

RED LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT  
Board of Manager's Minutes  
March 12, 2026

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

Present: Managers: Gene Tiedemann, Tom Anderson, Brian Dwight, Grant Nelson, LeRoy Ose, and Allan Page; Terry Sorenson participated via Zoom. Staff Present: Tammy Audette, Melissa Bushy, Elaine Rychlock, Corey Hanson, Lindsey Deselich, and Legal Counsel, Delray Sparby.

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

The Board reviewed the February 26, 2026, Board meeting minutes. Motion by Nelson, seconded by Page, to approve the February 26, 2026, Board meeting minutes. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the Financial Report as of March 11, 2026. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Dwight, to approve the Financial Report as of March 11, 2026. Motion carried.

Administrator Audette and staff member, Corey Hanson, discussed the Upper/Lower Red Lake 1W1P 2026 Annual Workplan and lake assessment on Blackduck Lake.

The Board reviewed a detailed short form agreement from Karvakko Engineering, Inc. representing the City of Northome regarding the Northome Stormwater Projects for the Upper Lower Red Lake 1W1P, RLWD Project No. 149C. After much discussion, a motion was made by Dwight, seconded by Anderson to approve the agreement with Karvakko Engineering, Inc. for the Upper Lower Red Lake 1W1P, RLWD Project No. 149C. Motion carried.

Administrator Audette and staff member, Elaine Rychlock, reviewed additional recommended 2025 Admin Construction Transfers. Motion by Nelson, seconded by Ose, to approve the 2025 Admin Construction Transfers as updated. Motion carried.

Administrator Audette reviewed the 2026 March Snapshot article that BWSR did on Chief's Coulee, RLWD Project No. 46S, Audette also played the video recording that was done relating to the project.

Administrator Audette reviewed the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Fund availability in relation to Mud River, RLWD Project No. 180C. The Mud River Project was granted an additional \$40,000 due to additional funding for a total of funding package of \$2,957,000.

Nate Dalager, HDR Engineering, Inc., reviewed the Findings of Fact and Conclusions for the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for Turtle Connection Cross, RLWD Project No. 114. A motion was made by Anderson, seconded by Page to approve the Findings of Fact and Conclusions Motion carried.

Administrator Audette discussed the Client Services Agreement with Houston Engineering Inc. for the upcoming BWSR District Assessment in the amount of \$10,000. Audette noted that this amount is being funded through BWSR. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Page, to approve the the Client Services Agreement with Houston Engineering Inc. for the upcoming BWSR District Assessment. Motion carried.

Administrator Audette provided an update from the recent SD 83/Thief River Area Flooding Concerns Project Team meeting held on March 11, 2026.

Administrator Audette discussed Houston Avenue in Crookston. The Red Lake River has been eroding its banks in the backyards of Houston Avenue residents, with the flood of 2022 making the erosion worse. Landowners approached RLWD for an initial inspection of the area in 2023. Audette stated the RLWD is interested in dealing with the erosion problems, though currently, it is not feasible due to the homes being so close to the banks. Audette spoke to several legislative members during the RRWMB/MN Watersheds event last week. Audette also reminded the Board that the RRWMB lobbyist are assisting at the capital.

Adminsitrator Audette discussed the research completed by Lindsay Pease, UMC, on a drainage study within the Red River Basin. Pease is looking for funding in the amount of \$15,000 to continue her research until her grant funding is available. Rob Sip, RRWMB, suggested Pease speak to the RLWD, and have the RLWD put in a request to the RRWMB for Pease. Motion by Ose, seconded by Page, to approve a request to the RRWMB on behalf of Pease for funding for continued research for drainage on the Red River Basin. Motion carried.

Staff member Deselich discussed the 2026 River Watch Forum that was held on February 25th at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, ND.

Administrator Audette reminded the Board of the upcoming RLWD Advisory Committee meeting on Monday, March 16, 2026, at 9 am.

#### **Administrator's Update:**

- **City of Grygla:** A meeting has been scheduled for March 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. with Dave Jones, NRCS, City of Grygla and Zach Thoma, Moore Engineering. It is Administrator Audette's understanding that the NRCS can federally fund a preliminary study for the Grygla flooding issues. Administrator Audette is not able to make the meeting, so Nate Koland will attend in her place. Administrator Audette did speak with Zack Thoma and they briefly discussed the potential of putting together a project team to work through the issues they are having. Dave Jones will be at the RRWMB/FDRWG conference next week, so Administrator Audette plans to visit with him then. Further update will be made after the 19<sup>th</sup>.
- **MN Watersheds/RRWMB:** Administrator Audette attended the RRWMB/MN Watersheds Legislative Conference last week in St. Paul. Audette was able to speak with three legislators regarding the Houston Avenue Project and the Mud River Project. Rob Sip set up meetings with the MnDNR, USCOE and the lobbyist, which was very helpful

to relay some frustrations northern MN watersheds are seeing. It was all a very good learning experience for Administrator Audette.

- **Agassiz NWR/City of TRF:** City of TRF Mayor, Mike Lorensen, reached out to Administrator Audette regarding a meeting/tour with Fischbach and Klobuchar's office on May 7<sup>th</sup> regarding the City of TRF drinking water intake and water releases from Agassiz NWR. The cost to move the intake is approximately \$15 million. Lorensen is looking for other options vs. moving the intake.
- **Vacation:** Administrator Audette will be on vacation March 31-April 3<sup>rd</sup>, but will be available for phone calls, text messages, or virtual meetings.
- **Brule Streambank:** A meeting had been scheduled for this afternoon with Sonny Brule and his renter, Terry Funk, regarding the Brule Streambank Project. Due to the weather forecast, the meeting will be rescheduled for later this month. District staff will keep the Board updated.
- **Red Lake River 1W1P:** The RLWD is working on setting up a meeting for a Streambank Stabilization Project north of the Huot/Brule sites on the Red Lake/Polk County line. District staff will keep the Board informed of the meeting date.
- **Thief River 1W1P:** Audette participated in the Thief River 1W1P Policy Committee meeting on March 9<sup>th</sup>, where the Mid-Point grant minor plan amendment was reviewed.
- **JD21/JD 11 Joint Meeting:** RLWD staff will participate in a Joint Ditch meeting on March 30<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. in Grygla. It is planned to discuss the restoration of the JD 21/Moose River system to the Joint Board.

Motion by Dwight, seconded by Page, to recess the meeting to the March 16, 2026, RLWD Advisory Board Committee meeting at the RLWD office, 1000 Pennington Avenue South, Thief River Falls, MN beginning at 9:00 am. Motion carried.



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LeRoy Ose, Secretary