



1303 4TH Ave. NE
Barnesville, MN 56514
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www.brrwd.org

Board Meeting Minutes

Monday May 11, 2026

Managers Present: Peter Fjestad; Catherine Affield; William Davis; Curtis Stubstad; Gerald Van Amburg; William Steffl.

Managers Absent: Troy Larson.

Staff Present: Kristine Goeden, Administrator; Matthew Schlauderaff, Watershed Specialist.

Consultants Present: Bennett Uhler, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI); Bennett Johnson, Vogel Law Firm.

Others Attending: John Tompson; David Grommesh; Pete Thompson; Dan Berg; Judy Shulstad; Stuart Shulstad; Roy Gilbertson; Teresa Gilbertson; Ed Gilbertson; Frank Schindler; Daniel Swenson; Mark Rustad; Jerry Butenhoff; Steven Thompson; Jeff Thompson; Todd Affield; Craig Hurner; Ray Bernard; Jerry Tenderholt; Tim Thompson; Ronald Butenhoff; John Peterson; Inez Settlemyer; Greg Settlemyer; Tim Friederichs; Greg Grommesh; Bob Cook; Paul Krabbenhoft, Clay County Commission; Jon Braton, Wilkin County Commission; Ross Aigner (remote).

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

Agenda: Additions to agenda:

Project No. 80 – Stony Creek Maintenance Concern Follow-up

Motion by Stubstad to approve agenda with addition, **Seconded** by Affield. **Motion Carried.**

Citizens to be Heard:

Ross Aigner. C-W Valley Co-op Follow-up. Aigner thanked Clay County Commissioner Jenny Mongeau for coordinating meeting with the Metro Flood Diversion Authority (MFDA) lands committee. He stated C-W Valley Co-op decided to build own levee. Once plans are completed, C-W Valley Co-op plans to request permit from BRRWD.

Craig Hurner expressed concern about neighbors planting crops in road ditch near his property in Section 35, Morken Township, Clay County. This results in plugging the ditch. Hurner requested BRRWD defend his right to drain his land. Van Amburg recommended BRRWD staff talk to Township officials. Van Amburg stated BRRWD is not able to enforce anything because it is a Township road ditch.

Bob Cook stated he is in contact with United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to start a trout farm along Deerhorn Creek. Cook plans to pump water out of Deerhorn Creek and through buildings and then put water back into Deerhorn Creek.

Steven Thompson asked if a levee is constructed and water spills over and flood property if landowner is entitled to damage payment. Uhler stated projects are designed to maintain breakouts, so water breaks out of channel where it would break out prior to construction of a proposed project. This is to ensure project does not worsen flood conditions downstream.

Jerry Butenhoff expressed concern with increased water downstream when Stony Creek is full. J. Butenhoff expressed concern that Stony Creek project was constructed without a retention site. J. Butenhoff wanted Board of Managers to look at retention.

Todd Affield stated water is getting worse and noted trees are washed out. T. Affield stated channel is 4 feet wider on his property and too much water flows through his property.

Mark Rustad stated he owns property where Whisky Creek meet the South Branch Buffalo River in Section 10, Alliance Township, Clay County. He questioned why water would be sent downstream as a solution.

Tim Friederichs stated BRRWD claimed retention site by his property in Humboldt Township was a federal project and questioned why BRRWD would not take responsibility for maintenance. Board of Managers confirmed project was a federal project through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Board of Managers stated project is not under their jurisdiction.

T. Affield questioned why retention was not included in construction of Stony Creek when plans discussed a retention site. Uhler noted final plans brought to the Stony Creek Hearing did not include a retention site.

Rustad stated his land in Section 15, Alliance Township, Clay County is at the end of proposed Whisky Creek, Barnesville Township, Restoration project area. He stated water from Whisky Creek comes hard and fast to his property. Rustad worried water is being pushed downstream. He questioned why BRRWD was not talking about retention. Rustad wondered if BRRWD was not compensating landowners enough for people to be interested in offering land for retention. Rustad questioned the Engineer's Report. Uhler noted hydraulic model is up to date with current acceptable engineering design standards. Rainfall distributions are determined from the latest published data from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Rustad asked Board of Managers to pause plans to move forward.

Stuart Shulstad discussed Minnesota Statute 103D.901 – Assessments; Levies Subpart 4. Assessments not to exceed benefits. Uhler noted assessments utilized 103D.729 water management district. S. Shulstad noted he wanted Board of Managers to hold back water at Grove Lake.

