

MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District Board of Managers
November 7, 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; Scott Rall, Tom Ahlberg and Tyler Wadzinski, advisory committee members; Paul Langseth, SWCD Supervisor, Julie Buntjer, Globe editor/reporter and Dan Livdahl, administrator.

Rogers moved to approve the September board meeting and 2024 budget hearing minutes. Ingenthron seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's report and bills payable were discussed. Bousema moved to approve the Treasurer's report, pay the bills, including the the 2023 filter strip incentives, and transfer money between bank accounts as needed. Rogers seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

The Crailsheim project pond and construction easements were signed and recorded.

Worthington mowed the trees on the west side of the Prairie View pond using the county's mower. Randy Graham has been contacted about removing sediment from the Prairie View filter benches this fall. He is not returning phone calls or text messages from Livdahl or Ingenthron.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Les Johnson mowed fire breaks to prepare for burning prairie areas on the north end of Bella Park. Livdahl asked him to submit a bill for his work mowing and tree spraying in 2023.

A card and memorial donation was delivered to Jim McGowan's funeral on October 18th.

Livdahl installed 132 storm sewer inlet markers this fall.

Beavers are building and rebuilding dams at the 310th Street culverts. Randy Erwin says he will set traps there.

Dennis Rick delivered a letter resigning as the district's auditor. He offered to help find another auditor and transfer records to the new firm.

There were no zebra mussel shells observed during inspections of the public docks and private boat lifts removed from Lake Okabena this fall.

NEW BUSINESS

Rall presented the recommendations from the advisory committee for future board actions. Recommendations included:

1. Begin Phase II of the Lake Ocheda Drawdown
2. Donate or sell some parcels of district property to Pheasants Forever of the DNR so it produces in-lieu of taxes payments and its vegetation is managed well in the future.
3. Improve invasive species signage and hazardous algae bloom signage at Lake Okabena landings.
4. Move to the next phase of Lake Okabena carp population management.
5. Develop a program to remove tile surface intakes from agricultural field and road ditches.

The recommendations will be discussed at future board meetings.

The list of 2023 filter strip incentives was reviewed. Payments were approved as a part of the Treasurer's report.

The Administrator's 2024 salary and benefits need to be set before finalizing next year's budget. Performance evaluation forms will be emailed to the board. Mahlberg and Rogers will meet with Livdahl to complete the performance review and discuss salary and benefits.

PERMITS

Ingenthron moved to approve the following permit application:

Kevin Donovan - to perform erosion and sediment control during construction to replace a fieldstone retaining wall with a block boulders wall and to place the removed fieldstone on top of existing shoreline riprap.

Milbrandt seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regular board meeting will be held on December 5, 2023, 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.