

WILD RICE WATERSHED DISTRICT

11 Fifth Avenue East

Ada, MN 56510

Special Meeting Minutes

February 28, 2008

APPROVED MINUTES

1. A special meeting of the Wild Rice Watershed District Board of Managers was held February 28, 2008. Managers in attendance: Diane Ista, Jim Wagner, Joe Spaeth, Mike Christensen, Bob Wright and Warren Seykora. Absent: Dave Vipond. In addition the following were in attendance: Elroy Hanson, Steve Dalen, Loretta Johnson and members of the audience, including Curt Jacobson, Steve Jacobson, Duane Erickson, Margo & Ray Hanson, Brian Borgen, Rhoda Habedank, Jim Ellefson, Chris Erickson, Duane Erickson and Terry Guttormson. Chairman Seykora called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

2. A motion was made by Manager Spaeth and seconded by Manager Wagner to approve the agenda as distributed. Carried.

3. Project No. 16. A motion was made by Manager Ista and seconded by Manager Wagner to set a Hearing Date for the repair of Project #16 for 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 11, 2008, at the District office. Carried.

4. WRDA Bill Appropriation Process. A conference call was held with the following on line attendees: Robin Goracke, Aid to Congressman Peterson; Brenda Elmer, Aid to Senator Coleman; Judy DesHarnais and Chris Erickson, COE; Dennis Neuland, Clearwater County; Jerry Bents, Engineer Houston Engineering.

A list of policy questions for Goracke and DesHarnais was distributed. DesHarnais reviewed the study process, which is the reanalysis of a previously completed study, using current planning criteria and policies, made necessary by changed conditions and/or assumptions. The six step planning process includes: 1) identifying problems and opportunities; 2) inventorying and forecasting conditions; 3) formulating alternative plans; 4) evaluating alternative plans; 5) comparing alternative plans and 6) selecting a plan. The results of the study are then documented in a General Reevaluation Report (GRR). The typical timeline is 1) appropriation signed – 3 months; 2) develop PMP/PCA 3-9 months; 3) draft report – 12-18 months; 4) final report – 6-9 months; 5) review and approve report – 6-12 months; 6) design 1-2 years; 7) construction 2-4 years. (The time is for each individual step, not cumulative.)

Goracke stated that whatever the decision that the COE makes, (although the outcome could be not to build anything), it is a directive and the funding or partial funding is there to act out the report. She also stated that the language also says after the study of the project is authorized, the COE still needs to go through the entire process. The appropriations would come through the Energy and Water Committee and subcommittee in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Goracke felt that she had all the information that she needed from the District but would like a letter of confirmation that the District wants Congressman Peterson to continue the process.

Judy DesHarnais stated that permits to do the work would be needed from the DNR and they have strong concerns about high hazard dams.

Ray Hanson expressed his concerns of opposition regarding the building of the dam, but DesHarnais stated that a public review by the COE would be in the planning. Margo Hanson stated that at the District's Twin Valley Public Meeting, she felt that there was no public support for the dam. Goracke stated that she knows that Congressman Peterson has had calls and letters both pro and con, but through the study process, if the determination is that the dam is not feasible, it will be put to rest. She stated that she understands that this is controversial and that is why the public review is included in the process.

Curt Jacobson stated that as a member of the Twin Valley Dam Steering Committee, they felt that this project is at the crossroads that hasn't been since 1987, and the Watershed District has an opportunity for construction funds that could solve the problem of flooding in the District. Jacobson stated that if opponents can give an option for flood control that will do as much as the Twin Valley Dam, it would be supported. Jacobson stated that engineering has done a factual study of hydroelectric power at the site and it would have the ability to produce electricity for 1,300 people. Jacobson also talked about the energy, recreation and flood control aspects of the proposed dam. Jacobson stated that Jeff LeDoux, has prepared a short PowerPoint presentation on the Twin Valley Dam and hydroelectric and economic development that could be a part of this, that will be shown at the upcoming Concerned Citizens Annual Meeting. He hopes to meet with the North Dakota delegation of Senators Dorgan and Conrad and/or staff for the story of the Twin Valley Reevaluation because they are also a part of it.

Engineer Bents stated that even if both projects (Project #42 and the Twin Valley Dam) were in place, the flooding would be drastically reduced, but there would still be flooding. Dean Neuland questioned where the local funding would come from. He stated that Clearwater County does not have flooding but does have concerns about the funding.

LeeAnn Hall arrived at 11:15 a.m.

A motion was made by Manager Wagner and seconded by Manager Christensen to submit correspondence to Congressman Collin Peterson requesting him to continue working on the Twin Valley Dam Reevaluation to include a 75/25 cost share. Carried. Letters of Support were discussed. Curt Jacobson asked the District to contact the RRWMB and the RRBB and request support letters from both agencies. A motion was made by Manager Ista and seconded by Manager Wright authorizing staff to move ahead and obtain letters of support from the Red River Basin Board and Red River Management Board and those cities and counties that would be of assistance in getting appropriations. Carried.

5. Open Meeting Law. Attorney Hanson discussed the open meeting law and how it pertains to Committee Meetings. Steve Jacobson asked if the Steering Committee is allowed to meet without notice. Hanson stated no, there needs to be at least a three day notice, posted on the door. Hanson also discussed the fact that the board or committee may not have a meeting outside the territorial boundaries of the Watershed District, however one board member can be designated to attend.

6. Board Direction. Administrator Dalen distributed a handout with solutions and suggestions to address board issues. Items included a strong chairman and respect for the chair and Managers out of direction. Jim Wagner asked what can be done when a board member actively campaigns against the District. Attorney Hanson stated that you are free to speak however you feel, even though the Board doesn't agree with your ideas. Dalen suggested Managers meet with County Boards and ask for assistance in seeking a solution. He felt that the Board needs to stand together as a team and cannot continue to work in the current condition. There needs to be 100% board support; board members cannot be going out and representing their own interests. Dalen stated it is a conflict of interest. Steve Jacobson suggesting rotation of the chairman of the board and felt that changing the chair would bolster public perception, to which LeeAnn Hall agreed. Seykora asked how to make sure the board speaks with one voice. Wright agreed with concerns, and suggested speaking out when the issue is discussed at the board table if you don't agree; he would be very reluctant in being against a board decision.

7. There being no further business to come before the Board of Managers, Chairman Seykora adjourned the meeting.

Diane Ista, Secretary