"BRRWD Covers Light Agenda in Record Time"

At their regular meeting held on February 24, 2020, at 7:00 PM in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), covered their agenda items in about 50 minutes and then watched two Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP) training videos on soil health/cover crops to fill out their hour-long meeting. These videos provide training to meet BWSR's Level II PRAP performance standards for Watershed District Managers.

Business included:

- The Board reviewed the BRRWD's financial status. Cash on hand is $2,451,098.43. Total income this year is $267,840.00. Income since the 2/10/20 meeting totals $3,128.59, including a payment from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for our Upper Buffalo River 319 Grant ($579.80), a refund from Premium Waters, Inc. ($48.79), and a payment from Hamden Township for their share of the Becker County Ditch (C.D.) No. 15 repairs ($2,500). The Board approved a motion to hire Harold J. Rotunda, Certified Public Accountant, to complete the BRRWD's 2019 audit. They approved payment of the bills in the amount of $56,933.46.

- Approved permits to the Clay County Highway Department to replace an existing bridge over C.D. No. 10 between Sections 22 and 23, Morken Township, with two lines of 9' x 6' precast concrete box culverts with end sections and minor grading; and the City of Barnesville for the development of the Del Acres Gilbertson 3rd Addition, a 57-lot residential single family home subdivision in the W½, Section 29, Humboldt Township, Clay County, including the installation of sewer, water, storm sewer, paving and grading, and a bituminous bike path along 13th AVE from 4th ST N to 9th ST S.

- Received an update on the status of the Stony Creek Water Resource Project. The office staff has revised the easement options and started forwarding them to the affected landowners. The Stony Creek project has been added to the Red River Basin's proposed $75 million 2020 Legislative bonding bill.

- Received an update on the status of the Fargo Moorhead Diversion lawsuits regarding the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources permit contested case and the Diversion project permit denial appeal.

- Noted that the Wilkin Soil and Water Conservation District has scheduled a meeting on 3/6/20 at the Environmental Office in Breckenridge at 9:00 AM for landowners involved with the Whiskey Creek Restoration project near Kent to discuss the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) grant program. In order to access the potential NWQI funding, local landowners will have to work with NRCS staff to implement conservation practices on their private land. The funding could be used for the implementation of best management practices: side inlets, sediment control basins, and even some of the channel restoration work. The use of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program to acquire the necessary permanent right-of-way will also be reviewed.

- Approved the transfer of 1.09 acres of wetland mitigation credits from the BRRWD's wetland bank to be used for the Oakport project.

- Noted that the draft Total Maximum Daily Load and the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies Reports for the Otter Tail River are being circulated for comments. Once the review period is over and the Reports are adopted, the next step could be to move forward with the One Watershed, One Plan process for the Otter Tail River watershed.

The Board of Managers, BRRWD, will hold their next regular meeting on Monday, March 9, 2020, 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.