



**East Dakota Water Development District
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Brookings, SD 57006**

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**MINUTES
May 20, 2021**

The Board of Directors of the East Dakota Water Development District (EDWDD) held a regular meeting on May 20th, 2021, at the Brookings City & County Government Center in Brookings. Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. The following persons attended:

Directors Present

Mark Anderson
Jeff Barth
Steve Dick
Gary Duffy
Spencer Hawley
Bob Kappel
Dana Loseke
John Moes

Others Present

Jeremiah Bergstrom, South Dakota State University
Tanner Clausen, SD Dept. Agriculture & Natural Resources
Kris Dozark, SD Dept. Agriculture & Natural Resources
Candace May, South Dakota State University
Barry McLaury, SD Dept. Agriculture & Natural Resources
John McMaine, South Dakota State University
Rocco Murano, SD Dept. Game, Fish & Parks

Directors Absent

Joedy Poppe

Staff Present

Jay Gilbertson

Administrative Items

Approval of Agenda -

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

Minutes - The Board reviewed the Minutes of the meeting on April 15th, 2021. Director Kappel noted that the Minutes did not include reference to the Managers exploration of the costs of addressing Finding 2019-002 in the 2019 Financial Audit by a third party accountant. The Manager noted this would be added under District Updates.

Motion by Moes, seconded by Duffy, to approve the April 15th, 2021, Minutes as so amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Reports - The Board reviewed the April 2021 Financial Reports.

Motion by Dick, seconded by Hawley to accept the April 2021 Financial Reports. Motion carried unanimously. Chairman Anderson asked that the report be placed in the District files.

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Report of Meetings and Conferences - Director Kappel participated in the Big Sioux River Clean Up sponsored by the Friends of the Big Sioux River in Sioux Falls on April 24th.

Director Loseke attended the May 17th meeting of the Minnehaha Conservation District Board of Supervisors in Renner.

The Manager briefly commented on the following meetings he attended:

1. April 17th - Lake Poinsett - Lake Poinsett Water Project District Annual Meeting.
2. April 21st & 22nd - 2021 Western South Dakota Hydrology Conference via Zoom.
3. May 4th - Grant County Commission meeting via Zoom.
4. May 4th - SD Board of Water & Natural Resources via teleconference.
5. May 12th - Brookings County-Medary Township Big Sioux River Diversion via Zoom.
6. May 13th - James River Water Development District via Zoom.
7. May 17th - Sioux Falls. Minnehaha Conservation District Board of Supervisors.

Upcoming Meetings -

1. **May 23rd & 26th** - Big Sioux River Project Legislative tours.
2. **June 1st & 2nd** - Deadwood. South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS) Leadership Seminar.
3. **June 3rd** - Deadwood. SDARWS Board of Directors Meeting.
4. **June 15th** - Rural Minnehaha County. 2021 Joint Appropriations Committee tour.
5. **June 16th - 7:00 p.m.** - Centerville. Vermillion Basin WDD Board of Directors meeting.
6. **June 17th - 9:00 a.m.** - EDWDD Office, 132B Airport Avenue, Brookings. June EDWDD Board of Directors meeting.
7. **June 17th - 9:30 a.m.** - Fort Sisseton State Park. South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts (SDACD) Coteau Area meeting.
8. **June 21st - 10:00 a.m.** - Parker. SDACD Vermillion-Big Sioux Area meeting.
9. **June 25th & 26th** - teleconference. South Dakota Board of Water & Natural Resources.

Payment Requests - The Manager presented the Board with two payment/reimbursement requests that required Board action. The requests were in order, and consistent with the conditions established by the Board at the time of the award.

<u>Grant Recipient/Activity</u>	<u>Requested Amount</u>
SDSU CEE/Bacteria removal from storm water runoff (Hua)	\$ 1,958.21
City of Brandon/Water Treatment Plant Facility Plan	\$ 19,830.34
Total	\$ 21,788.55

Motion by Hawley, seconded by Duffy to authorize payment of \$21,788.55 as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

Project Assistance Request(s)

SD Department of Game, Fish & Parks - At their April 2021 meeting, the Board had tabled a request for a cost-share assistance grant in support of a project at identifying and categorizing drained depressions (wetlands) in the glaciated areas of South Dakota. The project, entitled, “Quantifying Restorable

Wetlands in the Prairie Pothole Portion of South Dakota,” is a collaborative effort initiated and partly funded by the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture (PPJV). PPJV is a collaboration of many partners including state, federal and non-governmental partners interested in wetland and grassland conservation in the glaciated areas of North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa, including the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks (GF&P).

Motion by Hawley, seconded by Barth to take the request of the table. Motion carried unanimously.

Rocco Murano, Senior Waterfowl Biologist for (GF&P), reviewed the proposal, and addressed questions from the Board. He reiterated that the intent of the effort was to identify and categorize depressions in the landscape of eastern South Dakota. Many of these depressions would retain water, and therefore could be generally be considered ‘wetlands.’ However, it was noted that the formal definition of what constitutes a jurisdictional ‘wetland’ can vary between regulatory agencies and programs, and as such, not every wet depression would necessarily be identified as such. The project also intends to identify depressions that had been altered (drained).

The effort as envisioned will last 4-5 years, and while the sponsors have support arranged for the first year, they are looking to cooperators to raise future funds. Mr. Murano noted that they were seeking support and/or funding from a broad group of partners to increase diversity of needs, perspectives, and in the end make a better final product. The request to the Board was for a one-time grant in the amount of \$25,000, which would be applied toward the support of a graduate student at South Dakota State University working on the effort.

