

Heron Lake Watershed District (HLWD) Advisory Committee Meeting

Tuesday, September 19, 2017 6:00 p.m.

Heron Lake Watershed District office

Heron Lake, MN

ATTENDANCE

Paul Pietz, Larry Janssen, Shelly Lewis, Naomi Hill, Matt Widboom, Jerry Ackermann, Allen Jensen, Julie Lopez, Jim Eigenberg, Jerry Christopherson, Mona Henkels, Kevin Stevens, David Dieter, Jan Voit, and Catherine Wegehaupt

1. Call to Order

Paul Pietz called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Introductions were done.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the July 18, 2017 HLWD Advisory Committee meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Allen Jensen and seconded by Jerry Ackermann to approve the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

3. HLWD Advisory Committee membership

Paul Pietz has contacted a landowner in Jackson County to fill the seat left vacant by Clarence Madsen. The person has not yet given an answer.

4. HLWD Board of Managers Meeting Observations

July and August 2017 – The meetings were well run. The atmosphere is conducive to conducting business. There has been good humor and good manners. The meetings were productive, professional, and well-handled. Things seem to be going smoothly. There is a healthy environment and the board members are working together for the same goals.

5. Discussion Items

Jan Voit gave an update on HLWD activities.

Prairie Lakes Conference

The Prairie Lakes Conference was held on August 10, 2017. Jan Voit gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding watershed district governance and activities.

Summer Interns

The summer interns gave their PowerPoint presentation summarizing the work they did at the August 14 meeting. That was their last day of work.

Ag Awareness Event

Jackson County Farm Bureau hosted an ag awareness event on August 15 at New Vision Co-op in Brewster. Catherine Wegehaupt attended and gave EnviroScape presentations.

Seward 29

The board authorized development of the bid packet at the July meeting. It was presented to them at the August meeting. The bid packet was mailed to contractors on August 23, 2017. Bids will be opened at the October meeting.

At the suggestion of Ed Lenz, Board of Water and Soil Resources, Nobles Soil and Water Conservation District was contacted to see if they might have funds available. In order for the project to be considered, an application must be submitted. Board approval is being sought to apply for funding.

MAWD Awards

Preliminary rankings for the MAWD Project and Program of the Year Awards were completed on August 28, 2017.

MAWD Annual Committee Meeting

Abstracts for the MAWD Annual Meeting were distributed to committee members for review. There were 38 abstracts.

BWSR Academy

On September 14, Jan Voit participated in a planning session for BWSR Academy. The session is about civic engagement – strategies and approaches for engaging citizens in daily activities.

HLWD General Operating Levy

The HLWD has levied \$250,000 for eleven of the last twelve years (in 2007, the levy was \$240,105). The same amount is proposed for 2018. The \$250,000 general operating levy is no longer sustainable. The Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts had a resolution in 2017 for raising the general operating levy limit. It is likely that this will be pursued in 2018.

Grants

Clean Water Fund (CWF) Grant Applications

Work was done on the narratives for grant applications from mid-July through August 9, 2017. Applications for best management practices (BMPs) for Jackson County Ditch (CD) 3 and Judicial Ditch 19 were submitted on August 9.

Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) Grant Application

On September 18, 2017, the HLWD was notified that the grant application submitted to LCCMR for BMPs on CD 3 was chosen for an interview. A planning session will be held on September 20. The presentation is at the State Office Building in St. Paul on October 4.

Major Watershed Project

On August 14, 2017, Ross Behrends; Toby Spanier and Karen Terry, University of Minnesota Extension; Katherine Pekarek-Scott; and I met via conference call to discuss the details for the second Citizen Council meeting. That meeting was held on September 6. The meeting focused on fostering citizen leadership and engagement in the watershed. Time was spent brainstorming about potential public involvement opportunities.

Clean Water Partnership Loan Program

Two applications were submitted on September 18, 2017. Landowner approval letters were sent on September 19.

WFDNR Prioritizing and Targeting Endeavor

On August 1, 2017, Houston Engineering, Inc. (HEI) submitted the information needed to conduct field validation for the WFDNR Prioritizing and Targeting Endeavor. Catherine Wegehaupt submitted the field validation information to HEI on August 31, 2017. She explained the process and the grant to the committee.

Third Crop Phosphorus Reduction Effort Final Report

The final report for this grant is being written. The report is due on September 30, 2017.

Public Drainage Systems

Jackson County Judicial Ditch (JD) 3

The petition and supporting documentation for Jackson County JD 3 were accepted by the board on May 16, 2017. Chuck Brandel, ISG, was appointed as the engineer.

Bruce Sellers, attorney for the petitioners, sent a request for a redetermination of benefits to the Jackson County Commissioners on September 18, 2017.

Jackson County JD 14

The petition and supporting documentation for Jackson County JD 14 were accepted by the board on April 18, 2017. Chuck Brandel, I+S Group (ISG) was appointed as the engineering.

The preliminary engineer's report was submitted on August 17, 2017. The DNR comments were received on September 5, 2017. Scheduling the hearing will be discussed at tonight's board meeting.

Jackson CD 3

An appeal of the Redetermination of Benefits for Jackson County Ditch 3 was filed with the court administrator on August 2, 2017. The Jackson County board will either get an order to reopen the matter to determine whether the viewer's report on the redetermination of benefits is complete and was properly determined or a jury trial will determine if it was properly determined. The petition for outlet was filed with Jackson County.

Projects 4 and 84-4A

Before the board can take any action on reestablishment of records for these systems, a combined historical review memorandum is required. Chuck Brandel will need the few records that Jackson County has in order to draft the memo.

Discussion was held regarding ditch system projects, providing a map of their locations, statutory requirements for watershed district ditch authority, and that the HLWD should be the drainage authority for systems within the watershed that have had improvement projects done since February of 1970.

6. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Mona Henkels and seconded by Jerry Christopherson. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted
Allen Jensen
Secretary