

RED LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT
Board of Manager's Minutes
February 26, 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.

Managers present in person: Gene Tiedemann, Tom Anderson, Al Page, Brian Dwight, and LeRoy Ose. Manager(s) present virtually: Terry Sorenson. Staff Present: Tammy Audette, Melissa Bushy, Elaine Rychlock, Lindsey Deselich, Erick Huseeth, Tony Olson, Corey Hanson, and Legal Counsel, Delray Sparby.

Note: Manager Sorenson was present via Zoom to observe the meeting proceedings, however, he expressed he would not be present as a voting member.

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

The Board reviewed the January 22, 2026, Board meeting minutes. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Page, to approve the January 22, 2026, Board meeting minutes, with corrections as noted. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the Financial Report dated February 25, 2026. Motion by Page, seconded by Ose, to approve the Financial Report dated February 25, 2026. Motion carried.

Staff member, Elaine Rychlock, reviewed the current Certificate of Deposit rates for the following area banks: Dakota Heritage Bank, Northern State Bank of Thief River Falls, Ultima Bank MN of Fosston, Edward Jones, and American Federal Bank-Fosston. There are two CD's maturing 2/26/26 at Dakota Heritage Bank. After much discussion, a motion was made by Anderson, seconded by Dwight, to re-invest the two maturing CD's (\$500,000 and \$250,000) with Dakota Heritage Bank for twelve months at 4.04%. Motion carried.

Administrator Audette and Tony Nordby, HEI, stated they had met with landowner, Eric Sundberg of Beltrami County, on February 13, 2026, regarding JD21/Moose River, Thief River 1W1P, RLWD Project No. 149A. It was the consensus of the Board that Audette and Nordby meet with additional landowners to determine whether there is interest in the potential restoration of the old JD 21 channel.

Administrator Audette reviewed a financial donation request from the West Polk SWCD for the Area I Envirothon to be held on April 29, 2026, at Rydell Refuge. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Nelson, to approve the requested maximum donation of \$300 to the West Polk SWCD for the Area 1 Envirothon. Motion carried.

Administrator Audette reviewed the letter from The Nature Conservancy outlining their burn plan for the Pembina Trail SNA burn units and a map outlining the watershed district's affected

property. Motion by Nelson, seconded by Dwight, to approve the prescribed burn near Burnham Creek, RLWD Project 43A. Motion carried.

At 9:30 a.m., President Tiedemann paused the regular meeting and called the Polk County Ditch 39 Improvement Hearing, RLWD Project No. 179, to order. President Tiedemann then turned the Hearing over to Legal Counsel Sparby who noted that proper notice had been provided to landowners and also County Ditch 66 landowners. Legal Counsel Sparby explained the purpose of the Hearing was for the consideration of re-appointment and/or direction to update and amend the viewers' report and Engineer's construction estimate. President Tiedemann opened the hearing to the public for any comments or questions. Rich Sanders, Jerry Pribula, Charlie Hotvet, and Kathy Peterson addressed the Board with their questions and/or concerns. Upon receiving no further comments, President Tiedemann closed the Hearing and re-called the regular meeting back in session for Board discussion. After much discussion, a motion was made by Dwight, seconded by Nelson, to re-appoint the viewers to update and amend the viewers' report and for the engineer to update the construction estimate. Motion carried. Once the viewers' report and engineers estimate is updated and filed with the Board, an additional hearing will be scheduled.

Staff member, Corey Hanson, presented two proposals for the 2026 tree planting strategy for the Huot Habitat Improvement and Streambank Stabilization project in Red Lake County and the 2026 tree planting strategy for the 2025 Thief River/SD 83 Streambank Stabilization sites. After much discussion, a motion was made by Page, seconded by Nelson, to approve both proposals. Motion carried, with Manager Ose voting in opposition.

Engineer Nate Dalager, HDR Engineering, Inc., shared with the Board the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) Final Findings for RLWD Project No. 114, Turtle Connection Cross Lakes. Dalager noted that he has reached out to MnDNR staff for their input on comments received during the EAW process.

Torin McCormack, HDR Engineering, gave a JD 4 Peatland Restoration/Wetland Bank Feasibility update to the Board. Motion by Dwight, seconded by Anderson, to approve moving forward with this.

Administrator Audette discussed the proposed Texas crossing replacement on the Lost River, RLWD Project No. 4, between Sections 3 and 4, Lambert Township, Red Lake County. Audette presented a Resolution in support of Lambert Township for a bridge installation in lieu of culvert replacements. After much discussion, a motion was made by Page, seconded by Nelson, to approve the Resolution in support of Lambert Township for replacement of the Texas crossing on the Lost River, RLWD Project No. 4 with a bridge installation. Motion carried.

The Board reviewed permits for approval. Motion by Ose, seconded by Nelson, to approve the following permits with conditions as stated on the permit: No. 25-183, Mitch Mack, Huntsville Township, Polk County. Motion carried.

Administrator Audette and staff member, Rychlock, reviewed the Capital Project Fund Transfers as of December 31, 2025. After much discussion, a motion was made by Dwight, seconded by Ose, to approve the Capital Project Fund Transfers as of December 31, 2025. Motion carried.

Administrator's Report:

- **City of Grygla:** Included in the packet was correspondence from the NRCS regarding the City of Grygla funding request. It appears that the project has been waitlisted, with no timeframe in place. More information to come.
- **RESCHEDULED State Ditch 83 Area Project Team meeting:** A reminder was provided that the next State Ditch 83 Area project team meeting will be held on March 11th at 9:00 a.m.
- **Pay Equity:** The District was notified that the MN Management and Budget approved the submitted District Pay Equity Report.
- **MN Watersheds/RRWMB:** Administrator Audette will be participating in the RRWMB/MN Watersheds Legislative Conference next week.
- **BWSR Workshop Buffer Compliance:** Staff member, Erick Huseth, is planning to participate in the March 24, 2026, BWSR Workshop on buffer compliance.

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



LeRoy Ose, Secretary