

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 17, 2011
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"Busy Time of Year for Local Watershed"

At their 10/11/11 meeting held in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), dealt with a variety of issues. The nice fall weather has allowed completion of many repairs/construction projects. A number of different groups attended the meeting to receive updates regarding their projects.

Landowners from Georgetown questioned the status of the levee improvement project. Earlier this year, there were differences in the projected project costs (\$4.25 million) and the project revenue (\$3.5 million). The Board asked Houston Engineering, Inc. (H.E.) to review their cost estimate. Their most recent estimate for the project is \$3,597,431. At this time, the Board felt that was close enough to authorize the Phase II buyouts. Phase II includes landowners who cannot be protected by the levee due to their location and the river. A meeting will be scheduled with the City of Georgetown to discuss Federal Emergency Management Agency funding for work that may need to be completed yet this fall in preparation for a possible 2012 spring flood.

The Board received a request from a landowner in Section 1, Riverton Township, Clay County, for financial assistance regarding repairs to a dike along the Buffalo River. The dike washed out during the 2009 spring flood. The landowner has been working with the Clay Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The estimated project costs are \$6,600. The landowner will receive 75% SWCD funding. The Board agreed to contribute 15% to the overall project costs.

Several landowners questioned the status of the ditch repair along Country Heritage Addition in Oakport Township that was cleaned as part of Project No. 49, Oakport Flood Mitigation. Since the cleanout, the homeowners say the ditch is caving in and has not vegetated. Ulteig Engineers, Inc. (UEI), the project engineer, is working with the contractor to make the necessary repairs. The homeowners would like to see a more permanent plan to address the ditch problems in their backyards. The Board agreed to hold an informational meeting this winter. UEI has developed four possible options to address the problem.

A homeowner questioned the status of Project No. 65, Clay/Wilkin County Line Outlet. The Board awarded the construction contract to Barry Construction for their bid of \$110,454.82. The work will include the installation of the deeper outlet, which will actually be cheaper and will accommodate the United States Fish and Wildlife Service options to manage water levels on their Waterfowl Production Area. The Board also agreed to sign a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources grant in the amount of \$150,000 for 50% of the project costs. Construction of the project should start later this month.

Considerable time was spent discussing options for relocation of the BRRWD office. On 9/01/11, the office was moved from 123 Front ST S to 114 Front ST S. The new accommodations are working quite well. The Board is considering either a new office building or possibly buying an existing building in Commercial Park, which could be renovated. The cost for both options seems to be similar. Some Managers felt the new building project has taken too long. On a 3-2 vote, the Managers agreed to authorize Margaret Follingstad, YHR Partners, to develop the architectural specifications for the new building. Once these specifications are received, they will be furnished to local contractors for suggestions/ideas on ways to reduce costs.

Other business included:

- The Board approved permits to: Spring Prairie Colony to install a interceptor/seepage control ditch along the east side of Section 10, Spring Prairie Township, Clay County; Eldon Hermunslie to regrade the ditch along County Road (C.R.) No. 3 in the E1/2, Section 6, Deerhorn Township, Wilkin County; David Ackerson to install a drainage ditch to control seepage from a Wetlands

10/11/11 BRRWD News Release (cont.)

Reserve Program (WRP) project in the E1/2 NW1/4, Section 22, Skree Township, Clay County; Clay County Highway Department to install an approach with a 24" dia. culvert off from C.R. No. 71 in the NW1/4, Section 9, Elkton Township, Clay County; John Nord to replace existing drain tile in Section 14, Eglon Township, and install drain tile in Sections 25 and 34, Highland Grove Township, Clay County; Lois Jensen to replace her driveway culvert with a larger structure in the NW1/4, Section 24, Spring Prairie Township, Clay County; Wilkin County Highway Department to add an 8' x 7' reinforced concrete box to the existing culverts in C.R. No. 151 between Sections 14 and 15, Wolverton Township; Dave Sogn to restore two wetlands on a Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM)/WRP easement in the NE1/4, Section 32, Tansem Township, Clay County; and Eveleth Ulven to restore wetlands on a RIM/WRP easement in the SE1/4SE1/4, Section 22, Highland Grove Township.

- The Board addressed an illegal culvert installation at the intersection of 190th ST and 180th AVE in the northwest corner of Section 21, Mitchell Township, Wilkin County. The Board asked for removal of the culvert by 11/01/11.
- The BRRWD authorized outlet repairs for Clay County Ditch Nos. 10 and 59 per petitions submitted by Ronald Tang.
- The Managers discussed reservations to the upcoming Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts annual meeting to be held on December 1-3, 2011, at the Arrowwood Resort, Alexandria.
- The Board acknowledged receipt of a petition to improve Lateral No. 3 to Wilkin County Ditch No. 22. They appointed H.E. as the Project Engineer. The Board also appointed Viewers Lauren Peterson, Arvid Thompson, and Eddie Bernhardson to begin the assessment of benefits and damages.
- The Board agreed to advertise for a part-time administrative assistant.
- The Board approved payment of bills totaling \$407,200.75.

The next regular BRRWD meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 24, 2011, at 8:00 PM in the Barnesville office. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our Website at www.brrwd.org.