

**MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District Board of Managers**  
**December 5, 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 Steve Bousema, Casey Ingenthron, Rolf Mahlberg, Jay Milbrandt and Jeff Rogers. Also present were: Bob Demuth, Jr. county commissioner; Tom Ahlberg, John Ahlers and Scott Rall, advisory committee members; Paul Langseth, SWCD Supervisor, Julie Buntjer, Globe editor/reporter and Dan Livdahl, administrator.

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

The Treasurer's report and bills payable were discussed. A CD expires at Worthington Federal on December 10<sup>th</sup>. The money will be put into another CD of unknown duration. Mahlberg, Milbrandt and Livdahl are signatories to the expiring CD. Rogers moved to approve the Treasurer's report and pay the bills. Ingenthron seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

A Wetland Conservation Act decision was received for the Crailsheim pond project. Geotechnical work is occurring on the site today. The district and Houston Engineering are waiting for a decision from the Army Corp of Engineers on how the project will be regulated. A decision is promised before the end of the week. A DNR permit application for the project will be submitted soon.

Timing for bidding and construction of the Crailsheim Pond project was discussed. It is hoped that the Corps of Engineers will waive permit requirements because the site is regulated by the state Wetland Conservation Act and the DNR permit will be issued on time for bidding to occur this winter.

Rogers and Mahlberg completed Livdahl's 2023 performance evaluation earlier this afternoon. Rogers presented Livdahl's request for a salary increase, Medicare supplemental policy and four-day week when the workload permits in 2024. Rogers moved to offer Livdahl the salary and insurance benefits he asked for and provide him with office hours of four days a week with a minimum 32 hours worked per week. Ingenthron seconded the motion. Affirmative Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: Bousema. Motion carried.

A draft 2024 budget was reviewed by the board. Ingenthron moved to approve the 2024 budget as presented. Rogers seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

**ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Ingenthron and Livdahl attended the Minnesota Watersheds annual meeting in Alexandria last week.

The Okabena-Ocheda-Bella Clean Water Partnership Joint Powers Board needs to meet soon. Milbrandt and Ingenthron represent the OOWD on the board. Dates for the meeting were discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

The Advisory Committee chair, Scott Rall, was present to further explain the pros and cons of using the partnership with Nobles County Pheasants Forever to transfer district property adjacent to state wildlife management areas or federal waterfowl production areas to the DNR. Among them are: elimination of management costs and liability, freeing up RIM Critical Habitat Program match money to protect more land in the Bella wellhead management area, and an in-lieu of taxes payment would be made to the county from the state. The board discussed the possible need to own the property to protect adjacent landowners' tile outlets and drainage rights. Bousema moved to drop the proposal to donate the north Bella properties to the DNR. The motion died for lack of a second. The issue may be sent back to the advisory committee to get a consensus opinion on the issue.

The 2024 annual plan will be discussed at the January meeting after more information is available about whether construction will occur on the Crailsheim project next year.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The next regular board meeting will be held on January 2, 2024, in the Nobles County Public Works Department building conference room at 960 Diagonal Road, Worthington. Rogers moved to adjourn the meeting. Bousema seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.