

Pursuant to notice and due call, a regular meeting of the Upper Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers was held Tuesday April 8, 2025, at the district office located at 211 2nd Street SE Ortonville, MN. Board members present were Sandberg, Gillespie, Holker, Bork and Sheridan Giese as Meyer's appointed replacement. Executive Director of the UMRWD, Amber Doschadis assisted with the meeting in coordination with President Wanda Holker.

Members of the public present were Lisa Odens and Dennis McAlpine from Houston Engineering; and Big Stone County Commissioner Wade Athey.

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

Swift County

Sheridan Giese was appointed by the Swift County Commissioners to replace Gene Meyer in his retirement from the UMRWD Board of Managers. Giese signed the bond and oath of office. Travis Sandberg will fill the Secretary role, previously held by Meyer.

Minutes and Expenses

A motion to approve the previous month's meeting minutes and current expenses was made by Bork, seconded by Gillespie. Motion carried: 5-0.

Houston Engineering	# 75416 Whetstone Waste	\$19,564.25
Houston Engineering	# 75633 Whetstone Restoration Efforts	\$8,988.50
LMCIT	PandC Coverage Premium	\$2,980.00
Big Stone Highway	Dry lake - clean inlet	\$24.72
ESRI	2025 Subscription	\$200.00
Houston Engineering	#75255. Climate Resiliency Upper Big Stone Lake	\$2,992.00
Houston Engineering	#75253 BV Toelle Coulee	\$25,629.25
Houston Engineering	#75254 BV Flood Diversion Benefits	\$7,007.50
ProWest	BV Diversion Flood Benefits. Trav County Parcel Report	\$461.28
Gazette Publishing	Hay Lease Ad	\$336.60

CenBank and MinnWest

A motion was made by Holker, seconded by Sandberg to update signature cards, removing Gene Meyer and adding Sheridan Giese to the CenBank and MinnWest accounts. Motion carried: 5-0.

DNR General Permit #1997

Historically, UMRWD issued permits in coordination with the DNR for projects on Big Stone Lake that qualify under the DNR's "no permit necessary" criteria. In recent years, this process has become redundant, raising questions about jurisdiction between DNR and UMRWD regulations. UMRWD General permits were typically only issued for work above the DNR's Ordinary High Water Level (OHWL) on Big Stone Lake or when there was a demonstrated need for riprap below the OHWL. Moving forward, if landowners meet DNR's "no permit necessary" criteria and are working with the county on shoreland regulations, no additional UMRWD permit would be required. A motion to terminate the agreement with DNR, asking the DNR to act independently on permits was made by Bork and seconded by Gillespie. Motion carried: 5-0.

DNR Public Waters

The DNR is developing a county-by-county update process that will involve technical analysis by hydrologists using the best available technology. No timeline has been set for the counties that encompass the UMRWD boundary.

Administrators Report

A motion was made by Gillespie, seconded by Sandberg to approve the Administrators report as submitted.

Motion Carried: 4-0 with Holker abstaining.

MN Watersheds Special Meeting

After discussion UMRWD Board Managers didn't have any resolutions to bring back to the association.

Browns Valley

Lisa Odens presented on the Benefitted Property Determination Report for Browns Valley, Diversion Project. Discussion took place on the process of defining benefits for the Diversion Project, and the board asked HEI to hold off on defining damages until after the public meeting. A motion to approve the report as submitted pending any legally required revisions was made by Bork, seconded by Gillespie. Motion Carried: 5-0

A public meeting will be held on June 26th.

Diversion – 2023 Disaster Appeal

Doschadis reviewed MN FEMA's response to our appeal. A partial payment, based off the original engineer's estimate has been offered. Doschadis explained that because the original estimate was high and our bids came in lower, this payment will cover all costs on the MN side where the appeal was required. A motion to approve the partial payment offer from FEMA was made by Gillespie, seconded by Bork. Motion Carried: 5-0

Diversion Hay Lease

Doschadis presented one bid for haying lease on the Browns Valley Diversion Property. A motion to award the lease at \$3,100 a year pending landowner review was made by Bork, seconded by Holker. Motion Carried: 5-0

Toelle Coulee Phase 2

Lisa Odens gave an update on the Alternative Analysis for Toelle Coulee Phase 2. Doschadis will wait for a draft report before contacting landowners who are noted on the list of potential projects.

Beardsley Dry Lake

Additional Services Request was presented by Dennis McAlpine for work on the Resiliency and Flood Modeling Results. A motion to approve the additional expense was made by Bork, seconded by Sandberg.

Motion Carried: 5-0

Upper Big Stone Lake

Climate Resiliency Study update was given by Lisa Odens. Doschadis will coordinate with the local government offices and landowners identified for potential projects.

Whetstone

Dennis McAlpine and Lisa Odens explained the ongoing coordination with USACE staff on modeling of downstream impacts.

Waste Remediation Project was outlined by Dennis McAlpine. A motion was made by Bork to post the project for public bid, pending a few minor revisions as required by Big Stone County, motion was seconded by Holker.

Motion Carried: 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Amber Doschadis, Administrator

Travis Sandberg, Secretary