



Sauk River Watershed District Regular Meeting
MINUTES

Tuesday, September 19th, 2023

Located at: St Cloud Municipal Drinking Water Plant, St. Cloud, MN at 6:00 p.m.

Managers Present:	Bill Becker, Paul Hartmann, Scott Wittkop, Scott Klatt, , Russell Miller, David Zerr, Eugene Mensen
Staff Present:	John Kolb, Attorney; Jon Roeschlein, Administrator; Galen Gruber, Ditch and Permit Manager, Steve Zeece III, Water Resources Manager
Guests Present:	Paul Wildman, Steve Notch
Manager’s Absent:	Kevin Lahr, Donavon McKigney

Public Comments - None

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance** – The meeting was called to order by President Becker at 6:00 p.m.

2. **Additions/corrections to the agenda** – President asked for corrections or additions to the agenda. There were none. **Manager Wittkop made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Manager Hartmann. The motion passed with all in favor.**

3. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Financial Reports/Meeting Minutes
 1. Checks for August
 2. Receipt Book
 3. Revenue Guideline
 4. Cash Balances
 5. Expenditure Report
 6. August 15th, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
 7. Permit Summary Table

Manager Zerr made a motion to approve the consent agenda with a typographical correction to the minutes. The motion was seconded by Manager Wittkop. The motion passed with all in favor.

4. **Reports – Action Items, Reports and Project Updates** – *Administrator Roeschlein and staff*
 - a. Administration
 - i. Sauk River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (SRCWMP) – Fiscal Agent Agreement – Administrator Roeschlein reported to the board and presented a fiscal agent agreement for the Sauk River Watershed Collaborative describing the need for the revision. The revision is necessary to obtain additional grant funding other than the watershed-based implementation funding grants to be used by the collaborative to implement the comprehensive watershed management plan. The previous agreement was specific to the fiscal year 2022-2023. The revisions broaden the scopes of the fiscal agent’s abilities

to utilize additional grant funding, as well as, to continue managing future watershed-based implementation fund grants without revision to the agreement every 2 years. **Manager Zerr made a motion to approve the revised fiscal agent agreement for the Sauk River Watershed Collaborative. The motion was seconded by Manager Wittkop. The motion passed with majority in favor, Manager Mensen opposing.**

- ii. Administrator Report – Roeschlein was asked to present his Administrator’s Report. He reported that the preliminary levy for the calendar year 2024 was certified to the counties on September 17th, 2023. He also noted that the agreement with Peterson Companies for the audit has been signed.
- iii. Outreach/Education Department Update-Web Analytics – Roeschlein pointed out the schedule that Adam Hjelm, Public Outreach Coordinator, had included in his report. He highlighted the fall Community Education Zoom classes, the 2023-2024 WaterFest schedule, and the Lunch and Learn program scheduled for discussing drainage in December, January, February, and March. He noted to the board that if they would like to participate in any of these events, that they should contact Adam and make the arrangements. He encouraged the board to take in some of these events to have a better understanding of the district’s education program.
- iv. Monitoring Department Update – The board reviewed Allison Lightfoot’s Environmental Monitoring Manager’s Report. The report indicated that water levels are down and that the headwaters of the Sauk River at Osakis Lake outlet has now stopped flowing.
- v. Water Resources Manager Update- Water Resources Manager Steve Zeece III presented his monthly report. He reported that the district’s presentation to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council on the phase 5 application went well. He also noted that the Council has more requests for funding than they have funding to distribute and therefore, staff expects that the district’s request will be lessened to some extent and the district will need to revise the workplan to accommodate. He also reported that he has submitted a grant application to the Conservation Partners Legacy Program to fund the Little Birch Lake outlet rock arch rapid modification. He also submitted a grant application for the MPCA Small Communities Planning Grant for Stormwater, Wastewater, and Community Resilience. This grant application was submitted for funding to be used as match for the US Army Corps of Engineers Planning Assistance to States Study Grant.

b. Projects

- i. JD 2 Watershed – The board reviewed a report on the JD 2 Watershed area. Administrator Roeschlein highlighted the kickoff meeting that was held with the US Army Corps of Engineers to begin the Lake Osakis Planning Assistance to States Grant and Alternatives Analysis Report work. He also noted that if the Community Planning for Stormwater, Wastewater, and Community Resilience Grant through the MPCA is awarded to the district, staff will know around November 15th. The Crooked Lake bus tour was held September 7th with 47 people registered. Roeschlein provided a copy of the booklet that was distributed at the tour. He also noted that the JD 2 sed ponds have been posted with no trespassing signs. Tentatively, staff are planning a workshop on the sed

pond project for October. The intention is to share the history and the background of the project, as well as, the results of the latest survey of the ponds showing the volume of the sediment collected since the clean out in 2019.

