NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 22, 2014
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“Another Long Night for Local Watershed”

It took the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), just over four hours to get through their two page agenda at their regular meeting held in Barnesville on Monday, July 14, 2014.

Discussion took place on a number of topics:

- A landowner questioned the progress of the Manston Slough Restoration Project construction. The contractor is currently working on the south end near Tower Road. The landowner felt the work should have taken place on the outlet first. With the June heavy rainfall events, he experienced some flooding downstream of the project. The Board asked him to document the claim this fall during harvest, which could be turned over to the Project's contractor.

- A Clay County landowner felt there was a need for the BRRWD to get control on the number of tile projects throughout the Watershed. During the recent June flooding, he had land under water while neighbors two to three miles further upstream were still running their lift stations. The Board said that this winter, adopting new Rules for the BRRWD would be one of their priorities. The Rules must be adopted in accordance with Minnesota Watershed Law. If changes are made, landowners would be able to go to the BRRWD's website to see which Townships are affected by flooding and for information regarding operation of their tile projects. This is similar to what's being done in the Bois De Sioux Watershed District in Wheaton, MN.

- Another landowner expressed concerns regarding his drainage in Section 35, Deerhorn Township, Wilkin County. He feels that Lateral No. 2 of Wilkin County Ditch (C.D.) No. 22 needs to be investigated and possibly more repairs done. He also complained about several plugged culverts on his land. The office will conduct a field investigation before determining a course of action.

- Stephanie Miranowski, Wilkin County Commissioner, attended the meeting for an update on what is happening within the Watershed. Discussions ultimately led to the proposed Army Corp of Engineers Fargo-Moorhead Diversion and the current ring dike that is being constructed around the Oxbow-Hickson-Bakke subdivisions. The BRRWD will ask the Diversion's engineer for an analysis of the effects of the ring dike in relationship to the COE's projected 100-year water elevations.

Other business included:

- Approval of the Treasurer's Report. The BRRWD currently has $1,849,979.09. The office is still waiting for the first half payment from Clay County pertaining to projects/ditch systems.

- Approval of permits to:
  - Vance Johnson for pattern tiling in the NE¼, Section 4, Connelly Township, Wilkin County.
  - Jason Crabtree for the restoration of four wetland basins with the project being supervised by the Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District/United States Fish and Wildlife Service in Section 1, Lake Park Township, Becker County. The proposed project drains directly into LaBelle Lake.
  - Clay County Highway Department to remove a bridge on 140th ST S between Sections 12 and 13, Holy Cross Township, the replacement structure will be one line of 14'x4'
reinforced concrete box culvert, having a total water way area 54 square feet. The proposed structure closely matches the existing bridge sizing.

- Greater Minnesota Gas Company for 10 miles of gas pipeline between Ulen and Hawley. Erik S. Jones, Houston Engineering Inc. (H.E.) said that the proposed project does not cross any BRRWD projects. The permit was approved with the BRRWD standard utility disclaimer, which states that if the pipeline is ever found to be in the way of future BRRWD projects, it must be relocated at the applicant's expense.

- Gordon Kassenborg for 156 acres of pattern tiling in the NE¼, Section 11, Oakport Township, to drain directly into Clay C.D. No. 35.

- Carlisle Township to install two lines of 66"x60' culverts on the north side of 240th ST for access into the SW¼, Section 19.

- Jonathan Piekarski to install 110 acres of pattern tiling in the W½, Section 7, Carlisle Township, Otter Tail County. The project will drain directly into Wilkin-Otter Tail Judicial Ditch (J.D.) No. 2.

- Eric Marshall to install a driveway culvert for a new home located in the Borgen Field Subdivision in the SE¼, Section 10, Oakport Township, Clay County.

- David Schroeder for 210 acres of pattern tiling in the N½, Section 21, Elkton Township, Clay County.

- Rick Maier for a new driveway off of Trunk Highway No. 9 into the SE¼, Section 35, Barnesville Township, Clay County.

