

RED LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT
Board of Manager's Minutes
April 13, 2023

President, Dale M. Nelson, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District Office, Thief River Falls, MN.

Present: Managers: Dale M. Nelson, Gene Tiedeman, Terry Sorenson, Tom Anderson, LeRoy Ose, Brian Dwight, and Allan Page. Staff Present: Myron Jesme, Tammy Audette, and Legal Counsel, Delray Sparby.

The Board reviewed the agenda. A motion was made by Page, seconded by Ose, and passed by unanimous vote that the Board approve the agenda as printed. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the March 23, 2023, minutes. A motion by Sorenson, seconded by Anderson, to approve the March 23, 2023, Board meeting as presented. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the Financial Report dated April 12, 2023. Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Ose, to approve the Financial Report dated April 12, 2023, as presented. Motion carried.

Administrator Jesme updated the Board on recent impoundment activity due to the Spring flood event, stating that District staff have been monitoring impoundments daily. Local contractors were hired to remove snow from problem areas on the Black River Impoundment and Euclid East Impoundment. Elm Lake/Farmes Pool and Lost River Pool drainage areas had over 4" of moisture content in the snow, which triggers the District to request additional operation to release water at both impoundments to allow for spring runoff. Jesme indicated that the gage on Highway 89 increased substantially, so District staff is currently enroute to the Moose River Impoundment to determine any changes that may need to be made. Manager Ose stated that he was at Elm Lake/Farmes Pool yesterday, requesting that the District pull additional stoplogs to get rid of early water, noting that the two impoundments will be able to capture water when it is released from the Moose River Impoundment to replenish their pools. Jesme indicated that we are operating Farmes Pool/Elm Lake structure in accordance with the operating plan. There were also concerns from James Graham, Agassiz NWR, that the gate on Farmes Pool does not seal well, so the gate may need to be replaced.

The Board reviewed the snow survey map completed by District staff as of April 6, 2023.

Northern State Agency notified the District, that they currently do not have an agent to process the District's League of Minnesota Cities policy, therefore North Risk Partners has agreed to manage processing of the insurance. Administrator Jesme stated that Northern State Agency receives a 2% brokerage fee, whereas North Risk Partners requires a 10% brokerage fee. Both agencies are the only two in this area that are authorized by the League of Minnesota Cities to broker their insurance. North Risk Partners agreed, for this time, to remain at the 2% brokerage fee. The District will monitor if/when Northern State Agency has a new agent. Motion by Ose,

seconded by Anderson, to approve transferring the District's League of Minnesota Cities policy to North Risk Partners. Motion carried.

Administrator Jesme stated that there was good landowner attendance at the Turtle-Connection-Cross Lakes landowners meeting held on April 13, 2023 at the Embassy in Fosston. Various landowners would like to see the elevation raised on Turtle Lake, with one landowner against it. Jesme indicated that Minnesota shoreline laws are: if you want to raise the lake elevation, you must have 100% landowner approval. A questionnaire was given to the landowners, so we are hoping to receive some feedback. Jesme will present additional information at the next Board meeting.

Engineers, Dillion Nelson, and Nate Dalager, HDR Engineering, Inc., stated that permits have been submitted for Phase 2 of the Pine Lake Project, RLWD Project No. 26B, which will replace the culvert downstream of the Pine Lake Outlet Structure. Once all agencies have had a chance to comment, the Final Plans and Specifications will be put out for bids. Nelson indicated that the end construction date will be August 2024, due to the availability of the box culvert.

The District was notified that the Fladeland Ring Dike, RLWD Project No. 129AX was awarded \$77,750, and the Beich Ring Dike, RLWD Project No. 129AY, was awarded \$80,000 through the MnDNR from a LCCMR Grants program. Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Page, to approve the development of the Plans and Specifications for the Fladeland Ring Dike, RLWD Project No. 129AX and the Beich Ring Dike, RLWD Project No. 129AY. Motion carried.

It was noted that the Red Lake River 1W1P, RLWD Project No. 149, 2020 Watershed Based Funding grant is completed and closed out.

Motion by Ose, seconded by Dwight to table the following permits for further review: No. 23021, Knute Knutson, Gervais Township, Red Lake County; No. 23022, Zavod Zuprod, Badger Township, Polk County; No. 23023 and 23024, Erik Roed, Hill River Township, Polk County; No. 23025, MnDOT, Polk County; No. 23026, Pam Paradis, Poplar River Township, Red Lake County; No. 23027, Brandon Maygra, Kertsonville Township, Polk County; No. 23028, Clearwater County Highway Department, Leon Township, Clearwater County; No. 23029, Richard Vraa, Goodridge Township, Pennington County; No. 23030, Kolstoe Farms, Garnes Township, Red Lake County; and No. 23031, Curt Johnson, Star Township, Pennington County. Motion carried.

Administrator Jesme indicated that currently the District's health insurance benefits are not effective for new employees until 30 days of employment. Jesme requested changing the District's policy to include insurance coverage effective the first day of employment. Motion by Page, seconded by Tiedemann, to approve changing the District's insurance benefit to become effective the first day of full-time employment with the District. Motion carried.

Administrator Jesme noted that the District has received a certification of compliance for the 2022 Pay Equity Report as required by the MN Management and Budget.

Manager Sorenson discussed the application process and interview process for the Natural Resource Technician position with the recommendation of hiring Lindsey Kallis at a Step 1 pay scale level. Administrator Jesme stated that her fulltime employment date will be June 1, 2023, but that she is available to help out on a part-time status as she finishes college. Motion by Dwight, seconded by Sorenson, to approve hiring of Lindsey Kallis for the Natural Resource Technician position at a Step 1 pay scale level, plus benefits. Motion carried.

Administrators update:

- Jesme and Manager Ose will participate in the RRWMB meeting on April 18, 2023.
- Jesme will participate in the Drainage Workgroup (DWG) meeting on April 24, 2023 in Alexandria.
- There will be a Mud River Steering Committee meeting held on April 14, 2023 with a Project Team meeting on April 21, 2023.
- A Clearwater River 1W1P Policy Committee meeting was held on March 29, 2023 in Bagley. 50% of the Watershed Based Implementation Grant in the amount of \$487,363 was received, so we are officially able to start working on the implementation of the plan.
- The Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P Policy Committee will meet on April 17, 2023 at the Red Lake DNR office. The agenda for the meeting was included in the packet.
- Included in the packet was a City of TRF Municipal Power Dam Hydroelectric Stakeholder comment letter regarding licensing of the dam.
- Staff member Hanson will be participating in a Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG) Training hosted by the MPCA on April 19, 2023.
- Included in the packet was a Minnesota Watersheds Legislative update.

Manager Dwight indicated that the legislature has included a bill for the “Keep It Clean” campaign.

President Nelson read a letter presented by Administrator Jesme, informing the Board of his retirement effective June 30, 2023. Motion by Sorenson, seconded by Tiedemann, to accept the letter of retirement from Administrator Myron Jesme, effective June 30, 2023. Motion carried. The Board thanked Jesme for his years of service to the District, wishing him the best in retirement.

Legal Counsel Sparby received notice that a decision will be received by 10:00 a.m. on April 17, 2023, regarding the District’s Appeal for the Improvement to Polk County Ditch 39, RLWD Project No. 179.

Motion by Ose, seconded by Dwight, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.



LeRoy Ose, Secretary