"BRRWD Manager Resignation"

At their 09/26/16 meeting, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), learned that Clay County Manager Breanna L. Kobiela is planning to move to Fargo, North Dakota, at the end of the month. Her term was scheduled to expire on 08/31/18. If she is no longer a resident of the District, she is not eligible to serve on the Watershed Board. Staff will work with the Clay County Board of Commissioners and the Auditor's Office regarding her replacement. Kobiela started her service with the BRRWD in November 2009.

Other business included:

- Reviewed the BRRWD's financial status. Cash on hand totals $1,662,506.30. Receipts since the 09/12/16 meeting include $81,093.87 from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for work on Phase 4 of the Oakport Flood Mitigation Project and $16,485.98 from the Red River Watershed Management Board for reimbursement of Mediation Project Team Fiscal Year 16 expenditures.

- Received a complaint from a landowner on Phase 4 of the Oakport Flood Mitigation Project regarding the location of an approach that was installed off County Road (C.R.) No. 1/Broadway. The location of the approach will be field verified to be sure that it is not located on the complainant's property.

- Approval of permits to: Century Link for utility work on C.R. No. 93, Section 18, Oakport Township, Clay County, involving the Oakport Flood Mitigation levee project, with the required flood proofing of all utilities; the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to scrape out five wetlands in the SW1/4, Section 28 and the N1/2, Section 29, Parke Township, Clay County; the USFWS to restore wetlands in the S1/2, Section 36, Cuba Township, Becker County; the USFWS to restore six drained wetlands in the NE1/4, Section 18, Audubon Township, Becker County; and Wang Farms to install 150 acres of pattern tiling, outletting in the southeast corner of the NW1/4, Section 9, Moland Township, to Clay County Ditch (C.D.) No. 3.

- Discussed drainage issues involving Section 5, Barnesville Township, Clay County. Water leaving a series of wetlands, must drain west into the east ditch of C.R. No. 21, where it goes north to Stony Creek. Over the years, a number of culverts have been installed along the waterway path in varying sizes and elevations. A landowner in Section 5 would like to see a survey done of the culvert sizes and elevations. The office will contact the Clay County Highway Department regarding the culvert survey along their road.

- Noting that a hearing regarding the abandonment of Project No. 77, Clay C.D. No. 51-Proposed Lateral No. 3, will be held at 6:45 PM on Tuesday, October 11, 2016, in conjunction with the BRRWD meeting that same evening. Notices have been sent to the affected landowners. The Board made the Order to construct the project, but after an appeal was filed, the two parties agreed to purchase a property affected by the project. Illegal dikes will be taken down, which should remedy the problem, no longer necessitating the need for Project No. 77.

- To accommodate a request filed by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to do work on their easements in and around the Manston Slough Restoration project area, the Board agreed to lower the water levels behind the structures located in County State Aid Highway No. 26 and the main dam, located two miles north. We are still waiting for
a Conditional Use Permit from the NRCS to lower spoil banks in the SW1/4, Section 20, Manston Township.

- The next Mediation Project Team meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 13, 2016, at 7:00 PM in the BRRWD Office, Barnesville. The BRRWD held a successful Fall Tour on 09/22/16 with approximately 45 people attending. Tour routing this year primarily looked at projects jointly installed by the BRRWD and the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District. Erik S. Jones, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI), noted that after another teleconference with personnel from the DNR Dam Safety Division, it appears that they will lower their hazard rating for the proposed dam on Stony Creek.

- Noting that two new documents have been completed by HEI for Water Quality Communique. The first is an introduction and water quality overview. A rating scale was established for water quality. The document looks at water quality based on the various planning regions. A companion document includes detailed results and methods. Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator, will review both draft documents. Draft copies will be distributed to the Managers at the next meeting. Eventually, the materials will end up on the BRRWD Website for public use.

- Received plans and specifications from HEI regarding the repair of Wilkin C.D. No. 7. Jones noted that bids will be opened on 10/11/16 at 10:00 AM at the Fargo HEI office. Contractors interested in the project should contact HEI for more information.

- Received a repair report for Wilkin C.D. No. 4 and 4A. The report includes a table showing the existing ditch right-of-way (R/W) in comparison to the R/W needed to comply with the new one-rod (16.5’) grassed Buffer Strip Law. Repairs primarily focus on the area from the C.R. No. 162 crossing to the outlet at the Otter Tail River. The owner of this property will be installing Conservation Reserve Program grassed buffer strips. The Wilkin County Highway Department intends to do the repair with their equipment. The estimated construction costs are $190,000. The County hopes to complete the work yet this fall.

- Agreed to contribute $400 to the Breckenridge Public Schools to start a 4th Grade Outdoor Classroom Adventure.

- Noting that a meeting was held on 09/22/16 with landowners and the NRCS regarding work on Phase 1A of the Wolverton Creek Restoration Project. Landowners along this phase are encouraged to contact the NRCS to file an application to use the Wetlands Reserve Enhancement funding to help complete the project. Earlier in the year, the BRRWD obtained a $2.8 million grant through the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, using their Targeted Watershed Program funds. Estimated project costs are between $11 and $12 million.

- Approved the payment of bills totaling $143,661.80.

- Noting that the 34th Annual Red River Basin Land and Water International Summit Conferenced, titled "Passport to Progress: Thinking Beyond Our Borders", will be held on January 17-19, 2017, at the Ramada Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, Fargo, ND.

- Authorized the repair for three field inlets located in the NE1/4, Section 33, Morken Township, Clay County, on C.D. No. 39. Estimated repair costs are $5,000 to $5,500.

The next meeting of the Board of Managers, BRRWD, is scheduled for Tuesday, October 11, 2016, at 7:00 PM in the BRRWD Office, located at 1303 4th AVE NE, Barnesville, MN. The meeting was moved to Tuesday in observance of the Columbus Day Holiday. All meetings are open to the public. For more information, please visit our website at www.brrwd.org.