

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 24, 2014
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Bruce E. Albright, 218-354-7710

"Fall Busy Time of Year for Local Watershed"

It took the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), approximately three and a half hours to get through their meeting agenda on Monday, September 22, 2014. Fall is typically a busy time of year for the BRRWD, with landowners wanting to get last minute projects done before freeze-up and the BRRWD trying to complete their own work on projects/ditch systems.

The Board discussed use of a form they are developing where certain types of permit activities would require downstream landowner notification before the Board would act on the request. Discussion took place as to whether the BRRWD should be contacting the downstream landowners or if it should be the applicant's responsibility.

At the meeting, the Board approved 10 permits, as follows: Clay County Highway Department to replace a bridge over Whiskey Creek between Sections 22 and 23, Barnesville Township; Arland Anderson to restore three wetland basins in conjunction with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) in Section 4, Norwegian Grove Township, Otter Tail County; Jon Christiansen for wetland restorations in conjunction with a WRP easement in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 17, Lake Park Township, Becker County; Highland Grove Township to replace an existing 18 inch diameter culvert in 15th AVE N with a 36 inch diameter pipe in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 35; Darin Roehl to install main tile lines with laterals on 50 foot spacing in NE $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 30, Carlisle Township, Otter Tail County; Don Abarr to install 10 acres of pattern tiling outletting via a gravity flow outlet to Spring Creek in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 30, Skree Township, Clay County; Century Link to install underground utilities affecting Clay County Ditch (C.D.) No. 41-Lateral 1 in Section 11, Moorhead Township, Clay County; Robert Ronsberg to install an approach with an 18 inch diameter culvert to access a proposed gravel pit in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 17, Skree Township, Clay County; Manuel Jerger and Sons Farms to install a main tile line for future tiling work in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 30, Atherton Township, Wilkin Township; and Hornbacher's Grocery to construct a new store including utility work and installation of a storm water pond in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 20, Moorhead Township, Clay County.

Other business included:

- Noting that an informational meeting was held on 09/19/14 with neighboring landowners, Skree Township officials, and other agencies to discuss drainage concerns in and around Sections 27, 34, and 35, Skree Township, Clay County. Lynn Foss, Clay County Administrator for the Wetlands Conservation Act, will work with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) regarding possible altering of the hydrology affecting several area wetlands. The BRRWD will also work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to determine if the elevation of an outlet culvert along 110th AVE S can be modified. Suggestions were made that maybe the best possible solution would be to return the area to the way it existed 10 years ago, when no water could drain west, and the local drainage was directed south into Spring Creek.
- The petition for a new lateral on Clay C.D. No. 51 has been turned over to Tami L. Norgard, Attorney, Vogel Law Firm, for her review and opinion. The proposed project would provide drainage in and around Sections 28 and 33, Kragnes Township, Clay County.
- Discussed the proposed restoration of Whiskey Creek in Section 14, Connelly Township, Wilkin County. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) protected water course is the outlet for several drainage systems in that area. The BRRWD has now received a DNR permit for the restoration work. A conditional use permit (CUP) will be

required from the Wilkin County Environmental Planning Office. They have asked that wetlands along the channel be delineated. Another step will be development of easements with the affected landowners. Given the current time frame, it is doubtful that this project will be completed in 2014.

