

MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District Board of Managers
February 4, 2025

The regular meeting of the Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District Board of Managers was called to order at 4:00 p.m. Present were managers Tom Ahlberg, Steve Bousema and Rolf Mahlberg. Also present were Bob Demuth, Jr., county commissioner; Paul Langseth, SWCD supervisor; Al Langseth, district resident; Julie Buntjer, Globe editor/reporter and Dan Livdahl, administrator.

The January meeting minutes were discussed. Ahlberg moved to approve the minutes. Bousema seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ahlberg, Bousema, Mahlberg. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's report and bills payable were discussed. Bousema moved to approve the report and pay the bills. Ahlberg seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ahlberg, Bousema, Mahlberg. Opposed: none. Motion carried. Moving some of the money from the First State Bank SW checking account into an account that pays interest will be investigated before the March meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

A memo from Houston Engineering was discussed. It presents three low risk alternatives for removing phosphorus pollution at the Crailsheim Project site. Alternative 3 would remove the most pollution but would require the project site easement to be enlarged. John Landgaard will ask the District 518 operations committee for advice and ask the school board if they will expand the easement to cover the Alternative 3 footprint. The memo was forwarded to the DNR Area Hydrologist for comment. Livdahl met electronically with Tom Kresko and Jon Lore yesterday. They suggested that none of the options were appropriate for the site and a compromise would be installing one small pond and remeandering channel upstream and downstream or it. Ahlberg moved to direct engineer Chris Otterness and Livdahl to meet with the DNR to see if Alternative 3 violates a state rule or regulation, and if not, pursue an easement change and a permit. Bousema seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ahlberg, Bousema, Mahlberg. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Collecting water quality and flow data to compare an urban and agricultural watersheds was discussed. Ahlberg and Bousema talked about potential sites for comparison. Ahlberg met with Jeff Strock about the methodologies and equipment for sampling and flow measurement. An automatic sampler and flow meter equipment vendor from Pipestone was contacted last week to look at sites, recommend equipment, and quote a price. The 2025 annual plan will include this work.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

The Lake Ocheda Advisory Team met electronically on January 18th. The advisory team decided to update the plan with the addendum and submit it to the DNR authorities for approval.

The Board of Water and Soil Resources will do a Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP) assessment of the LGUs in the Missouri River Joint Power Organization this spring. The OOWD's last assessment was done ten years ago.

Minnesota Watershed will hold its legislative event on February 19th - 20th. Livdahl is not yet registered for the event or the watershed administrators' association meeting on the 19th.

NEW BUSINESS

Ahlberg moved to approve of updating the Lake Ocheda Management plan with the addendum and to send a letter to the DNR urging them to speed up the plan amendment and approval process so a drawdown of up to two years may begin during 2025 if weather and hydrologic condition permit. Bousema seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ahlberg, Bousema, Mahlberg. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

A draft of the 2024 annual report was discussed. Ahlberg moved to approve the report as drafted. Bousema seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ahlberg, Bousema, Mahlberg. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Staff from the SWCD will be asked to attend a future meeting to discuss CRP buffer strips and other USDA and State conservation programs to see whether OOWD incentives should be implemented or changed to enhance them.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regular board meeting will be held on March 11, 2025, in the Nobles County Public Works Department building conference room at 960 Diagonal Road, Worthington. Rogers moved to adjourn the meeting. Ingenthron seconded the motion. Affirmative: Ahlberg, Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.