

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 29, 2014
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"Local Watershed Acknowledges Manager's Service"

The meeting of the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), held on August 25, 2014, happened to be the last regular meeting for Clay County Manager, Curtis M. Nelson. Mr. Nelson has served on the Watershed Board since 1981. The Board was very thankful for his 33 years of dedicative service. For many years, Mr. Nelson also represented the BRRWD on the Red River Water Management Board. His replacement is Mark T. Anderson, Moorhead, whose term will begin on 09/01/14. The BRRWD currently has seven Managers, three from Clay County, two from Wilkin County, one from Otter Tail County, and one from Becker County. They are appointed by their respective County Boards to serve three-year terms, and are eligible for reappointment. Earlier this year, the Board reappointed Gerald L. Van Amburg, Moorhead.

Other business included:

- Considerable discussion once again regarding drainage issues involving Sections 27 and 34, Skree Township, Clay County. The landowner in Section 27 attended the meeting and asked the Board to consider removal of a centerline corrugated metal pipe from 110th AVE S, between Sections 27 and 34. The Board said that decision would involve a number of parties including neighboring landowners and Skree Township. A field review of the area will be conducted. If needed, the Board can schedule an informational meeting with the affected parties to further discuss this and any other issues pertaining to drainage in and around this area.
- Based on hearings that were held on 08/19/14, the Board reviewed requests from Curt Stubstad to have the SE¹/₄, Section 2, Elmwood Township, Clay County, removed from the benefitting area of County Ditch (C.D.) No. 21 and that same land added to the benefitting area of Clay C.D. No. 58. Both systems were redetermined in 1985. Mr. Stubstad is currently planning tiling projects for the SW¹/₄, Section 1, and the SE¹/₄, Section 2, Elmwood Township. The tile outlets are designed to drain south into Clay C.D. No. 58. The Board approved removal of the property in Section 2 from C.D. No. 21 and adding it to No. 58, and approved his permit for the tiling of these two tracts.
- Approval of a permits to Manuel Jerger and Sons Farm for 80 acres of pattern tiling in the SE¹/₄, Section 19, Atherton Township, Wilkin County, with outlets directly into the South Branch of the Buffalo River; Menholt Farms for approximately 400 acres of pattern tiling in Section 22, Flowing Township, Clay County, with outlets that will drain to Clay C.D. No. 10, for which the property is assessed; John Piekarski for random tiling in NW¹/₄, Section 27, Carlisle Township, Otter Tail County; Darren Tucker to install a drainage swale and diking along the property line to control erosion in the SW¹/₄, Section 19, Skree Township, Clay County; the Fergus Falls Fish and Game Club to install several shallow wetland scrapes in the N¹/₂, Section 5, Orwell Township, Otter Tail County; Tansem Township to install a 12" dia. by 150' long culvert to lower water from a wetland area adjacent to 180th AVE S; Peter Fjestad for random tiling in the NW¹/₄, Section 22, Oscar Township, Otter Tail County; and Peter Fjestad for random tiling and an approach installation in the NW¹/₄, Section 11, Carlisle Township, Otter Tail County.
- Met with a Minnesota landowner near the Oxbow-Hickson-Bakke ring dike project that is being built by the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Authority. He felt that the project would affect water levels on the MN side of the river. The BRRWD has asked the Diversion Authority for more information and modeling regarding that project's impacts.

