BUFFALO – RED RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

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www.brrwd.org

# Budget Hearing & Board Meeting Minutes

Monday October 12, 2026

**Managers Present:** Peter Fjestad; Catherine Affield; William Davis; Curtis Stubstad; William Steffl; Amos Baer.
**Managers Absent:** Troy Larson.
**Staff Present:** Kristine Goeden, Administrator.
**Consultants Present:** Bennett Uhler, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI).
**Others Attending:** Jenny Mongeau, Clay County Commission; Michael Miller (remote).

President Fjestad called meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

**Agenda: Motion** by Davis to approve agenda with addition:
Drone Discussion
**Seconded** by Affield. **Motion Carried.**

**Citizens to be Heard:**
**Jenny Mongeau.** Mongeau noted City of Barnesville is working on their Wellhead Protection Plan. The Moorhead-Clay County Joint Powers Agreement (MCCJPA) is working with the Metro Flood Diversion Authority (MFDA) on a debris management plan. They want to make sure MFDA is working with BRRWD and there is a clear inventory of who is responsible for each culvert.

**Consent Agenda: Motion** by Affield to approve consent agenda items:
September 14, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes
Financial Report
Permit Nos.
- 26-048, Terry Alder – water and sediment control basin (WASCOB), SW ¼, Section 8, Callaway Township, Becker County with conditions
- 26-081, Tim Jaehning – tiling, E ½ SW ¼, Section 1, McCauleyville Township, Wilkin County with conditions
- 26-082, Tim Jaehning – tiling, SE ¼, Section 1, Wolverton Township, Wilkin County with conditions
- 26-083, Tim Jaehning – tiling, SE ¼, Section 23, Roberts Township, Wilkin County with conditions
- 26-084, Fergus Falls Fish and Game Club, c/o Doug Wells – installation of Texas crossing, SE ¼, Section 5, Orwell Township, Otter Tail County with conditions
- 26-085, Levi Stenerson – WASCOB, NE ¼, Section 11, Carlisle Township, Otter Tail County with conditions
- 26-086, Tim Christopher – culvert installation, NE ¼, Section 14, Breckenridge Township, Wilkin County with conditions

Pj. No. 85 – Upper South Branch Buffalo River Restoration, Phase 2 Pay Estimate No. 4 for $274,632.75
**Seconded** by Steffl. **Motion Carried.**

**Projects:**

**Project No. 79 – Wolverton Creek. Culvert Installation. Change Order No. 1 and Pay Estimate No. 1. Motion** by Stubstad to approve Change Order No. 1 for $4,788.00, **Seconded** by Davis. **Motion Carried. Motion** by Affield to approve Pay Estimate No. 1 for $136,548.25, **Seconded** by Steffl. **Motion Carried.**

**Project No. 80 – Stony Creek Restoration. Notice of Violation.** At the September 2026 Board Meeting, Board of Managers discussed fence violation in easement area. Attorney Bennett Johnson, Vogel Law Firm, recommended to staff that Board of Managers consider issuing a Notice of Violation and Hearing. This Notice give landowners an opportunity to attend the November Board Meeting to be heard. **Motion** by Davis to issue Notice of Violation and Hearing giving landowner 45 days to address fencing concerns and adding requirement to remove culvert and excess gravel added in the easement area, **Seconded** by Steffl. **Motion Carried.**

**Whisky Creek Restoration, Barnesville Township. Project Update.** At the July 2026 Board Meeting, Board of Managers discussed requesting an extension for funds received from Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC). At that time, Board of Managers directed staff to continue working with landowners to modify project design. Board of Managers also directed staff to request extension. Staff initiated extension request and met with LSOHC staff. It was recommended that BRRWD only continue with extension request if work could be completed by June 2029. It was recommended that if BRRWD needed additional time to work with landowners to modify project design, BRRWD should return funding and reapply when project is ready to move forward. Uhler provided update on adding storage component to project. Modeling shows it is possible to store water in Section 22, Barnesville Township to reduce peak flows downstream. Staff will begin working with landowners to see if there is interest in moving forward with plans for a storage site in this area. **Motion** by Davis to return LSOHC funds and reapply when project is closer to construction, **Seconded** by Affield. **Motion Carried.**

**Ditches:**

**Clay County Ditch No. 50. Concreate Liner Repair Update.** Key Contracting, Inc. is currently repairing concrete liner of Clay County Ditch No. 50. Since they began the repair an additional 230 feet of concrete liner has fallen into the channel and is in need of repair. Additional work can be added as a change order on to the existing contract. Board of Managers agreed work needed to be completed.