Greg Grommesh stated culverts on property in Section 22, Atherton Township, Wilkin County along Deerhorn Creek washed out after Deerhorn Creek project was constructed. G. Grommesh stated culverts cost approximately \$32,000.00. Schlauderaff noted Board of Managers authorized HEI to survey channel and determine culvert sizing. Board of Managers authorized HEI to complete analysis and help G. Grommesh obtain a permit from Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR). G. Grommesh stated he believes BRRWD project washed out culverts and wants BRRWD to purchase culverts.

Tim Thompson stated Board of Managers needed to listen and talk about retention. T. Thompson expressed concern about a retention site on his property. T. Thompson stated there are landowners willing to give up land for retention on Stony Creek.

Cook stated there are five beaver dams on Deerhorn Creek that are planned to be removed. Cook expressed concern that water would come faster once dams are removed.

Consent Agenda: Motion by Affield to approve consent agenda items:

April 13, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2026 Whisky Creek, Barnesville Township, Restoration Hearing Minutes

Financial Report

Permit Nos.

26-007, Ross Aigner – tiling, NW ¼, Section 1, Mitchell Township, Wilkin County with conditions

26-022, Marshall Hendricks – culvert installation, SE ¼, Section 27, Elmwood Township, Clay County with conditions

26-023, Lowry Engineering, c/o Andrew Thill – land development, SE ¼, Section 21, Moorhead Township, Clay County

26-024, City of Moorhead, c/o Tom Trowbridge – land development, NE ¼, Section 29, Moorhead Township, Clay County

26-025, Mason Herbranson – water and sediment control basins (WASCOBs), SW ¼, Section 4, Tansem Township, Clay County with conditions

26-026, Scot Manthe – culvert installation/land development, SW ¼, Section 9, Hawley Township, Clay County with conditions

26-027, Kevin Lunde – tiling, SW ¼, Section 3, Lake Park Township, Becker County with conditions

26-028, Alex Soyring – culvert installation, SE ¼, Section 1, Elkton Township, Clay County with conditions

26-029, Greg Grommesh– culvert installation/ditching, Sections 7 and 8, Humboldt Township, Clay County with conditions

Pj. No. 85 – Upper South Branch Buffalo River Restoration Phase 2, Pay Estimate No. 1 for \$7,837.03

Seconded by Van Amburg. **Motion Carried.**

Permits for Discussion:

Permit No. 26-029. Mark Carr. Applicant proposing to tile NW ¼, Section 33, Elkton Township, Clay County. Natural flow path of water remains unchanged. Tile outlets into Clay County Ditch No. 17, which is an adequate outlet. Land is included in benefit area for Clay County Ditch No. 17. Uhler recommended approval subject to standard tile conditions and approval from road authority to work within road right-of-way (ROW). **Motion** by Van Amburg to approve Permit No. 26-029 with conditions outlined above, **Seconded** by Steffl. **Motion Carried.**

Projects:

Project No. 81 – Whiskey Creek Enhancement. Effectiveness Monitoring Grant Agreement. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved work plan for Whiskey Creek Effectiveness Monitoring. BRRWD is now waiting on Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to finalize grant agreement. Board of Managers reviewed draft agreement. **Motion** by Affield to authorize Goeden to sign grant agreement and sign contract with International Water Institute to complete water quality sampling, **Seconded** by Davis. **Motion Carried.**

Project No. 84 – City of Wolverton Flood Mitigation Project. Pre-Construction Easement Management Discussion. Landowners who have signed or will sign permanent easements for City of Wolverton Flood Mitigation Project requested Board of Managers discuss how weeds will be managed on easements before construction. **Motion** by Stubstad to allow landowners to manage their own weeds and be reimbursed at a standard rate, **Seconded** by Steffl. Board of Managers directed staff to find North Dakota State University (NDSU) standard rate and work with MFDA to determine if they also have a standard rate. **Motion Carried.**

Project No. 80 – Stony Creek Restoration. Maintenance Concern Follow-up. At the Whiskey Creek, Barnesville Township, Restoration Hearing on May 4, 2026, landowners informed Board of Managers that there were repairs on Stony Creek that had not been addressed. HEI completed a drone flight and determined all sixteen rock riffles installed as part of the project were in good condition. The channel was also in good condition. Uhler noted Stony Creek BRRWD inspects projects annually and Stony Creek was last inspected in fall 2025.

Board of Managers went into Closed Executive Session at 8:31 PM

Pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.05, subd. 3(b), Closed Meeting: Attorney—Client Privilege for proposed Whiskey Creek, Barnesville Township, Restoration Project and Clay County Ditch No. 34 Reroute Petition and Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13D.05, subd. 3(c)(3), Closed Meeting: Counteroffers for the Purchase of Real Property for proposed Whiskey Creek, Barnesville Township, Restoration Project.