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- Dismissed a petition filed for a lateral to Clay C.D. No. 51 in Section 34, Kragnes Township. The petitioner may start over with a new petition. The BRRWD costs incurred to date will be deducted from the petitioner's bond, which is adequate to cover those costs.
- Approved Pay Request No. 4 to Gladen Construction Inc. for their work associated with the Manston Slough Restoration Project. The amount due was \$217,002.32. The Board also approved Change Order No. 1 for that same project in the amount of \$91,043.85. The biggest increase pertains to the graveling of the shoulders along County State Aid Highway No. 26.
- Noting that the office has been working with the Moorhead Police Chief regarding future hunting in the Oakport Township area associated with Project No. 49, Oakport Flood Mitigation. The BRRWD owns a number of buyout properties in that area. The area will be annexed into the City of Moorhead on 01/01/15.
- Noting that Reiner Construction Inc., the contractor who is improving the levee around the City of Georgetown, is still waiting for a garage to be moved before they can come back and finish their work. Hopes are that the garage can be moved in the next several weeks.
- Noting the scheduling of an informational meeting with the landowners on Clay-Wilkin Judicial Ditch No. 1. The meeting will be held on Thursday, September 4, 2014, at 8:00 AM in the Barnesville Office. An informational meeting was held with these same landowners earlier this spring. They expressed concerns regarding 2013 flooding that occurred along the drainage system. Some of those same problems happened again this spring. The BRRWD has looked into the possibility of installing a diversion ditch along the Clay-Wilkin County line, possible repairs to the drainage system in Clay County, and the history analogy of how the system was constructed. Hopes are that after the informational meeting, maybe a path can be laid out as to how the landowners would like to proceed with addressing their problems.
- Approved pay requests to William Nichol Excavating Inc. (\$6,197.50 and \$9,639.00) and JBX LLC. (\$25,856.00) for their work associated with the repair of Clay C.D. No. 10. Erik S. Jones, Engineer, Houston Engineering Inc., anticipated that both contractors would be finished by the next BRRWD meeting.
- Noting that the next Mediation Project Team meeting is scheduled for September 25, 2014, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville Watershed Office. It was noted that the Barnesville Township Drainage Study received a \$10,000 acceleration grant from the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group to help with the initial survey/study costs. The office is working with a couple of landowners along the South Branch of the Buffalo River in Wilkin County. A dike is being explored for the NE¼, Section 6, Manston Township, and we're looking at a potential water retention area in Section 11, Manston Township.
- Reviewed bids for the Buffalo River Restoration Project in Hawley. The apparent low bidder was Reiner Contracting, Inc. The total bid, including Alternate Nos. 1 and 2, was \$644,602.50. The BRRWD has a signed grant with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in the amount of \$496,000. An informational meeting will be held with the City to see where the possible extra funding might come from. The BRRWD could levy part of their costs through the Minnesota Statutes Annotated 103D.905, Subd. 3 funding provisions, which allow for project/programs with District benefits. To use this funding, a petition would need to be filed by a local political subdivision.

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- Agreed to submit a Targeted Watershed Demonstration Program application to the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR) for the Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee Restoration Project. The application is due 08/29/14. The Board will request somewhere between \$1.5 and \$2 million. If selected, BWSR could ask for an interview to review the project, and those interviews would take place in October 2014. Projects will be selected by BWSR on 12/17/14.
- Discussed water quality monitoring associated with Project No. 46, Turtle Lake Outlet. Downstream landowners on Lake Fifteen have expressed concerns regarding their water quality. Samples taken by the BRRWD a number of years ago showed no problems with the water that was being released from Turtle Lake. The Board did agree to conduct another series of water quality sampling to hopefully address their concerns.
- Noting that the office has submitted a support letter regarding the Red River Retention Authority's application to the Natural Resource Conservation Service for funding through the new Farm Bill Regional Conservation Partnership Program.
- Approval of repairs to Becker C.D. No. 5 for the replacement of a field crossing culvert, located in the NW¼, Section 28, Audubon Township, and the clean out of approximately 5,000 feet of channel on "east tributary" associated with Project No. 54, Whiskey Creek Tributaries. That work will be located in Section 14, Barnesville Township, Clay County.
- Approved the payment of bills, totaling \$293,844.09.

The next meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, which will include their annual budget hearing, where levies for 2015 will be discussed and set, is scheduled for Monday, September 8, 2014, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office, located at 1303 4th AVE NE. The budget hearing will begin at 9:00 PM. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our website at www.brrwd.org.