The Board had a number of questions about the proposed activity, which were addressed by Mr. Murano. Concerns were expressed about the possible implications for landowners on whose property ‘new’ wet depressions (jurisdictional wetlands) might be identified as a result of the project. There were also questions about how the information collected might be applied to ongoing District activities and issues.

Motion by Kappel, seconded by Hawley to provide \$25,000 in District cost-share assistance in support of the project entitled, “Quantifying Restorable Wetlands in the Prairie Pothole Portion of South Dakota,” as requested. Motion carried with Directors Barth, Hawley, Kappel and Loseke, along with Chairman Anderson, in favor, and Directors Dick, Duffy and Moes opposed.

South Dakota State University - Dr. John McMaine (Agriculture & Biosystems Engineering), Jeremiah Bergstrom (School of Design) and Dr. Candace May (Sociology & Rural Studies), presented a request for District cost-share assistance in support of a project entitled, “Assessing Capacity for Community-based Watershed Planning in South Dakota.” The overall goal is to develop tools and resources needed to engage small communities in collective action to address water resource issues. Most communities in South Dakota lack the necessary resources (technical and financial) to support in-house water resource management staff, so this effort is intended to develop support systems (tool kit) to allow these communities to deal with a broad range of water resource issues that may impact their environs. They collectively propose to:

- Educate residents, landowners and governments to better understand changes to the landscape;
- Assist residents, landowners and governments in identifying connections between the built environment and water resources; and

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- Enable residents, landowners and governments to create a more resilient and sustainable future for their communities.

The initial effort will focus on information gathering. Objectives include identifying individual and community water resource values and management capacity; evaluation of applicable regulatory policies and programs impacting water resources management in the human built environment; and quantifying water resource impacts on the human built environment. It will culminate with the convening of a stakeholders meeting with representatives from across eastern South Dakota to validate and disseminate findings.

The projected cost of the first year (Phase 1) is projected at \$34,076. The applicants are seeking \$15,138 in support from the 319(h) NPS Minigrant Program through the SD Discovery Center, and SDSU will provide \$8,576 in waived indirect costs. The request to of the District is for \$10,362, which comes to about thirty point four percent (30.4%) of the total projected costs.

Motion by Hawley, seconded by Kappel to provide District cost-share assistance to South Dakota State University for the project, “Assessing Capacity for Community-based Watershed Planning in South Dakota,” as requested, to cover 30.4 % of the costs of the effort, up to a maximum of \$10,360. Motion carried unanimously.

Director Loseke left the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

SD Department of Agriculture & Natural Resources - Tanner Clausen, Kris Dozark and Barry McLaury, with the Watershed Protection Program within the Department of Agriculture & Natural Resources (DANR), gave a presentation on the planned Riparian Buffer Initiative (RBI) being developed by the state.

The overall goal of the RBI is to establish over 3,000 acres of new riparian buffers to make measurable water quality improvements in South Dakota's impaired watersheds. DANR and GF&P are currently working with a wide range of partners to acquire funding for a state riparian buffer program using annual cash payments as an incentive to the voluntary use of buffers on private lands along streams and rivers in the state. Selected impaired watersheds in the Big Sioux River, James River, Cheyenne River and Belle Fourche River watersheds will be targeted with special incentives to maximize water quality improvements and habitat protection. They also reviewed the requirements for participation in the RBI, along with the rate schedule for the incentive payments.

They noted that the planned cost of the 5-year RBI program is \$15 million, with \$10 million to be sought from the US Department of Agriculture Regional Conservation Partnership Program Alternative Funding Arrangement (RCPP-AFA). This would be matched with \$5 million to come from non-federal sources. To date, the following match funds had been identified: \$3,000,000 set aside by the 2021 Legislature in HB 1256, along with \$500,000 each from DANR and GF&P. The balance (\$1,000,000) is expected from local partners and in-kind match.

To that end, the Manager noted that he had informally suggested that support from the District for this effort in the range of \$25,000 per year might be possible, with the stipulation that East Dakota funds

would need to be applied within our boundaries. Given that a significant amount of the grant funds were likely to find their way back into the main basins within it's jurisdiction (Big Sioux, Minnesota and Vermillion), this seemed a reasonable level of support.

He requested that the Board consider dedicating project assistance funds in support of the RBI effort. Given that the current RBI proposal to be submitted for funding through the RCPP-AFA was for five years, this would amount to \$125,000. Further, although said District support might be used to leverage funds that would be applied all across the state, expenditure of any District resources would be limit to activities with it's boundaries. He noted that this was analogous to the \$3,000,000 provided by the HB 1256. It too could be used to leverage funds that might be spent statewide, but these funds must only be spent within the Big Sioux River watershed.

The Board discussed the request, as well as how the assistance might alternatively be used to support the Legislature's funds, should the RBI RCPP-AFA grant request be unsuccessful. The Manager suggested tying expenditure of any District support to expenditure of the legislatively provided funds. While they are presently planned to be used as match in the grant request, if that is unsuccessful, the \$3,000,000 will still be applied to watershed restoration efforts, including riparian buffer protection, within the river basin.

Motion by Kappel, seconded by Hawley to provide a District cost-share assistance grant in the amount of four percent (4%) of the \$3,000,000 allocated by the South Dakota Legislature in HB 1256, which would equal \$120,000. It was the consensus of the Board that these funds, like the HB 1256 funds, will be pledged as match for the proposed RBI effort, but that if the RCPP-AFA grant request is unsuccessful, the funds would be applied to comparable watershed restoration and protection efforts. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further District business or issues for consideration, Chairman Anderson declared the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Spencer Hawley, Secretary