**Wilkin County Ditch No. 12. Order to Perform Work to Remedy Noncompliance.** Landowner in SE ¼, Section 30, Nilsen Township has a non-compliant buffer and a Corrective Action Notice was issued in April 2024. Landowner did not correct action within eleven month deadline and BRRWD issued an Order to Perform Work to Remedy Noncompliance in October 2025 and reseeded buffer in November 2025. 2026 inspection found landowner is still in violation. It is recommended Board of Managers issue second Order to Perform Work to Remedy Noncompliance before considering additional legal action. **Motion** by Stubstad to approve Order as presented, **Seconded** by Affield. **Motion Carried.**

**Wilkin/Otter Tail Judicial Ditch No. 2. Order to Perform Work to Remedy Noncompliance.** Landowner in S ½ of the SW ¼, Section 18 Carlisle Township, Otter Tail County has a non-compliant buffer and a Corrective Action Notice was issued in July 2025. Landowner did not correct action within eleven month deadline. It is recommended Board of Managers issue Order to Perform Work to Remedy Noncompliance. **Motion** by Stubstad to approve Order as presented, **Seconded** by Steffl. **Motion Carried.**

**Wilkin/Otter Tail Judicial Ditch No. 2. Order to Perform Work to Remedy Noncompliance.** Landowner in W ½ of the W ½, Section 30 and SW ¼, Section 31, Carlisle Township, Otter Tail County has a non-compliant buffer and a Corrective Action Notice was issued in July 2025. Landowner did not correct action within eleven month deadline. It is recommended Board of Managers issue Order to Perform Work to Remedy Noncompliance. **Motion** by Affield to approve Order as presented, **Seconded** by Stubstad. **Motion Carried.**

**Wilkin County Ditch No. 37. Township Cost-share Request.** Nilsen Township requested Board of Manager consider cost sharing replacement of two failing culverts in line with Wilkin County Ditch No. 37. One culvert is a 48" x 60' corrugated metal pipe (cmp) underneath 280th Ave between Section 31, Andrea Township and Section 36, Nilsen Township. The second culvert is a 77" x 52" x 50' corrugated metal pipe arch (cmpa) underneath 260th Ave between Sections 34 and 35 Nilsen Township. Estimated cost for 48" x 60' cmp is $6,000.00 and for 77" x 52" x 50' cmpa is

$10,000.00. Per BRRWD's Cost share for Culverts through Township Roads on Public Drainage Systems Policy Board of Managers considered cost sharing up to 50 percent of the cost of the culverts ($8,000.00). **Motion** by Davis to approve cost sharing on two culverts as requested, **Seconded** by Affield. **Motion Carried.**

**Other:**

**Project & Ditch. Weed Management Authorization.** Board of Mangers discussed granting staff authority to manage noxious weeds along projects and ditches to allow staff to address areas of concern immediately instead of waiting for authorization at a Board Meeting. **Motion** by Stubstad to authorize staff to manage noxious weeds along projects and ditches in the jurisdiction of BRRWD as staff are notified of noxious weed concerns, **Seconded** by Affield. **Motion Carried.** Board of Mangers discussed adding a cost limit to staff authorization. **Motion** by Stubstad to authorize staff to manage noxious weeds along projects and ditches up to a limit of $10,000.00 per month, unless Board President authorizes additional expenses as needed, **Seconded** by Davis. **Motion Carried.**

**Stream Gaging Equipment.** BRRWD has been monitoring stream flows in 8 locations since 2011. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has been loaning BRRWD equipment since 2011, however, MPCA will no longer be loaning equipment for this program. BRRWD has a contract with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) to service and maintain the stream gaging equipment through January 31, 2028. MPCA has agreed to continue to loan equipment through the end of that contract. Board of Mangers discussed continuing the program past January 2028. MNDNR has indicated contract cost will likely double in 2028. With the added cost of equipment and increased cost to maintain equipment, Board of Managers discussed discontinuing the program. Staff reached out to partner agencies, and the data is not currently being used. Board of Managers will consider an agreement with MPCA at a future Board Meeting to continue utilizing the equipment through January 2028.

**2027 Board Meeting Date and Time.** Board of Managers will set the date and time for regular Board Meetings at the Annual Meeting in January 2027. Board of Managers discussed options for meeting times. Board of Mangers agreed current schedule of the second Monday of the month at 7:00 PM worked well.

**Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). 2027 Member.** Board of Mangers reviewed the 2026 Citizens Advisory Committee Members. Board of Managers will appoint the CAC at their Annual Meeting in January. 2027.

**Rules of Order.** Board of Mangers reviewed proposed Rules of Order. **Motion** by Stubstad to adopt Rules of Order as presented, **Seconded** by Davis. **Motion Carried.**

**Minnesota Watersheds. Annual Conference.** Fjestad and Affield plan to attend and are registered. Stubstad and Baer plan to attend.

**Drone Discussion.** Board of Managers discussed option of purchasing done equipment to aid in ditch and project inspections. Davis noted there are areas that may be too dangerous to drive an ATV, where a drone would be useful. Goeden noted staff operating drone would need to be licensed and BRRWD would need additional liability insurance. In addition, BRRWD would need to purchase software to process imagery. Currently, when there is an area that is difficult to access, staff request HEI complete investigation with their drone. To date, this has worked well. Board of Managers agreed BRRWD should continue to utilize HEI when drone images are needed.

**Bills. Motion** by Affield to approve bills totaling $1,162,143.96, **Seconded** by Stubstad. **Motion Carried.**

**Next Regular Meeting.** Monday November 9, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office.

President Fjestad adjourned meeting at 8:55 PM.

/s/ William Davis
Secretary