

MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District Board of Managers
August 1, 2023

The regular meeting of the Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District Board of Managers was called to order at 4:00 p.m. Present were managers Casey Ingenthron, Rolf Mahlberg, Jay Milbrandt and Jeff Rogers. Also present were: Tom Ahlberg, Scott Runck and Tyler Wadzinski, Advisory Committee members; Bob Demuth, county commissioner; Paul Langseth, SWCD supervisor; Kari Lucin, Globe reporter and Dan Livdahl, administrator.

Rogers moved to approve the July board meeting minutes. Ingenthron seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's report and bills payable were discussed. Rogers moved to approve the Treasurer's report and pay the bills. Ingenthron seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Drafts of the Crailsheim pond project temporary construction easement and permanent easement were reviewed. It is unknown if the school district operations committee reviewed the easements in July. Livdahl thinks Todd Ahlquist has what he needs to complete the documents.

Henning Construction will use its brush mower to remove the trees around the Prairie View filter benches for \$300 per hour. It is expected the job will take at least 4 hours. Competing cost estimates or bids are needed from two or more contractors for replacing the sand layer in the filter benches.

The Eden Lakes proposal to install biochar filters in Lake Okabena, Sunset Bay and the Prairie View pond was reviewed. Advisory committee member, Tyler Wadzinski was asked to comment on it by email and at the meeting. He stated his opinion that, while biochar filters may work, there are many factors that determine their effectiveness and the science is not vigorous enough to suggest the proposed filters are likely to improve the lake. The proposal will be discussed further at the September meeting.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Livdahl sprayed and the city mowed thistles at the Prairie View pond site. He also sprayed thistles in Bella Park near the shelters and along the trails.

Okabena had harmful algae blooms on the east end of the lake between July 18th and 23rd. The bloom at Sailboard Beach tested positive for low levels of Microcystin toxins on July 21. There have been no positive tests for Cylindrospermopsis toxins. If the Microcystin toxins persist, Worthington will likely post harmful algae bloom advisory signs at Lake Okabena beaches and boat ramps.

NEW BUSINESS

A draft of 2024 budget for the September public hearing was reviewed by the board. Rogers moved to approve the budget for publication in the September 5th hearing public notice. Milbrandt seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The Advisory Committee met at 3:00 this afternoon. Committee chairman, Scott Rall, will present some member recommendations at the September meeting.

The UM Bee Lab rental agreement for the St. John property cropland expires on September 30th. Permanent vegetation for wildlife habitat and water quality protection will be established on the acres. Details will be discussed at a future meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The public hearing for the proposed 2024 budget will be held at 4:00 p.m. on September 5, 2023, in the Nobles County Public Works Department building conference room at 960 Diagonal Road, Worthington. The regular September board meeting will immediately follow. Rogers moved to adjourn the meeting. Ingenthron seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.