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**HEARING ON UPPER BECKER PROJECT
10:00 A.M. April 21, 2010
VFW MEETING ROOM
APPROVED MINUTES**

1. The hearing on the Upper Becker Project was held at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday April 21, 2010, at the VFW meeting room in Ada, Minnesota. Managers in attendance included Diane Ista, Joe Spaeth, Greg Holmvik, Joe Spaeth and Dean Spaeth. Absent: Duane Erickson and John Austinson. In addition the following persons were in attendance: Administrator Tom Wollin, Assistant Administrator Loretta Johnson, Attorney Hanson, Engineer Jerry Bents, and interested landowners.
2. Chairman Christensen called the hearing to order at 10:15 a.m.
3. Attorney Hanson gave the opening presentation stating that the purpose of the hearing today is for the establishment of the Upper Becker Project. Hanson stated that the initially the local share of funding was intended to be through a Water Management District (WMD), however the Watershed District decided to drop the WMD and fund the local share through the Red River Construction Account. He stated that the meeting today is to consider evidence and testimony and make a decision to either establish a project that is conducive to public health and promotes public welfare and is compliant with the District's Water Management Plan or deny the project.
4. Engineer Bents gave a PowerPoint presentation describing the background of the project. Bents stated that the original cost estimate was \$10.6 Million, however with the increase in land cost the latest estimate may be up to \$11.5 Million. Bents stated that because of the possible availability of outside funding, the local project cost is estimated at \$1.1-1.2 Million dollars.
5. Following Engineer Bents presentation, members of the audience were given the opportunity to give testimony. Following are a few of the comments. Riceville Township's included their opposition due to the fact that they had road issues, and felt that their area already had two dams. Bill Zurn asked if the Board was going to make a decision today due to all board members not being at the meeting. Attorney Hanson stated that was a board decision. Wally Eid, Mahnomen County Commissioner, stated that their county's resolution regarding opposition to the project was for the Water Management District, not the project itself. Mr. Zurn asked if Manager John Austinson had an interest in the dam. Also brought up by the public was the fact that Manager Erickson may have a conflict of interest due to ownership or rental of land in the area. Eric Zurn stated that if this project goes forward, he will be forced out of business. Tom Bergren commented that if the District uses all of its funds from the Red River Construction to build this project, will they have funds to build another one. Clay County Commissioner, Wayne Ingersoll, stated that he was not in favor or against this dam, but asked if there were funds set aside for long term maintenance.

Bill Zurn expressed concerns about living downstream of the dam and the fear of overtopping and destroying the dam due to a large storm event. Norman County Commissioner and landowner, Steve Jacobson stated that he felt it was a start of flood retention, he too, would be paying taxes on his land for the project, but felt it was needed. Mark Harless, landowner, stated that this was a start; flood control is needed, and felt that Managers should proceed.

There being no further testimony given, consensus of Managers was to not make a decision without the full board present.

A **motion** was made by Manager Ista and **seconded** by Manager J Spaeth to recess the hearing until 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 12, 2010, at the District office. **Carried.** Chairman Christensen recessed the hearing at 12:00 noon.

John Austinson, Secretary