"BRRWD Considers Reorganization"

At their regular meeting held on May 26, 2020, at 7:00 PM in Barnesville, the Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), discussed the Clay County Board of Commissioners' action to remove BRRWD President Jay Leitch for cause from the BRRWD Board of Managers, effective immediately. The Board discussed their options for reorganization and agreed to revisit the issue at their 6/8/20 meeting.

Other Business included:

- Reviewed the BRRWD's financial status: Cash on hand is $1,631,272.50. Income received since the 5/11/20 meeting totaled $121,289, and total income this year is $450,210.06. The Board also approved the payment of bills, totaling $157,129.48.

- Approved permits to Bob Leiseth to replace damaged and undersized culverts in the SE¼, Section 17, Alliance Township, Clay County, subject to township approval to work within their road right-of-way (R/W); Myron Ehler to add a new field approach with an 18” dia. culvert in the NE¼, Section 19, Nordick Township, Wilkin County, off County Road No. 18, subject to County approval to work within their R/W; Jeff Lavigne to install pattern tile in the NW¼, Section 25, Elkton Township, Clay County, outletting to Spring Creek and the township road ditch, plus the installation of two approach culverts off the township road, which he also plans to clean; Pheasants Forever to restore one drained wetland basin in the NE¼, Section 14, Eglon Township, Clay County, by removing sediment and constructing a ditch plug with a rock armored spillway; Brian Piekarski to install a single line of 6” dia. tile, 0.25 miles long, to connect low areas in his field to an existing outlet; Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton Public Schools for school building additions and remodeling in Dilworth and Glyndon; and Michael Hasbargen to install pattern tile in the SE¼, Section 22, Nilsen Township, Wilkin County, outletting south into County Ditch (C.D.) No. 3-Branch 3 to which it is assessed.

- Approved a cost share agreement for $1,006.12 with the Clay County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) for two shoreland restoration projects on Turtle Lake, as a project expense.

- Approved an amendment to the Audubon Dakota/Oakport Flood Mitigation project Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to add two habitat restoration sites and to extend the enhancement period.

- Approved the finalized Change Order No. 4 in the amount of $180,773.33 to extend the Wolverton Creek Restoration Phase 1 work downstream approximately 0.5 miles through Section 22, Holy Cross Township, Clay County.

- Authorized BRRWD Engineer Erik Jones, Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI), to submit the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) funding application for a proposed project to establish a corridor for a future river restoration project on the Otter Tail River. The BRRWD is partnering with the Wilkin SWCD and Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to secure voluntary conservation easements along the Otter Tail River by using LSOHC funding. The total funding request is for $4.5 million.

- Authorized beaver control for Whiskey Creek in Wilkin County and the Buffalo River in Becker County.

- Approved repairs for two field inlet culverts with damaged flapgates in Sections 14 and 16, Kurtz Township, Clay County, estimated to cost $2,000-$2,500, as a Clay C.D. No. 33 ditch system expense.

- Approved a National Science Foundation (NSF) Research internship request for Kerria Burns to work with the BRRWD's water quality monitoring program to analyze existing data and also participate in field data collection. The internship is fully funded by NSF funds. The Board approved an MOU from the University of Vermont, and agreed to provide an offer letter for Burns, as her sponsoring organization. Manager Van Amburg will be her onsite supervisor.
• Approved Clay County request to award a contract with Dennis Drewes, Inc. for their low bid of $209,710 for culvert replacements along Clay C.D. Nos. 9 and 11. The Engineer's estimate was $504,126. The BRRWD has entered into a MOU with the Highway Department to complete these repairs.

• Authorized HEI to conduct a survey related to a drainage violation in Section 16, Riverton Township, Clay County.

• Authorized the HR Committee to hire a consultant to analyze the potential cost savings of transitioning the three current HEI office staff members to BRRWD employees and to obtain a legal opinion evaluating whether the current office staffing structure creates a conflict of interest.

• Approved providing a letter of support for Audubon Dakota's LSOHC grant application to purchase and restore approximately 70 acres of habitat in the Bluestem area in South Moorhead north of the BRRWD’s 50th AVE project and to act as fiscal agent/land purchaser for the grant application.

The Board of Managers, BRRWD, will hold their next regular meeting on **Monday, June 22, 2020, at 7:00 PM** in the Barnesville office. Due to the COVID-19 emergency, we plan to hold an electronic meeting in accordance with Minnesota Statutes Annotated, Section 13D.021. The conference line information is: Toll Free 1-833-403-3948 or Local 1-701-499-9476. Access Code 2503. Conference PIN 1401. The public is welcome to dial in to the meeting. More information will be posted on the BRRWD's website prior to the meeting at [www.brrwd.org](http://www.brrwd.org).