- Tom Arnhalt for 315 acres of pattern tiling in the E½, Section 34, Manston Township, Wilkin County.

- Tim Pender to install an approach with an 18” dia. culvert to access his field off 157th ST in the E½NE¼, Section 34, Riverton Township, Clay County.

- Discussed a complaint filed about tiling in the S½SW¼, Section 16, Humboldt Township, Clay County. A downstream landowner was concerned about work being conducted on their property. Information from the downstream landowner's attorney was reviewed. The Board will investigate the complaint.

- The Record of Decision regarding the Environmental Assessment Worksheet completed by the BRRWD for the restoration of the Whiskey Creek channel in Section 14, Connelly Township, Wilkin County, has been distributed to approximately 30 parties. The next step will be for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to issue the restoration permit. Once that is completed, the BRRWD will contact the affected landowners regarding the necessary easements to do the channel restoration work. The Wilkin County Highway Department is anxious to see the work done so that they can conduct repairs on Wilkin C.D. Nos. 1-C and 34.

- Discussed the status of the Manston Slough Restoration Project. The detour route for County State Aid Highway No. 26 has now been set up. The contractor plans to begin work on this section of roadway this week. Wet weather has delayed progress. We are still waiting for one landowner easement to be signed and the Board approved a motion to use condemnation if the easement cannot be secured in a timely manner.

- Noting that the final house now has been moved pertaining to the Georgetown Levee Project. The contractor needs to come back to relocate the garage. Weather permitting, the work will clear the way for the project's contractor, Reiner Construction, Inc., to come back and finish the levee construction. Pay Request No. 7 in the amount of $55,106.44 was approved. The Pay Request reduces the contractor's retainage due to substantial completion.

- Jones noted that H.E. should begin surveying on Clay-Wilkin J.D. No. 1 later this week, weather permitting. It is expected that in two weeks, his analysis regarding the impacts of the Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee Restoration Project, a possible county line outlet, and recommended repairs for the drainage system can be further discussed.
• Contractors are working on the repair of Clay C.D. No. 10. Work is scheduled for completion by 08/31/14.

• Noting that the next Mediation Project Team meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 25, 2014, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville Watershed Office.

• Authorized H.E. to begin surveying on the Barnesville Township Comprehensive Project. The Board met with landowners from the affected area last February. They urged the Board to proceed with the study. A $5,000 grant was obtained through the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (RRBFDRWG) to assist with the surveying cost. Additional funding may be available from the RRBFD RWG.

• Agreed to submit a grant to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, titled "Planning for Resilience in the Red River Basin: BRRWD." The focus area is titled "Communities Adapting to Climate Change and Extreme Weather." Watershed Staff worked with Linda Kingery, Executive Director, University of Minnesota, Northwest Regional Sustainable Partnership, in drafting the grant.

• Noting that all work is now completed on Clay C.D. Nos. 9, 32, and 33. The final pay requests were processed for the contractors. The redetermination of benefits for these systems will be handled by the BRRWD later this fall.

• Approved repairs to the outlet of Wilkin C.D. No. 42 in Section 22, Atherton Township; replacement of a failing crossing between Sections 7 and 8, Tanberg Township, on Wilkin C.D. No. 44; authorized replacement of two culverts on Becker C.D. No. 9 in 170th AVE in Section 25, Cuba Township.

• Staff presented the "draft" 2013 Annual Report for the Board's review. An annual report is required per Minnesota Watershed Law Statute 103D.351.

• Authorized removal of a beaver dam on a bridge over the Buffalo River on 130th AVE N, between Sections 10 and 15, Kragnes Township, Clay County, per a $2,500 bid submitted by William Nichol Excavating Inc.

• Approved the payment of bills, totaling $335,064.93.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, will be held on Monday, July 28, 2014, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office, located at 1303 4th AVE NE, Barnesville. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our website at www.brrwd.org.