



**East Dakota Water Development District**  
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**MINUTES**  
**October 21, 2021**

The Board of Directors of the East Dakota Water Development District (EDWDD) held a regular meeting on October 21, 2021, at the District Office in Brookings, SD. Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The following persons attended, either in person or via video-conferencing(\*):

**Directors Present**

Mark Anderson  
Jeff Barth  
Steve Dick  
Ryan Donovan  
Gary Duffy  
Spencer Hawley  
Bob Kappel  
John Moes  
Joedy Poppe

**Directors Absent**

- none -

**Others Present**

Dave Bartel, James River Water Development District  
John Buss, Minnehaha Community Water Corporation\*  
Travis Entenman, Friends of the Big Sioux River\*  
Shaun Feilmer, Lincoln County\*  
Mark Norton, SD Department of Game, Fish & Parks  
Kevin Robling, SD Department of Game, Fish & Parks\*

**Staff Present**

Barry Berg\*  
Kevin Christenson\*  
Jay Gilbertson  
Alexa Kruse\*  
Deb Springman

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**Administrative Items**

**Approval of Agenda** -

**Motion** by Moes, seconded by Kappel to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes** - The Board reviewed the Minutes of the September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021, meeting.

**Motion** by Hawley, seconded by Duffy to approve the Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**Financial Reports** - The Board reviewed the September 2021 Financial Reports.

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**Motion** by Moes, seconded by Dick to accept the September 2021 Financial Reports. Motion carried unanimously. Chairman Anderson then asked that the reports be placed in the District files.

Meetings and Conferences - Director Barth reported on a tour of community wastewater facilities in Minnehaha County he attended on October 13<sup>th</sup>.

Director Moes reported on the September 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Upper Big Sioux River Watershed Advisory Board, held in Watertown.

The Manager briefly commented on the following meetings he attended in the past month:

1. September 22<sup>nd</sup> - Big Sioux River Project Steering Committee, Dell Rapids.
2. September 27<sup>th</sup> - Whetstone River and Little Minnesota River re-diversion/diversion discussions w/ Upper Minnesota River Watershed District and South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, via video-conference.
3. September 28<sup>th</sup> - Aquatic invasive species workshop, Webster.
4. September 30<sup>th</sup> - South Dakota Board of Water & Natural Resources via video-conference.
5. October 13<sup>th</sup> - Moderator of a panel discussion, entitled, “Everything Including the Kitchen Sink: The Science and Governance of Your Drinking Water,” via video-conference. A joint SDSU and Brookings Human Rights Council event.
6. October 18<sup>th</sup> - South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems Quality On Tap editorial board via videoconference.
7. October 18<sup>th</sup> - Minnehaha Conservation District Board of Supervisors via video-conference.
8. October 19<sup>th</sup> - Water development district Managers meeting, Oacoma.
9. October 20<sup>th</sup> - Eastern South Dakota Water Conference via video-conference.

Upcoming Meetings -

1. **October 21<sup>st</sup> - 7:00 p.m.** - Upper Big Sioux River Watershed Project via teleconference.
2. **October 25<sup>th</sup> - 6:00 p.m.** - Sioux Falls. 2021 Sioux Falls Dairy Crawl.
3. **October 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>** - Deadwood. South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems Manager’s Group.
4. **November 3<sup>rd</sup> - 7:00 p.m.** - SDSU, Brookings. 2021 Griffith Honors Forum Lecture, “A Conversation with Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha”
5. **November 4<sup>th</sup> - 10:00 a.m.** - via video-conference. South Dakota Board of Water and Natural Resources.
6. **November 4<sup>th</sup> - 3:00 p.m.** - New Ulm, MN. Area II Minnesota River Basins Project/Redwood-Cottonwood Rivers Control Area Annual Legislative gathering.
7. **November 9<sup>th</sup> - 10:00 a.m.** - Armour. South-Central Water Development District Board of Directors meeting.
8. **November 10<sup>th</sup> - 12 noon** - Brookings. Sioux Valley County Commissioners Association.
9. **November 18<sup>th</sup> - 9:00 a.m.** - via video-conference. James River Water Development District Board of Directors.
10. **November 18<sup>th</sup> - 9:30 a.m.** - Sioux Falls. November EDWDD Board of Directors meeting.

Selection of Board Vice-Chair - Chairman Anderson noted that with the departure of (now former) Director Dana Loseke, the position of Board Vice-Chair is vacant. A full slate of Board officers (Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary) for 2022 will be selected at the January meeting, but it would be handy to have someone designated to fill in should the Chair be unavailable in the interim.

