

**Barnes County Water Resource District
PO Box 306
Valley City, ND 58072
845-8508**

Meeting Minutes

December 12, 2022 - 9:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Jerry Hieb, Managers Bruce Anderson (via WebEx), Scott Legge, Dan Buttke, Bret Fehr, Mike Opat, Houston Engineering, Sean Fredricks Ohnstad Twichell (via WebEx), Shawn Olason Barnes County Commissioner.

Chairman Hieb called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

Manager Legge moved to approve the minutes from the Board's meeting on November 14, 2022. Manager Buttke seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

VC Little Dam

Mike reported that we are still in the permit review process; everything is submitted, it could be January or February before we hear back from DWR. He explained an archaeology study has been done on the dam, that will be added to the COE permit application.

NRCS-RCPP Program

Mike summarized the discussion from last meeting with Christie Fisher (NRCS), the Board approved to move forward with two PIFR reports. Mike will work with NRCS staff on a scope to come up with a total budget so agencies have an idea of what their share will be, after that the WRD can start applying for cost share funds. He expects work with NRCS on this will begin in January.

Thordenskjold Drain

Mike reported that he and Chairman Hieb met with the Ransom County Board to discuss benefits to properties in Ransom County. The Board indicated that if the Drain provides benefit to parcels in Ransom County, the Ransom County WRD would not object to inclusion of Ransom parcels in the assessment district. The Ransom Board has no problem with the Barnes County WRD inviting those Ransom landowners to an informational meeting; we will keep the Ransom Board apprised of the date and if they are available, they might attend. Mike suggested focusing on the landowners within the SW quadrant in Barnes Co. along with the potential landowners in Ransom Co. for the informational meeting. The Board will conduct the informational landowner meeting during the regular WRD February meeting, Mike will work with Heather on the notices.

RRJWRD – bank stabilization

Mike reported over thirty plus responses have come in from the online survey, we are currently taking that data and merging it with aerial information and LIDAR. Mike will report on that information in early 2023, from there the Board can engage the stakeholders to see if there is any interest in doing some sort of pilot study or project.

Clausen Springs Dam:

Mike reported that we are still waiting on the official final report from the dam inspection. Mike sent photos and construction plans of the trash rack to Heather, discussion on the Highway Dept. potentially doing the rebuild if time allows. Heather will report back.

Mike suggested setting a time during the January meeting for all interested parties, including DWR, to attend and discuss the EAP updates along with their responsibilities, Mike will work with Heather to go through the list for the invites and get them out. Manager Anderson will contact Joel Lyons about the beaver issue on the discharge side of the dam.

Snagging/Clearing:

Mike reported that we are waiting on the weather and ice to cooperate, when conditions allow, we will coordinate with IBI and proceed with the project.

Manager Anderson reported that he closed Hobart Drain on December 1st, 2022.

NEW BUSINESS**Tomahawk Dam:**

The WRD received correspondence from the DWR on a permit application that was submitted for modifications to Tomahawk Dam. The WRD is not required to provide comments. Mike has reviewed the preliminary plans, the plan is to install box culverts for travel, there were some changes noted with the width of the guard rails for farm equipment. Kurt Tompkins (USFWS) was present to discuss, he mentioned this project has been awarded and they are looking at a potential June 2023 construction date.

2023 Meeting Dates:

The Board reviewed the 2023 meeting schedule. After discussion, Manager Fehr moved to approve the 2023 Meeting Dates. Manager Legge seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Engineer Report

Mike mentioned that the RRJWRD is working on a pilot study that is going to look at a basin wide plan to handle funding for projects. There have been discussions on regrouping and focusing that pilot study on funding for watershed projects that are coming out of NRCS realm like the RCPP program. He explained there is a high likelihood it will head in this direction; this could work in our favor of the two PIFR's we are currently working on. Mike will keep us updated on this. Mike discussed him covering some meetings remotely, the Board trusts his judgement with this.

Commissioner Olauson questioned snagging/clearing with this legislative session, Sean mentioned he feels there is strong support for snagging/clearing from many legislators, but some members of the State Water Commission have questioned funding for these projects.

Legal Report

Sean mentioned the SWC approved changes to their cost-share policy, including elimination of the SWC-mandated engineering selection process. He discussed the two separate bills the Drainage Committee recommended to the legislature; one is an assessment "clean up" bill that the North Dakota WRD Association supports, and the other is a cost-benefit bill that would severely limit the ability of WRDs to construct drains. Sean also reminded the Board that he will be sending out emails to give everyone a heads up during the legislative session.

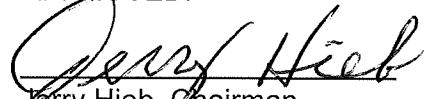
Manager Anderson discussed at the last RRJWRD there was discussion regarding dues based on watersheds. Barnes County's RRJWRD dues will likely increase for 2024 based on Randy Gjestvang's analysis of the Barnes County WRD's James/Red watershed.

Bills

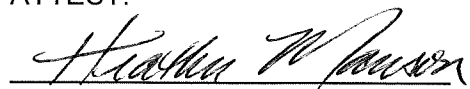
Manager Legge moved to approve the bills as presented. Manager Fehr seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

With nothing further to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:08 a.m.

APPROVED:


Jerry Hieb, Chairman

ATTEST:


Heather Manson, Secretary-Treasurer

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December 12th, 2022

PLEASE SIGN IN BELOW

Shawn O. Larson
KURT TOMPKINS