

**MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District Board of Managers**  
**April 16, 2024**

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: Tom Ahlberg, advisory board member; Bob Demuth, Jr., county commissioner; Paul Langseth, SWCD supervisor; Julie Buntjer, Globe editor/reporter and Dan Livdahl, administrator.

The February minutes were discussed. Rogers moved to approve the minutes. Milbrandt seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's report and bills payable were discussed. A certificate of deposit matured at Worthington Federal Savings Bank. The CD money was deposited into the Worthington Federal money market account. Milbrandt moved to approve the Treasurer's report and pay the bills. Rogers seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried. A CD matured at First State Bank SW on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Milbrandt moved to roll over the \$305,000 CD plus interest into a seven-month CD. Rogers seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

The Crailsheim pond project will very likely need to be redesigned with a lower spillway elevation and smaller pond capacity to meet the DNR dam safety requirements. Doug Goodrich communicated that a redesigned pond with reduced pollution removal capacity is still eligible for the Clean Water Legacy grant. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency needs to issue a 401 water quality certification for the project before the Army Corps of Engineers permit is granted. This will take about 120 days and may contain conditions that need to be met. Since the project design isn't complete and the DNR and Corps permits have not been finalized, the project likely will not be ready for bidding this spring.

Drafts of the 2024 annual plan were emailed to the managers before the meeting. Rogers moved to approve the 2024 annual plan and budget. Ingenthron seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried.

Drafts of the 2023 annual report were emailed to the managers before the meeting. Rogers moved to approve the 2023 annual report. Ingenthron seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motions carried.

Mahlberg explained proposed changes to the district's Employee Handbook to accommodate part-time employees and include the state's new safe and sick leave benefits. Bousema moved to approve the Employee Handbook update. Rogers seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motions carried.

**ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

One of the picnic tables was stolen from Bella Park this spring. A new similar table costs about \$800. A table kit and lumber costs about half that much. Rogers moved to purchase two picnic table kits for Bella Park. Milbrandt seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motions carried.

Past theft and vandalism at Bella Park was discussed. Milbrandt moved to buy two internet connected cameras and surveillance warning signs. Rogers seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motions carried.

Les Johnson plans to burn prairie acres at Bella Park and the St. John property. Livdahl told him the district will reimburse him for expenses.

The Olson Trust board meeting is scheduled for May 14<sup>th</sup>. They will be asked to pay part of the local share for the Crailsheim pond project.

Livdahl is assisting Mark Koster with a print and electronic media campaign about avoiding the spread of aquatic invasive

species. The campaign will begin on the fishing opener and will present the new waterless boat cleaning station in Sunset Park as a tool available to clean, drain and dry boats.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

The Lake Ocheda Management Plan advisory team met on February 21<sup>st</sup>. The group decided to propose an amendment to the plan allowing for a full season drawdown. The change will be presented to the lake's riparian landowners this summer for comment. Josh Kavanaugh will draft the amendment. Ducks Unlimited was asked to develop a feasibility study proposal for pumps needed to drawdown the lake. The proposal was reviewed and rejected for now due to the high cost of the study.

A dumpster for carp disposal was placed in the Centennial Park boat ramp parking lot yesterday. Decals were applied to it stating it is for carp only. The dumpster will be checked daily and dumped as needed to prevent odors. The cost of emptying it is \$60.72 each time. The dumpster will remain in place through the carp spawning season. A story in the Globe explained the dumpster's purpose. It got a lot of comments on The Globe's Facebook page.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The next regular board meeting will be held on May 7, 2024, in the Nobles County Public Works Department building conference room at 960 Diagonal Road, Worthington. Ingenthron moved to adjourn the meeting. Bousema seconded the motion. Affirmative: Bousema, Ingenthron, Mahlberg, Milbrandt, Rogers. Opposed: none. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

**Administrator's Report**  
**May 7, 2024**

**Prairie Burns**

The windy weather and recent rains have prevented the crew from burning prairie acres at Bella Park and the waterway of the St. John property. Les still hopes to do them.

**Prairie View Level**

The Prairie View pond elevation is a few inches above the riprap spillway today. The pond is about 4" higher than when I opened the low flow tube valve yesterday.

**High School Class Tour**

I gave Matt Tripp's students a tour of the Whiskey Ditch and Prairie View pond sites to talk about the pollution contributed to Lake Okabena from urban and agricultural land.