**Motion** by Hawley, seconded by Dick to have Director Duffy assume the position of Vice-Chair for the remainder of 2021, and to serve until new Board officers are elected in 2022, in accordance with SDCL 46A-3B-11. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Potential Water Infrastructure Funding under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)**

Scott Buss, Minnehaha Community Water Corporation Manager, briefed the Board on potential water infrastructure funding under the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). He noted that the State of South Dakota (state, county and municipalities) is expected to receive in excess of \$1.3 billion in funds from ARPA, allocated to the state, counties and municipalities. ARPA funds are intended to address a number of adverse impacts of the ongoing COVID pandemic. Upgrades to water and sewer infrastructure is included on the list of ARPA-eligible activities, with the intent to make investments to improve access to clean drinking water and invest in wastewater and stormwater infrastructure.

Mr. Buss noted that individual public water suppliers (PWSs), such as the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System and (MCWC), along with the South Dakota Association of Rural Water Systems (SDARWS) have approached the Governor's Office, along with the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (DANR), with hopes of securing "a place in line" for whatever funding is ultimately allocated towards water and sewer infrastructure. This effort has included development of a list of potential projects that are worthy of consideration for funding, when funding ultimately becomes available.

He noted that in late September, members of SDARWS met with representatives of Governor Noem's administration to discuss infrastructure funding under ARPA, and how the program may apply to water and wastewater funding in South Dakota. He briefed the Board on the results of the meeting, but noted that few if any decisions had been finalized.

### **Big Sioux River Watershed Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Proposal**

South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GF&P) Secretary Kevin Robling, along with GF&P Senior Wildlife Biologist Mark Norton, discussed plans for implementing a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) in the Big Sioux River watershed. CREP is a federal-state natural resources conservation program, through which participants receive financial incentives from USDA to voluntarily enroll property in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in contracts of 10 to 15 years. Participants remove typically cropland and marginal pastureland from agricultural production and convert the land to native grasses and other vegetation.

Currently, the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GF&P) is the local sponsor of a USDA CREP within the James River watershed, after which the Big Sioux effort will be modeled. The primary goals of the project are to improve water quality, soil erosion, flood control, and to enhance wildlife habitat through the establishment of permanent vegetative cover. GF&P makes additional payments to participants, equal to up to thirty percent of CRP rates, in exchange for the enrolled land being open to public hunting and/or fishing access.

They noted that for the Big Sioux River CREP, a goal of 25,000 acres has been established, with at least twenty percent (20%) to be located within riparian areas along rivers, lakes and streams. They are in the process of finalizing the proposal for consideration by USDA later in the year. Secretary Robling noted that while they are not formally seeking partners and /or financial assistance at this time, they will undoubtedly

be back once a final budget has been established. The Manager noted that the emphasis on protecting riparian areas would complement existing District-supported efforts.

### **Project Assistance Requests**

City of Sioux Falls - 2021 Big Sioux River Water Summit - The Manager presented a request from the City of Sioux Falls for District cost-share assistance in support of (sponsorship) the 2021 Big Sioux River Water Summit, which will be held virtually on December 7<sup>th</sup>. The District has sponsored this event at the \$500 level since its inception in 2013.

**Motion** by Kappel, seconded by Barth to provide \$500 in sponsorship support of the 2021 Big Sioux River Water Summit, and to authorize expenditure of the funds. Motion carried unanimously.

The Manager noted that he would be presenting results of the District's water quality sampling efforts within the basin at the event.

SD DANR Riparian Buffer Initiative - The Manager noted that on Friday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, he received the news that the proposed Riparian Buffer Initiative (RBI) was not one of the efforts supported by the United States Department of Agriculture under their Regional Conservation Partnership Program's Alternative Funding Arrangements (RCPP AFA). The effort, sponsored by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (DANR) would have expanded opportunities to protect riparian areas across the state, building on the success of the seasonal riparian area management (SRAM) program developed for the Big Sioux River Project. The grant request was for just over \$9,000,000 in RCPP AFA funds. Matching funds, totaling \$4,000,000, were provided from a mix of state and local funds, including \$120,000 pledged by East Dakota at the May 2021 meeting.

In that the RBI project will not be going forward as envisioned, he recommended that the Board rescind the pledge of match. He stated that as the funds were pledged to an activity that would not be moving forward as envisioned at the time the pledge was made, rescinding the pledge simply makes the funds available for other activities. At such time as DANR develops a new approach to riparian area restoration, management and protection, he would fully expect that the District could/would be a contributing partner in such an effort.

**Motion** by Kappel, seconded by Duffy to rescind the pledge of \$120,000 in District cost-share assistance made at the May 2021 Board meeting in support of the RBI proposal as submitted for RCPP AFA funding. Several directors noted that the District has a long history of supporting efforts to protect riparian areas along rivers, lakes and streams, and this action does not represent a change of Board opinion. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further District business, Chairman Anderson declared the meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

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Spencer Hawley, Secretary