion was made by Manager Spaeth and seconded by Manager Wright to adjourn the meeting. Carried. Chairman Seykora adjourned the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

Don Vellenga, Secretary