

May 13, 2025

Pursuant to notice and due call, a regular meeting of the Upper Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers was held Tuesday May 13, 2025, at the district office located at 211 2nd Street SE Ortonville, MN. Board members present were Gillespie, Holker, Bork and Giese. 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 (via phone) from Houston Engineering; Chad Gillespie (via phone) from Traverse County; Luke Olson from BWSR and Big Stone County Commissioner Wade Athey.

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

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: 4-0.

League of MN	work comp insurance	\$547.00
Houston Engineering	# 75745 Dry Lake Outlet	\$16,486.32
Rinke Noonan	#391442 Browns Valley	\$1,305.50
Houston Engineering	# 75664 BV Toelle Coulee Phase 2	\$4,471.50
Houston Engineering	# 75848 Waste, Whetstone	\$7,165.50
Houston Engineering	# 76009 Whetstone Restoration Efforts	\$6,684.25
Houston Engineering	# 76139 Big Stone Lake Resiliency Planning	\$14,264.50
Houston Engineering	# 76138 Browns Valley Fish Passage	\$2,262.00
MPCA	Whetstone, Zero Interest Loan Payment #3	\$21,262.65
Cutting Edge	Retirement plaque	\$38.00

Browns Valley

The Benefitted Property Determination for Browns Valley Diversion Project was presented for final review. A motion was made by Bork, seconded by Holker to file the revised Engineer's Report, which now includes an Appraiser's Review, completed by Houston Engineering. A Public Hearing on the establishment of benefits for the Browns Valley Diversion Project will be held on June 26, 2025 at 5:30pm at the Browns Valley American Legion. Motion carried: 4-0.

Toelle Coulee Phase 2

The Draft Toelle Coulee Alternative Analysis was presented by Lisa Odens. Lisa reviewed the 100-year flood history for Browns Valley, MN and identified the area impacted by flooding via the Toelle Coulee and historic design constraints that may have impacted the 1960's flood event of record. From the original report, HEI considered three additional options for providing flood protection to the area of impact. The board agreed that the first step should be reaching out to the landowners that the District would need to coordinate with in order to provide flood protect to the City, additionally HEI will initiate a conversation with MN DNR on dam safety as several project alternatives include structures that could be considered dams.

Upper Big Stone Lake

Climate Resiliency Study, areas for future projects have been identified and vetted through the local partnership, the final report is in progress. Lisa Odens will attend a future meeting to provide project closeout details.

Whetstone

Waste Remediation Project has been posted on QuestCDN. A motion was made by Gillespie seconded by Bork, to enter into an access agreement with the G and C Hedge FLP for temporary access off South Dakota County Road 39. Motion carried: 4-0. This alternative access will provide mutually beneficial access to the waste remediation site.

Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

Doschadis presented a proposed shoreline restoration project within the Lower Big Stone Lake subwatershed. Although the project lies just outside of a designated high-priority planning area, it offers a valuable opportunity to demonstrate effective shoreline restoration practices on Big Stone Lake. The proposed design incorporates a combination of riprap and native vegetation.

The landowner has committed to covering 50% of the total project cost. Big Stone SWCD will contribute local capacity funds and is requesting the remaining \$3,153.33 from the CWMP Grant to cover the remaining expenses. To support this, a revision to the current workplan will be necessary specifically, reallocating funds from the "Structural BMPs – Agricultural Practices" category to a newly created "Streambank/Shoreland Protection" category.

The landowner has also granted permission for Big Stone SWCD to document the restoration process. This documentation will support future outreach and educational efforts, promoting a holistic approach to shoreline restoration within the Upper Minnesota River Watershed.

A motion was made by Bork, seconded by Giese approving the Big Stone SWCD's request for grant funds. Doschadis will work with Luke Olson, BWSR BC to revise the workplan. Motion carried: 4-0.

Beardsley Dry Lake

The MPCA responded that our Stormwater Implementation Grant request was not successful in receiving funding. There were 45 proposals asking for approx. \$73 million. Doschadis will follow the grant program to see if they open another round of funding in the future, likewise the information collected for this grant can be used for future applications to different programs.

Administrators Report

A motion was made by Holker, seconded by Gillespie to approve the report as submitted. Motion carried: 4-0.

Discussion took place on the Minnesota Watershed's Summer Tour. Managers will look at their schedules and let Doschadis know if they are able to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 pm.

Amber Doschadis, Administrator

Travis Sandberg, Secretary