



East Dakota Water Development District
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MINUTES
May 21, 2020

The Board of Directors of the East Dakota Water Development District (EDWDD) held a regular meeting on May 21, 2020, by way of video-conferencing (Zoom). Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. The following persons attended:

Directors Present

Mark Anderson
Jeff Barth
Mary Ellen Connelly
Gary Duffy
Spencer Hawley
Martin Jarrett
Kay Kassube
Dana Loseke
John Moes

Others Present

Steve Dick, Hartford
Amber Doschadis, Upper Minnesota River Watershed District
Tami Jansma, City of Brandon
Kevin Smith, Advanced Engineering & Environmental Services, Inc.
Joshua Strobel, SD Department of Environment & Natural Resources

Staff Present

Jay Gilbertson
Deb Springman

Directors Absent

- none -

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Administrative Items

Approval of Agenda -

Motion by Loseke, seconded by Moes to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes - The Board reviewed the Minutes of the meeting on April 16th, 2020.

Motion by Loseke, seconded by Barth, to approve the April 16th, 2020, Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports - The Board reviewed the April 2020 Financial Reports.

Motion by Moes, seconded by Hawley to accept the April 2020 Financial Reports. Motion carried unanimously. Chairman Anderson asked that the report be placed in the District files.

Report of Meetings and Conferences - Directors Connelly and Loseke attended the May 5th meeting of the Friends of the Big Sioux River in Sioux Falls.

Director Moes attended the April 16th meeting of the Upper Big Sioux River Watershed Project via video-conferencing.

Chairman Anderson attended a on-line presentation on rain barrels hosted by the South Dakota State University (SDSU) Extension and the SDSU Landscape Architecture Program April 22. Link to the talk is: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F7-AAj6InOo&t=5s>.

The Manager briefly commented on the following meetings he attended:

1. April 17th - SD Board of Water and Natural Resources via teleconference.
2. April 27th - SD Board of Water & Natural Resources via teleconference.
3. April 29th - Baltic. Tour of flooded park along Big Sioux River.
4. May 11th - Grant County Board of Adjustment (NorSwiss Dairy permit) via video-conference.
5. May 14th - Flandreau. Moody Conservation District Board of Supervisors.
6. May 18th & 19th - North-Central Section Meeting of the Geological Society of America via videoconferencing.
7. May 20th - Vermillion Basin Water Development District via videoconferencing.

Upcoming Meetings -

1. **May 21st - 2:00 & 4:00 p.m.** - Zoom presentations by South Dakota State University Agricultural Engineering candidates.
2. **May 29th** - Sioux Falls. Interviews for Watershed Project Specialist for the Big Sioux River Watershed Project.
3. **June 18th - 9:00 a.m.** - via video conference. June EDWDD Board of Directors meeting.
4. **June 25th & 26th** - video conference. South Dakota Board of Water & Natural Resources.

Project Assistance Request(s)

City of Brandon - Tami Jansma, City Engineer for the City of Brandon, presented a request for District cost-share assistance to support the completion of an engineering assessment (facility plan) for the community's water treatment plant. The community has been experiencing a number of issues pertaining to its drinking water system in the past several years, and this effort is part of their ongoing efforts to address various issues. They have engaged Advanced Engineering & Environmental Services (AE²S) of Sioux Falls to complete the investigation, at a total projected cost of \$59,451.

Kevin Smith, AE²S, briefed the Board on the planned activities. He noted that the resulting engineering assessment will serve as the basis for a request for placement on the South Dakota State Water Plan, and subsequent requests for funding through the State's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan program.

Motion by Moes, seconded by Barth to provide a project assistance grant to cover one-third (1/3) of the total costs of the development of the proposed facility plan, up to a cap of \$20,000. Motion carried unanimously.

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SD DENR Rotating Basins Big Sioux/Minnesota/Red Rivers Assessments - The Manager presented the final version of the agreement between the District and South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for completion of the Rotating Basins Big Sioux/Minnesota/Red Rivers Assessments. He noted that while the plan had been to start sample collection on May 1st, the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed the process somewhat, with all formal work now scheduled to start on June 1st. The effort will involve twice-monthly water quality sampling at 42 river and stream sites within the Big Sioux River and Minnesota River watersheds during June through September in 2020 and May through September in 2021. All river and stream site sampling will be conducted by District staff. There will also be monthly sampling at a total of 37 lakes during the same period. Most (24) will be sampled by District staff, however some of the sampling will be handled by other stakeholders (Northeast Glacial Lakes Watershed Project, Upper Big Sioux River Watershed Project and the Friends of the Big Sioux) working under the supervision of the District.

The overall projected cost of the effort is \$325,566, with \$220,056 coming from DENR as grants from various sources. The bulk of the funds will be applied to the analytical costs of the water samples collected, equipment purchases and support for sub-contractor services. The balance, \$105,510, will be in-kind contributions of staff time and travel contributed by East Dakota.

Joshua Strobel, DENR Watershed Protection Program, and the manager answered questions about the effort.

Motion by Kassube, seconded by Barth to approve the Rotating Basins Big Sioux/Minnesota/Red Rivers Assessments agreement between the District and DENR, and to authorize the Vice-Chair (Director Loseke) to sign the agreement. Motion carried unanimously.

Whetstone River Re-Diversion/Channel Restoration

Amber Doschadis, Manager for the Upper Minnesota River Watershed District (UMRWD), Ortonville, MN, provided information on efforts to return the flow of the Whetstone River to its natural channel in the vicinity of Big Stone City. In the 1930s, in an effort to maintain the water level in Big Stone Lake, the natural course of the Whetstone River was altered, and it's flow diverted into the lake. She noted that as with many such efforts, what seemed like a good idea at the time didn't necessarily work out that way. In addition to bringing extra water into the lake, which exacerbated flooding during wet years, the diverted flow also carried with it significant sediment and nutrient loads. Big Stone Lake has experienced significant water quality degradation as a result.

UMRWD has been working for a number of years on a plan to return the rivers flow to its natural channel. Nearly a decade ago, an engineering and feasibility study was conducted to consider a return to the original channel. East Dakota was one of several area entities, from both Minnesota and South Dakota, supporting the effort. While this early effort identified a generally accepted plan of action, a lack of landowner cooperation delayed implementation until just recently. UMRWD has re-opened discussion and planning for the planned changes.

Under the current plan, low- to moderate-flows would move down the old (re-opened?) river channel, joining the Minnesota River about 2 miles south of Ortonville. At higher flow rates, a portion of the

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water would still move into the lake, but at rates that UMRWD believes can be better managed to the benefit of the lake.

As the changes to the river straddle the South Dakota/Minnesota border, funding for the changes will need to be raised in both states. Grants from the State of Minnesota are covering expenses at this time, but UMRWD staff and their engineers have started reaching out to state and local governments in South Dakota. The Manager indicated that he would be part of these discussions as necessary, and would keep the Board notified as things develop.

Adjournment

There being no further District business or issues for consideration, Chairman Anderson declared the meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Spencer Hawley, Secretary

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