"BRRWD Denies Diversion Permit"

At their regular meeting held on June 24, 2019, at 7:00 PM, in Barnesville, following an Executive Session to confer with their Attorney, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), voted to deny the Fargo Moorhead Diversion Authority's Permit No. 19-003 on a roll call vote with Managers Hanson, Larson, Affield, and Fjestad voting in favor, Managers Leitch and Van Amburg voting against, and Manager Anderson abstaining on advice from counsel regarding a possible conflict of interest. A motion made earlier in the meeting to approve Permit No. 19-003, subject to the amended BRRWD conditions, failed on a tied roll call vote with Managers Hanson, Leitch, and Van Amburg voting in favor, Managers Affield, Fjestad, and Larson voting against, and Manager Anderson abstaining. Regarding the issue of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) contested case, a motion to withdraw from the proceeding also failed with Manager Van Amburg voting in favor, Managers Larson, Fjestad, Affield, and Hanson voting against, and Manager Anderson abstaining.

Harold J. Rotunda, Certified Public Accountant, presented the draft 2018 audit. He discussed the BRRWD's management of our project assessment practices, project administration fees, and the Minnesota Statutes Annotated 103D.905, Subd. 3, taxing authority. The Board will review the draft audit and take action to approve it at their next meeting.

Other business included:

- Reviewed the BRRWD's financial status. Cash on hand is $2,418,919.00. Total income since the 6/10/19 meeting was $110,943.34, including $4,185.00 from Audubon Township for 50% of the cost of culvert replacements on Project No. 23, Becker County Ditch No. 15 and $106,758.34 from Becker County for current 2019 property/ditch tax proceeds. The Board approved payment of the bills, totaling $51,165.11.

- Approved permits to Superior Sales & Service LLC to install a new 18” dia. culvert/approach in Lot 7 in the Gloryland Subdivision in Section 11, Hawley Township, Clay County; Wilkin County Highway Department to replace an existing reinforced concrete box culvert in County Road No. 19 in the NW¼, Section 2, Foxhome Township, with a 42” x 58” corrugated metal arch pipe extension with a 36” x 58.5” reinforced concrete arch pipe; Frank Boone for an 8’ wide x 6’ high bridge crossing over a tributary to Whisky Creek he installed last year in the NW¼, Section 36, Barnesville Township, Clay County, on an existing minimum maintenance field road to access his newly constructed farm shop off 180th ST S, plus riprap inside the bridge and on the inlet and outlet ends; and Audubon Township to remove a plugged culvert in 200th ST in the SE¼SE¼, Section 8, install a new 15” dia. culvert through 190th AVE, and clean the east ditch along 190th AVE, outletting to a natural waterway.

- Received a survey report for Project No. 30, Clay/Wilkin Judicial Ditch (J.D.) No. 1-Branch repair. The survey will be forwarded to the adjacent landowners and the Wilkin County Highway Department to see if there is any interest to improve area drainage.

- Authorized signature of the construction contract with States Borders Construction, Inc. for the Wilkin/Otter Tail J.D. No. 2 repair. The pre-construction meeting was held on 6/17/19. The Board also approved Change Order No. 1 in response to the discovery of an existing tile outlet pipe, which increased the excavation quantities to shift the gradeline of the ditch north to allow the pipe to drain. Total pipe and riprap quantities were reduced. The change results in an overall net increase of $2,992.25 to the contract.
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- Approved a motion to proceed with the Reinvest In Minnesota application for the former Blilie property associated with the Wolverton Creek Restoration project.

- Noted that the Stony Creek Preliminary Resolution hearing was held on 6/25/19.

- Noted that the public hearing for the BRRWD Rules update is scheduled for 7/2/19 with the final Rules adoption to take place at the 7/8/19 Board meeting.

- Noted that the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts is hosting their Summer Tour this year in Moorhead at the Courtyard by Marriott on June 26-28, starting with a 6:00 PM Social and Dinner at the Hjemkomst Center in Moorhead.

- Held a special meeting on 6/28/19 at the Vogel Law Firm office in Fargo to consult with BRRWD Attorney Brent Edison regarding the DNR contested case and denial of the Diversion permit application.

The Board of Managers, BRRWD, will hold their next meeting on Monday, July 8, 2019, at 7:00 PM in the BRRWD office, located at 1303 4th AVE NE, Barnesville, MN. All meetings are open to the public. For more information about the BRRWD, please visit our website at www.brrwd.org.