

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

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

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. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

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. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

The Board reviewed the Financial Report dated February 11, 2026. Staff member Elaine Rychlock reviewed the current Certificate of Deposit rates for Dakota Heritage Bank, Northern State Bank of Thief River Falls, Ultima Bank MN of Fosston, Edward Jones, and American Federal Bank-Fosston. After much discussion, a motion was made by Ose, seconded by Page, to approve the February 11, 2026, financial report, and to invest the proceeds (\$500,000) from the maturing CD (February 2026) at Northern State Bank of Thief River Falls to Ultima Bank MN of Fosston for twelve months at 3.75%. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Administrator Audette reviewed the draft Pay Equity Report that needs to be submitted every three years. Motion by Dwight, seconded by Page, to approve submittal of the Pay Equity Report as provided. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Administrator Audette reviewed the documentation from the RRWMB regarding the cost-share payments due for USGS Stream Gages. The cost share time period is for the operation of gages from October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026 (FY2026) with the District's share of \$12,319. Motion by Ose, seconded by Anderson, to approve the cost-share payments due. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Administrator Audette and staff member, Erick Huseth, reviewed pictures showing the clearing and snagging efforts to date for State Ditch 83, RLWD Project No. 14. Audette told the Board this is paid by the SD 83 maintenance fund. Audette also discussed the area north of CSAH 6 where Judicial Ditch 21 enters the Thief River. Huseth shared to date the expenses for SD 83 have totaled approximately \$6000 and \$7000 for JD21. Huseth said the JD21 expenses were more as it includes the cost of an incinerator.

Tony Nordby, HEI, told the Board he is working on getting our permit(s) from the USACOE for the Clearwater Riverbank Stabilization, RLWD Project No. 149B. Nordby shared that we are waiting on a USACOE 408 permit approval, as it then triggers a USACOE 404 permit. We did receive the MnDNR permit. Construction is slated for this summer, pending permit approval.

Administrator Audette and Tony Nordby, HEI, will be meeting with landowner, Eric Sundberg of Beltrami County, on February 13, 2026, regarding JD21/Moose River, Thief River 1W1P, RLWD Project No. 149A.

Administrator Audette stated that the RRWMB will submit an LCCMR Grant Application for 10-year Flood Plain Modeling, inquiring if the Burnham Creek Sub-Watershed should be added to the LCCMR Grant Application. The Board consensus was for Audette to move forward with the application.

Nate Dalager, HDR Engineering, Inc., updated the Board on the drainage ditch upstream of the Brandt Impoundment, RLWD Project No. 60D. Dalager recommended that the District complete brushing and snagging at the inlet of the impoundment, beginning at the two box culverts on 250<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW. Dalager further discussed maintenance issues upstream from the box culverts, as the ditch system is full of sediment. Recommendation is to hold an additional landowner meeting for discussion on cleaning the upstream ditch system. Motion by Ose, seconded by Dwight, to clean inlet of the impoundment from 250<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW, and for Administrator Audette to set up an area landowner meeting. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Torin McCormack, HDR Engineering, Inc., will attend the February 26, 2026, Board meeting to present to the Board his findings on JD4 Peatland Restoration, RLWD Project No. 101.

Administrator Audette shared that we have received the grant money to be used for the upcoming BSWR Assessment that will be taking place in the next few months.

Administrator Audette discussed the proposed position of 1W1P Coordinator. This position would be funded and shared by the Red Lake River, Thief River and Clearwater River 1W1P's. After much discussion, the Board verbalized their support, and the consensus was to move forward with the proposed 1W1P role.

Administrator Audette reviewed a proposal for On-Call Engineering Services from HDR Engineering, Inc. The agreement is set for an amount of \$75,000 based upon future tasks and services to be requested by the RLWD. The fees will be billed monthly on a time and materials basis. A motion was made by Ose, seconded by Page to approve the proposal. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Administrator Audette reviewed the estimate from Frontier Precision in the amount of \$5,380.05, for the purchase of a Drone for the Red Lake Watershed District. After much discussion, a motion was made by Dwight, seconded by Anderson, to authorize Audette to purchase the Drone

from Frontier Precision in the amount of \$5,380.05. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

The RRWMB/FDRWG 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint Conference is scheduled for March 17-18, 2026, in Moorhead, MN. Those who wish to attend should contact staff member Bushy.

**Administrator's Report:**

- **MPCA MS4 Permit:** Enclosed in the packet is a letter from the MPCA stating that the District is not subject to regulation under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Stormwater Permit.
- **Red Lake River 1W1P:** The Red Lake River 1W1P Policy Committee meeting was held in the District office, yesterday, February 11, 2026.
- **RRWMB:** Audette will be attending the February 17<sup>th</sup> RRWMB meeting, along with the RRWMB Administrators meeting on February 18<sup>th</sup>. Discussion at the administrators' meeting will be focused on the legislative conference to be held the first week of March. Meetings have been scheduled with the Commissioner of the MnDNR, BWSR, Corps and other various agencies during the legislative event.
- **State Ditch 83 Area Project Team meeting:** Just a reminder that the next State Ditch 83 Area project team meeting will be held on February 18 at 9:00 a.m.
- **State Ditch 83 bank stabilization projects:** Last week, Audette and District staff met with three landowners in planning for the 2026 SD 83 bank stabilization projects. It is my hope to submit a CPL Grant application by next Tuesday.
- **Turtle Connection Cross Lakes Project:** Three easements are left to be attained by the District. MnDNR and Polk County are working on theirs.
- **Houston Avenue-Crookston:** Audette will request assistance of lobbying efforts from the RRWMB for the Houston Avenue Project.

Legal Counsel Sparby shared he is working on the CP Rail issue as it relates to the plugged culvert on County Road 6, east of Challenger Elementary School for the Thief River FDR Project, RLWD Project No. 171A.

Motion by Dwight, seconded by Anderson, to adjourn the meeting. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.



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LeRoy Ose, Secretary