- ii. Long (Higgins) Lake Outlet Project – Roeschlein indicated there was nothing new to report.
- iii. Little Birch Lake Outlet Structure – Roeschlein reported that a grant application was submitted to assist with the cost of the modification to the outlet from a fixed weir to a rock arch rapids design. If awarded, the Conservation Partners Legacy Program grant could fund up to 90% of the estimated cost which is estimated at \$325,000. The 10% match requirement would be met using the local project assessment area. If the grant is awarded, that match amount will include dollars already spent on the project over the past 18 months. Staff continue to work to re-establish the assessment area and presented 3 options for the board to consider in reestablishing the assessment area around Little Birch Lake. **President Becker made a motion to approve option #2 to hire 1 appraiser to provide a recommendation to assist the board in determining the benefits and damages in accordance with Minnesota Statute 103D.721. The motion was seconded by Manager Miller. The motion passed with majority in favor, Manager Mensen opposing.**
- iv. Ellis Wetland Restoration – Final Pay Request – The board reviewed the final payment request to Landwehr Construction for the Gary Ellis Wetland Restoration project. It was noted that there was an error in the payment request form, missing one of the change orders that would account for approximately \$1600 of the difference between the contract price and the work completed price. **President Becker made a motion to approve the final payment request of \$26,552.66 to Landwehr Construction and provide the documentation for the additional approximately \$1600 at the next meeting for approval. The motion was seconded by Manager Hartmann. The motion passed with all in favor.**
- v. Ashley Creek Shoreline Restoration-Bauer Site – The board discussed the streambank restoration project on the Wayne Bauer property. Staff provided a report stating that the project was completed in 2019 adjacent to Ashley Creek. This was in a partnership with the Todd SWCD and the Northwest Technical Assistance Service Area staff. Grant funds that the Sauk River Watershed District (SRWD) held were used to pay for the installation. This project was set up as a demonstration project and to get the project to move forward at that point, the SRWD agreed to perform the maintenance and operations on the site for the term of the contract, which is 10 years. The project is determined to be in need of maintenance. **Manager Hartmann made a motion to authorize staff to spend up to \$10,000 for approximately 50 cubic yards of rock to stabilize the bank between the root wads where work is necessary. The motion was seconded by President Becker. Roll call vote was taken: Hartmann, aye; Mensen, no; Klatt, no; Becker, aye; Wittkop, aye; Zerr, aye; Miller, no. The motion passed with majority in favor, three opposed.**

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- vi. MN Watersheds Newsletter & Legislative Report – Roeschlein noted that the MN Watershed Newsletter was in their board packet along with the Legislative Report for activities and accomplishments over the last several years.
- c. Committees
 - i. Water Quality/Projects – Managers Becker, Hartmann, and McKigney – No report
 - ii. Rules – Managers Klatt, Lahr, Mensen - No report
 - iii. Public Relations/Education – Managers Wittkop, Zerr, Miller – No report
 - iv. Budget Committee – Executive Board - No report
 - v. Personnel Committee – Executive Board - No report
5. **Items for Upcoming Meetings or of Interest**
- a. October 17th, 2023 – JD 2 Sed Ponds Workshop
 - b. SRWD General Lunch and Learn pdf – November 30th, 2023 – Flyer
 - c. November 21st, 2023 – Fortin Salt Board Workshop
6. **Upcoming Meetings to be Announced**
- a. Regular Board Meetings
 - 1. Tuesday, October 17th, 2023 – Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
 - 2. Tuesday, November 21st, 2023 – Regular Board Meeting, SRWD Office
 - 3. MN Watersheds Annual Conference – November 28th -Dec 1st, 2023 – Arrowwood Conference Center, Alexandria
 - b. Other Meetings
7. **Adjourn Regular Meeting – Manager Zerr made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:20 p.m. The motion was seconded by Manager Wittkop. The motion passed with all in favor.**

**Regular Drainage Authority Meeting
MINUTES**

1. **The Drainage Authority meeting was called to order by President Becker at 7:20 p.m.**
2. **Additions/corrections to the agenda item** – President Becker asked if there were changes or additions to the agenda. There were none. **Manager Wittkop made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Manager Zerr. The motion passed with all in favor.**
3. **Drainage Specific Public Comment Period** – None
4. **Reports**
 - a. Ditch & Permit Manager – Gruber highlighted his monthly written report. He noted that work will be in progress on the Dairyland Trails on Stearns CD 9 to repair an erosion problem against the trail. Estimates were obtained in the amount of \$17,000 to fix the erosion problem. Stearns County Parks Department will contribute \$8,500 to that for trail protection. Galen asked if there were any further questions on his report and there were none.
5. **Items for Upcoming Meetings** – None
6. **Upcoming meetings to be announced**
 - a. Regular Drainage Meetings
 - i. Tuesday, October 17th, 2023 – SRWD Office
 - ii. Tuesday, November 21st, 2023 – SRWD Office
7. **Adjournment of Drainage Authority Meeting** – **Manager Wittkop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. The motion was seconded by Manager Miller. The motion passed with all in favor.**