Minnesota Statute 13D.05, subd. 3(b), Closed Meeting: Attorney—Client Privilege for proposed Whiskey Creek, Barnesville Township, Restoration Project and Clay County Ditch No. 34 Reroute Petition.

Attorney Johnson discussed threatened litigation with Board of Managers.

Minnesota Statute 13D.05, subd. 3(c)(3), Closed Meeting: Counteroffers for the Purchase of Real Property for proposed Whiskey Creek, Barnesville Township, Restoration Project.

No Discussion.

Closed Executive Session ended at 9:11 PM.

Whisky Creek, Barnesville Township, Restoration. Project Establishment Order. Davis noted Board of Managers considered comments received from the public. Davis stated BRRWD currently has funding to complete channel restoration of Whisky Creek. Individuals that provided public comment expressed desire for water retention in the watershed. Davis noted cost of retention site would fall on landowners. **Motion** by Davis to not continue with Whisky Creek, Barnesville Township, Restoration Project, **Seconded** by Van Amburg. Roll Call Vote: Aye – Fjestad, Affield, Davis, Van Amburg, Steffl. Abstained – Stubstad. **Motion Carried.**

Ditches:

Clay County Ditch No. 33. Outlet Repair. Award Contract. **Motion** by Steffl to award contract to apparent lowest bidder, KCI Construction, LLC from Frazee, MN for \$183,222.50, **Seconded** by Stubstad. **Motion Carried.**

Clay County Ditch No. 40. Maintenance Request. BRRWD staff were notified of badger burrows along the buffer strip on Clay County Ditch No. 40 in Section 27, Kurtz Township. Schlauderaff recommended Board of Managers hire trapper to remove badgers and have contractor repair holes to maintain the integrity of the ditch. Schlauderaff recommended paying trapper the same rate as beavers (\$100 per beaver plus Internal Revenue Service (IRS) mileage rate). Estimated cost for contractor to repair holes is \$1,000.00. **Motion** by Davis to approve repair as recommended, **Seconded** by Stubstad. **Motion Carried.**

Clay County Ditch No 50. Concrete Liner Repair. BRRWD staff have been monitoring concrete liners on Clay County Ditch No. 50. Currently, there is a total of 1,660 feet of concrete liner that are separating and in various states of failure. Schlauderaff recommended Board of Managers repair the most urgent sections in 2026 and continue to monitor the remaining sections. Schlauderaff recommended Board of Managers consider repairing 5 sections of liner totaling 665 feet of channel. Estimated cost is \$305,000.00. **Motion** by Davis to create plans to repair 665 feet of channel liner as recommended, **Seconded** by Affield. **Motion Carried.**

Drainage Repair Recommendations

Drainage	Township	Section	Problem/Proposed Work	Estimated Cost
Clay County Ditch No. 60	Holy Cross	15	Sediment in channel. Remove roughly 1/2 mile of sediment from ditch bottom.	\$6,000 - \$8,000
Wilkin County Ditch No. 43	Atherton	27	Failing side inlet. Remove and install 18"x45' corrugated metal pipe (cmp) with flapgate.	\$3,000 - \$4,000
Pj. 54, Whisky Creek	Barnesville	14	Spray willows along channel and cattails in ditch.	\$1,000
Pj. 80, Stony Creek	Barnesville	3 & 4	Spray willows along channel.	\$1,000

Motion by Stubstad to approve repairs as presented, **Seconded** by Van Amurg. **Motion Carried.**

Other:

Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Mid-point Evaluation. Grant Agreement. **Motion** by Stubstad to authorize Goeden to sign grant agreement with Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for \$38,400.00, **Seconded** by Affield. **Motion Carried.**

Human Resources. Financial Authorization. **Motion** by Stubstad to authorize Renee Mortenson, BRRWD's Administrative Assistant and Accounting Specialist to have access to BRRWD financial accounts at Midwest Bank to allow her to complete duties of her position, **Seconded** by Affield. **Motion Carried.**

Minnesota Watersheds. Summer Tour Registration. Minnesota Watersheds will host their annual tour in Detroit Lakes, MN on August 25 through August 27. All Managers expressed interest in attending. Fjestad and Affield plan to attend.

Bills. **Motion** by Affield to approve bills totaling \$301,966.93, **Seconded** by Davis. **Motion Carried.**

Next Regular Meeting. Monday June 8, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Barnesville office.

President Fjestad adjourned meeting at 9:29 PM.

/s/ William Davis
Secretary