- A list of cleanup items has been furnished to Gladen Construction, Inc., and their work involving Project No. 71, City of Moorhead 50th Avenue Flood Control. A deadline of 10/10/14 was set for completing the work.
- Approved Pay Request No. 5 to Gladen Construction, Inc., and their work involving the Manston Slough Restoration Project. The amount due on this request is \$699,723.78. The Board also approved a time extension until 10/31/14 for completing the project. Reasons for delays include some additional work that was not shown on the construction plans and the wet weather conditions.
- Authorized repairs to an outlet ditch along 140th Avenue South in Section 14, Barnesville Township, Clay County. The work is associated with Project No. 54, Whisky Creek Tributaries.
- Noting that we are still waiting for a landowner to move into a relocated home in the City of Georgetown before the contractor can come back this fall and finish the levee work. Legal paperwork also needs to be completed with Vogel Law Firm. His garage also still needs to be moved.
- Noting that JBX LLC, and William Nichol Excavating, Inc., are finishing their work associated with the repair of Clay C.D. No. 10.
- Noting that the next Mediation Project Team meeting will be held on Thursday, September 25, 2014, at 7:00 PM, in the Barnesville office. Active projects include the Barnesville Township Area Drainage Study, Stony Creek Comprehensive Planning, and the South Branch of the Buffalo River in Wilkin County. The annual Fall Tour with the Advisory Committee, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and local elected leaders will be held on Thursday, October 9, 2014, at 1:30 PM beginning at the Galaxie Supper Club east of Barnesville.
- Reviewed an analysis completed by Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI) regarding the Oxbow-Hickson-Bakke (OHB) Ring Levees. The initial OHB hydraulic analysis was completed by the Houston-Moore Group on 04/08/14. Their analysis looked at both a steady-state and unsteady-state hydraulic model review. HEI's most recent analysis shows that both models appear to be producing reasonable results that show that the project's impacts are near zero. Neighboring landowners in attendance at the meeting questioned how that much work next to the Red River of the North could not have an effect on neighboring properties.
- Noting that Bruce Albright, Administrator, BRRWD, will be attending Minnesota Department of Agriculture meetings on September 29-30 in St. Cloud regarding the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program.
- Noting that on September 9, 2014, the Wilkin County Board of Commissioners transferred eighteen (18) drainage systems to the jurisdiction of the BRRWD. The drainage systems are located in the area that was annexed into the BRRWD back on April 25, 2012.

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- Approved ditch system repairs for a private crossing located on Wilkin C.D. No. 41 in the NE corner of Section 7, Prairie View Township, and repair of breakout erosion occurring in the NW¼, Section 4, Barnesville Township, on Clay C.D. No. 31.
- Discussed a briefing paper prepared by the International Water Institute titled “Water Management Options for Surface Draining”. The study looks at the relationship of agricultural drainage and flooding in the Red River Basin. The study developed recommendations to determine how to best manage the existing surface drainage systems to increase or maintain drainage benefits, reduce flood flows, and decrease downstream flood damages. It also talked about best strategies for future surface drainage system improvements and modifications regarding these same issues.
- Authorized replacement of a crossing along County Road No. 30 in Section 29, Prairie View Township, Wilkin County, on C.D. No. 43.
- Authorized repairs to Clay C.D. No. 69. The ditch will be cleaned to its original grade and configuration. Estimated costs are \$15,000 to \$20,000. The work will be done yet this fall, weather permitting.
- Noting that the BRRWD was not selected for an interview regarding the targeted watershed demonstration project. The application was submitted for Wolverton Creek/Comstock Coulee. HEI has looked at several methodologies regarding creation of a water management district that could be used to raise some local funding to work on the project.
- Authorized submittal of two grant applications to BWSR regarding their Clean Water Fund program. The first application will deal with outlet erosion on Clay C.D. No. 23 by Kragnes. The second application will deal with outlet repairs on Clay C.D. No. 39, which would be combined with field inlets on Clay C.D. No. 59. Both applications will be in the \$100,000 to \$150,000 range. The required 25% match will be furnished by the respective drainage systems. The applications are due 09/26/14.
- Authorized Thompson Greenery to do some additional landscaping work around the new office headquarters. This includes replacement of some plantings, protecting the trees for winter, and reseeded of some lawn areas.
- Approved the payment of bills, totaling \$765,494.99.

The next meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD is scheduled for Tuesday, October 14, 2014, (due to the Columbus Day holiday) at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office, located at 1303 4th AVE NE. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our website at www.brrwd.org.