

Pursuant to notice and due call, a regular meeting of the Upper Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers was held Tuesday March 12, 2024 at the district office located at 211 2nd Street SE in Ortonville, MN. Board members present were Radermacher, Holker, Meyer, Gillespie and Bork. Executive Director of the UMRWD, Amber Doschadis, facilitated the meeting with President Holker. Luke Olson BWSR Board Conservationist, Wade Athey Big Stone County Commissioner, along with Dennis McAlpine and Lisa Odens of Houston Engineering were present for the meeting. John Kolb of Rinke Noonan attended the meeting via phone call. There were no members of the public present during this meeting.

Holker called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Minutes and Expenses

A motion was made by Bork, seconded by Radermacher to approve minutes from the previous meeting, as well as authorize payment of submitted expenses, as presented by Doschadis. Motion Carried: 5-0

Ortonville Independent. Subscription	\$40.00
Discover. Office Supplies, Drainage Conf and MWs Legislative Event	\$880.10
Houston Engineering # 69731 BV Fish Passage	\$3,132.00
Houston Engineering # 69433 Whetstone	\$8,838.50

Browns Valley

1. Diversion Mechanism for Maintenance Lisa Odens presented on HEIs progress with creating a benefited property determination report for the Little Minnesota River Floodway (Browns Valley Diversion Project). The board discussed options for identifying benefits and assigning values to those benefits. Ultimately the board agreed that an Informational Meeting would be beneficial to gather landowner input on the effort. A motion was made by Bork, seconded by Meyer to schedule a Public Informational Meeting to discuss flood mitigation projects that have previously been constructed to protect the City of Browns Valley from flooding, the benefits and maintenance costs of these project components, as well as the purpose, components, and benefits of potential future project components. Motion Carried: 5-0

2. Diversion Sediment Removal. Odens updated the board on Houston’s billed time do date. Additional engineering support was needed when responding to FEMA’s requests for information and engineers’ justification for the work proposed on the MN side of the sediment cleanout. Doschadis reviewed the contract requirements for Joe Riley Construction with the board and John Kolb noted his legal review would be complete soon. A motion was made by Meyer, seconded by Bork directing Doschadis to execute the contract with Joe Riley Construction, pending receipt of the legal review. Motion Carried: 5-0

3. Haying Lease Review. Doschadis reports that the sediment cleanout to be completed this year offers a level of communication between URMWD and the holder of the hay lease. A motion was made by Bork, seconded by Radermacher approving Doschadis to extend the hay lease with the current lease holder for 2024 at \$2,250 if he is interested. Motion Carried: 5-0

4. Spray Ditch in town. With the upcoming weather forecast Doschadis will coordinate with a spraying company in late April.

5. Toelle Coulee. Doschadis reports that she is working on bonding bill wording changes with Representative Backer and MN MMB/ DNR Staff. Once funding is secured in a grant, UMRWD will need to work with landowners and engineering to identify necessary project features to accomplish the goals of the locals.

Whetstone River Restoration

1. Project Update was given by Houston Engineering and Rinke Noonan. Dennis McAlpine discussed the ongoing waste coordination with Big Stone County. The Board agreed to move forward with Big Stone County Environmental to satisfy local permitting requirements. Currently there is no need to involve MPCA in this voluntary cleanup effort. Doschadis will work with HEI, BSC and reach out to the previous landowners to discuss project extents and cost estimated as they are developed.

Terry Gillespie left the meeting at 10:30 am

Beardsley Dry Lake

1. Update - Houston Engineering. Odens provided and updated on their draft report that reviews the initial project and explores alternative options for repairing or replacing the failing system. Doschadis will reach out to landowners along an alternative route identified by HEI to gage their interest.

2. Coordination with Representative Anderson. Doschadis explained the significant difference in costs since the City's initial request through bonding. The Engineers Review of the entire system shows cracking, spalling, and settling throughout the entire system. It is in the project's best interest to seek additional funding to repair or replace the entire system. The alternative route, if viable may offer a cost savings as the bury depths would be significantly shallower than the current system.

Upper Big Stone Lake

Resiliency Grant. Odens gave a brief overview of the future grant work plan. Doschadis reported the MPCA hasn't returned a grant agreement, but work can begin as soon as we are in an agreement. A motion was made by Radermacher, seconded by Bork to approve the submitted HEI task order, pending the finalization of a grant with MPCA. Motion Carried: 5-0

One Watershed, One Plan

1. BWSR Review. Board meeting is scheduled for March 27th.

DNR Public Waters Work General Permit 1997-4241. Kolb had no legal concerns with the agreement. Board had previously approved, pending legal review. Doschadis will coordinate with DNR staff on any other changes they may have to the GP before determining if the board should review again.

Administrator's Report

Discussion took place on David Botker's permit # 25-23. Doschadis reported that the Stotesberry's expressed general concern with the tiling project. She explained the applicant's revisions from the initial permit submitted in 2023, and that the applicant is complying with the Engineer's suggestions along with the applicants right through MN statute to improve drainage on their property.

Discussion took place on Lynn Lovgren's permit # 8-24. Doschadis reported that Calvin Leuthardt came into the office to express concern with additional seepage lines into the existing tile that outlets towards his property. Doschadis explained the applicants right through MN statute to improve drainage on their property.

Both of these permits were approved by the board as part of the Administrator's Report.

A motion was made by Meyer, seconded by Bork to approve the Administrator's Report as presented. Motion Carried: 5-0

UPCOMING EVENTS

UMRWD Regular Meeting – April 9, 2024 – 9:00 a.m.

UMRWD Regular Meeting – May 14, 2024 – 9:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Amber Doschadis, Administrator

Gene Meyer, Secretary