

MINUTES
Regular Meeting of the Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District Board of Managers
March 3, 2009

The regular meeting of the Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District Board of Managers was called to order at 4:00 p.m. Present were Managers Les Johnson, Rolf Mahlberg, Jim Mc Gowan and Jeff Williamson. Also present was Dan Livdahl, Administrator.

The minutes of the February regular board meeting were reviewed. The minutes as mailed need to be corrected to show that Mc Gowan made the motion to approve the minutes at the February meeting. Mahlberg moved to approve the minutes as mailed. Williamson seconded the motion. Affirmative: Johnson, Mahlberg, Mc Gowan, Williamson. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's report and bills payable were discussed. Mahlberg moved to approve the Treasurer's report and pay the bills. Mc Gowan seconded the motion. Affirmative: Johnson, Mahlberg, Mc Gowan, Williamson. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

COST-SHARE

A cost-share payment for Eric Pass to seal a well was approved with the bills payable.

OLD BUSINESS

The managers discussed the watershed district rules. The mailing address for submitting permit applications needs to be updated. The rules for storm water storage are inconsistent and confusing to some applicants. Mahlberg moved to update the address and delete section 5.5.2.5, on page 6. Mc Gowan seconded the motion. Affirmative: Johnson, Mahlberg, Mc Gowan, Williamson. Opposed: none. Motion carried. Rules regarding permit requirements and the reasonable use restriction were reviewed. It was decided to seek input from the Advisory Committee about whether the rule requiring permits for tile drainage projects should be changed. Livdahl will contact the advisory committee members and ask them to meet before the April 7th board meeting.

A draft of the 2009 Annual Plan was reviewed. Changes will be made to the document stating that programs for conservation easements and land purchases will be investigated for riparian land throughout the district. Mahlberg moved adopt the 2009 Annual Plan. Williamson seconded the motion. Affirmative: Johnson, Mahlberg, Mc Gowan, Williamson. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Livdahl and Johnson will contact the owners of the East Lake Okabena basin to see if they can be talked into selling the land needed for restoration.

The WD's mower has not been used for several years and it is unknown whether it is still operational. Mahlberg moved to donate the mower to the Nobles County Pheasants Forever chapter. Mc Gowan seconded the motion. Affirmative: Johnson, Mahlberg, Mc Gowan, Williamson. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Nobles County will be printing some newspaper advertisements this year to educate the public about

disposing of oil and filters at the Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

A summary of the OOWD's 2008 activities to protect groundwater, restore wetlands and improve surface water was set to the Heron Lake Watershed District. The information will be forwarded to Representative Rod Hamilton.

The OOWD owns 12.3 acres along the Herlein-Boote Wildlife Management Area diversion channel. Most of the land is within the WMA fence and is maintained by the DNR. Livdahl will talk to DNR Wildlife division staff about the management plan for the WMA's structures.

The Heron Lake Ecology Bus Center will be holding an intergenerational dialogue to discuss the proposed regional science and nature center in Lakefield. Managers are invited to participate. The QuickBooks software will need to be upgraded by May to continue using payroll functions.

The website was updated in January. Managers were asked to look at the site and make comments on its content.

NEW BUSINESS

BWSR is anticipating additional money for the state cost-share program and RIM program during the 2010 state fiscal year. The SWCD was asked to develop a list of easement sites and shovel-ready projects eligible for the programs. SWCD technical staff from Slayton will be asked to look at shoreline erosion control options on Lake Bella and the Langseth site on Lake Ocheda.

Livdahl met with MN DOT staff, Peter Harff and Ryan Barney on January 14th to discuss storm water and wetland issues on the St. John property. MN DOT proposes to create storm water ponds on both sides of the highway near Ditch 6. The highway project design is not finished, so the size of the R.O.W. and ponds is unknown. The OOWD will be paid approximately the market value for the land in the easement.

Harff stated that MN DOT needs to mitigate wetlands destroyed by the highway project and said that they would be willing to enter an agreement to pay the watershed district to do it on the St. John property. The wetland mitigation site would need to be restored to state standards and would be placed into a permanent easement. The site has the hydric soils and the hydrology necessary for shallow wetlands. It would be very difficult to keep invasive species off of the site, since it is surrounded by reed canarygrass. Livdahl will contact MN DOT and tell them that, due to difficulty of establishing the required vegetation, the OOWD does not want to do wetland mitigation for the highway project on the St. John property.

Scott Rall thanked the Managers for helping to purchase the Donkersloot and Drost properties in the Bella Wellhead Protection Area. He asked the Managers to consider donating its mower to the Nobles County Pheasants Forever chapter to be used for managing vegetation in wildlife areas. The mower has been unused and in storage for many years.

Rall stated that the OOWD should enforce its rules.

Attending the Lessard Natural Heritage Committee meetings was discussed. Williamson moved for staff to attend the meetings with Rall. Mc Gowan seconded the motion. Affirmative: Johnson, Mc Gowan,

Rogers, Williamson. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regular board meeting will begin at 4:00 p.m. on March 3, 2009 at the Nobles County Public Works Facility, 960 Diagonal Road, Worthington.

Meeting adjourned.