"City of Moorhead Recognizes BRRWD's Flood Mitigation Efforts"

At their 3/14/16 meeting held in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), received a plaque from Mayor Del Rae Williams recognizing their contributions to the City of Moorhead Comprehensive Flood Mitigation Improvements for which the City received the 2016 Project of the Year award from the City Engineers Association of Minnesota. She thanked the BRRWD for their work and cooperation over the years. City Manager Michael Redlinger also thanked the BRRWD for their work with the City of Moorhead and their work throughout the region. Manager Anderson thanked the City for the outstanding work that they have done on flood protection over the years, and Manager Van Amburg, who is a Moorhead resident, was also gratified by the work that has been done by the City.

Dr. Robert Zimmerman, Moorhead City Engineer, gave a presentation on the City's Flood Mitigation Improvements. He noted that six of the top ten flood events on the Red River in Moorhead have occurred between 1997 and 2011. The record flood of 2009 required emergency protection including: nine miles of sandbag levee, nine miles of clay levee, 61 emergency auxiliary pumps, and numerous sanitary and storm sewer plugs. Direct surface flooding and storm sewer flooding put 3,800 properties at risk, required 2,000 households to evacuate and damaged 300 properties. The City began planning for flood mitigation immediately after the 2009 flood crest. Their goals were to: reduce emergency flood protection measures and flood risk up to 42.5 feet, reduce emergency response time, keep the community in business during a major flood event, send a positive message to businesses and homeowners and avoid the continued financial burden and risk to the City and State. They used an incremental and adaptive approach to reach these goals through strong State and Local support. Funding for these projects, which has totaled $105.2 million, came largely from the State of Minnesota through their Flood Damage Reduction Grant Program and Local Funds. Additional funding came from Federal funds and the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Over half of the project costs were for the acquisition of flood prone properties, with the remaining costs covering infrastructure improvements. The mitigation projects included: the acquisition of 247 properties, all of which were voluntary, 67 property easements, 12.1 miles of levees and floodwalls, three removable floodwall closures, nineteen stormwater pump stations, 78 stormwater gates and five sanitary pump station upgrades. Most of the mitigation projects have received FEMA Accreditation. These improvements have significantly reduced the emergency measures needed during a flood event. At a 42.5’ flood crest, the miles of temporary levees required has been reduced from 9 to just over 2 compared to the 2009 conditions. Similarly, the number of sandbags needed has been reduced from over 4 million to about 400,000, and the preparation time required has been reduced from 10 days to less than 4.

Other business included:

- Holy Cross Township resident, Lynn Brakke, addressed the Board with concerns about their membership in the Flood Diversion Authority Joint Powers Agreement (JPA). He felt that the Board should continue to be a part of the JPA, otherwise residents like him will not have any representation. Alliance Township resident, Jon Evert, also addressed the Board saying that it was important for the BRRWD to remain a part of the JPA and to be a voice for the District’s residents.
• Approval of permits to: Gerald & Jared Nordick to install one run of tile along a ridge in the NE1/4, Section 22, Meadows Township, Wilkin County; John David Lee for pattern tiling in the W1/2, NW ¼, Section 34, Georgetown Township, Clay County; the City of Moorhead for street improvements along 40th Ave S.; Jerred Jirava for pattern tiling in the NW1/4 & N1/2 SW1/4, Section 2, Riceville Township, Becker County, outletting in Becker County Ditch No. 21; the City of Moorhead for street improvements at the intersection of Village Green Blvd. and 20th St. S.; Chad Oberg for pattern tiling in the W1/2, Section 24, Kragnes Township, Clay County; Chad Oberg for pattern tiling in the NW1/4, Section 25, Kragnes Township, Clay County; and the Clay County Highway Department for road improvements to County Road 95, between C.S.A.H. 18 and C.S.A.H. 26.

• Noting that District Administrator, Bruce E. Albright, attended the Izaak Walton League of America, 2016 Watershed Summit, in Bloomington, MN on March 12. He gave a presentation on the Manston Slough Restoration. He also spoke about several other projects that the BRRWD is currently working on.

• Noting that three Flood Damage Reduction Landowner Forums are scheduled for: Tuesday, March 15, at 9:00 a.m. at the Nordick Farm near Rothsay, Friday, March 18, at 9:00 a.m. at the BRRWD Office in Barnesville, and Tuesday, March 22, at 9:00 a.m. at the American Legion in Lake Park.

• Noting that the Red River Watershed Management Board and the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group Joint Annual Conference will be held on March 23-24, 2016, at the Courtyard by Marriott in Moorhead.

• Noting that the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts Legislative reception will be held on March 30 – 31, 2016, at the Embassy Suites in St. Paul.

• Noting that the next Mediation Project Team meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 7, 2016, at 1:30 PM, in the Barnesville Watershed office.

• Noting that the 2016 Advisory Committee Meeting will be held on Friday, April 1, 2016, beginning 1:30 p.m. at the Watershed Office.

• Approval of Change Order No. 1 and Pay Request No. 4 in the amount of $45,684 to American Enterprises, Inc. for their work on the 2014 Clay County Ditch No. 41 – Lateral No. 1 Repair.

• Approved the payment of bills, totaling $327,171.29.

The next meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Monday, March 28, 2016, 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.