

# ***BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT***

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## **BUFFALO-RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT**

### **Glyndon Waterway**

### **Minutes for Landowner Informational Meeting**

**August 22, 2019**

The Board of Managers, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District (BRRWD), held a landowner informational meeting regarding the Glyndon Waterway on Thursday, August 22, 2019, at 7:00 PM in the Glyndon Community Center. BRRWD Managers present were Gerald L. Van Amburg and John E. Hanson. BRRWD staff attending included: Bruce E. Albright, Administrator, Kathleen K. Fenger, Assistant Administrator, Erik S. Jones, Engineer, and Bennett Uhler, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI). Others attending included: Lynn Foss, Clay Soil Water Conservation District (SWCD); Cecil Johnson, Mayor, and Wendy Affield, Clerk/Treasurer, City of Glyndon; and landowners: Kemp Lass, Irene Lass, Jeffery Possehl, Gary Leach, Jamie Leach, LeRoy Babolian, Pat Babolian, Larry Babolian, Janice Huwe, Carter Neset, Bill Davis, and Wade Savageau.

Bruce E. Albright, BRRWD Administrator, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He introduced the BRRWD Board and Staff and announced that the proceedings were being recorded to aid in the preparation of the minutes. An attendance sign-up sheet was circulated.

Albright began the meeting by going over some of the history of the project. For years, the BRRWD has been aware that there are problems along this waterway, and we have worked with the City of Glyndon in this regard to address beavers and drainage of water from the City's lagoon system. An informational meeting was held on March 27, 2018, at which time it was determined that a survey of the waterway should be conducted. HEI conducted the survey and filed their report on June 25, 2018. A copy of their report is on the BRRWD's website at [www.brrwd.org](http://www.brrwd.org). The survey identified numerous reasons why the waterway doesn't drain properly, including beaver dams and under sized crossings. Albright noted that the BRRWD met with the City of Glyndon earlier this year to review the survey results and decided to schedule a meeting with landowners to inform them of the issues to gauge their interest in resolving the problem.

Erik Jones, BRRWD Engineer, referred to a survey wall map of the waterway and pointed out the areas that are causing most of the water issues. A drone field review was completed May 3, 2018, and a field survey was completed June 21, 2018. Jones presented the drone video of the waterway to give a better sense of the issues. The waterway flows northwesterly through Sections 1, 2, and 12, Glyndon Township, Sections 5, 6, and 9, Riverton Township, and Section 35, Moland Township, Clay County, before entering the Buffalo River. The survey started near the north-south quarter line of Section 12, Glyndon Township (northeast of the City sanitary lagoons) and proceeded northwesterly downstream. The survey consisted of a channel profile, sediment test pits, and culvert elevation and sizes along the waterway. In addition, any channel blockages were also surveyed, such as beaver dams. In total, approximately 3.5 miles of the channel were surveyed. A series of beaver dams were identified along the channel. Sediment test pits indicate that there is at least 1' of sediment in the channel with many stretches having up to several feet, primarily behind dams or blockages.

Except for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad bridge, all remaining channel crossings are culverted in the surveyed reach and are as follows:

Station	Culvert Crossing Description	Waterway Area
127+00	15 <sup>th</sup> AVE N 3 Lines of 12' x 8' RCB Culvert	282 sq. ft.
173+00	Field Crossing 24" dia. CMP	3.14 sq. ft.
242+20	Trunk Highway (T.H.) No. 10 2 lines of 10' x 6' RCB culvert	116 sq. ft.
245+00	Field Crossing 15" dia. PVC	1.23 sq. ft.
253+50	Field Crossing 15" dia. RCP culvert and 24" dia. RCP	4.37 sq. ft.

Albright explained that the area in question was identified in the mid-1980's by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as "protected waters", so a DNR permit would be needed before any work could be done on this waterway. It is a process that adds to the complexity of the project development. Albright provided a handout that lists what can be done without a DNR permit and included beaver removal. He also noted that each landowner in the survey area is currently responsible for maintenance of the waterway on their property. The BRRWD does not have jurisdiction.

Landowner Janice Huwe informed the group that her neighbor, David Palya, has been exploring a way to address the beaver dam problems, but there has been too much water this summer.

Albright explained that the BRRWD would consider making this a project given the fact that DNR permitting is involved. To acquire funding, a benefit area also needs to be established. The next step would be to refer this potential project to the BRRWD Managers and their Mediation Project Team (PT) for further review and analysis.

Albright clarified that the beaver dams are a large part of the issue. Beaver trappers could be hired to remove the beaver for a short-term solution. However, the three small pipes crossing the waterway are also slowing down the water with sediment buildup, causing significant blockage, which is evident according to the survey.

Huwe asked if the City releases the lagoon continually or periodically. Mayor Cecil Johnson replied that the water is released in phases and is regulated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

Bill Davis asked if the curves in the waterway could be straightened. Albright explained that the curves would probably have to remain because, environmentally, the DNR would not allow straightening. A landowner suggested the BRRWD could start with getting rid of the beavers, then clean out the sediment.

Manager Van Amburg pointed out that the landowners in the red boundary area on the map could be assessed if a Water Management District (WMD) was formed. Albright explained that if a project is established, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) and BNSF could be a part of the assessment area. Jones noted that everyone that benefits from the project needs to be assessed. Albright suggested that the water management system assessment process should be kept simple by setting a nominal fee.

Jones explained that if a watershed project were established, the cost estimate would be \$300,000.00 to \$500,000.00. The sediment excavation would be limited to the very bottom of the channel. Cleanout could be done on one side of the channel where the excavator would remove trees and sediment to eliminate tree removal for future excavation. No fill can be placed in the wetland areas.

Albright suggested asking the landowners for an easement to access their property and clarified that the waterway is already "public waters".

Johnson asked if it would be difficult to get the DNR involved. Albright explained the DNR will want to review the survey data before they will issue a permit for work in protected waters. Jones noted that the test pits that were done in the survey will provide valuable information for the DNR permit.

Albright suggested in the first year, the beaver dams could be removed; the second year, we could address the culvert issues; and the third year, remove trees/sediment. Van Amburg asked if the City could apply for funding since their lagoons are involved with the project. A landowner asked what the life expectancy was for the City lagoons. Johnson replied that the lagoon system has been there for 20 to 25 years and the MPCA says it is still working well. Albright noted that as more homes are being built in Glyndon, a new system might be needed in the future.

Albright informed the group that he would work with Johnson to outline the plan and obtain a permit through the DNR before any work could be done. A question was asked if the landowners could attend the meeting with the DNR since it is an "open meeting". Albright informed them that they could attend or invite the DNR to Glyndon for a meeting if that was more convenient for the landowners.

The group discussed potential tax assessment scenarios that could be used to fund the project. Albright noted that the BRRWD could not put a taxing district in place without having a hearing and notifying landowners.

Albright encouraged the landowners to contact the BRRWD with their questions or comments regarding this issue. At 7:55 PM, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

John E. Hanson, Secretary