

Minutes of the meeting of the Managers  
Turtle Creek Watershed District  
August 20<sup>th</sup>,2024

The Turtle Creek Watershed Board of Managers met at the Government Center in Hollandale, Minnesota. Present were Jeff Ravenhorst, Jon Erichson, Micelle O'Connor, Dave Vanderploeg, Peter VanErkel, Steve Penkava, James Fett and Att'y John Kolb.

Also present were Chad Billat, Tom Butler, Scott & Dawn Lightly, Mark Behrends—Ditch Viewer and Kelly Hendrickson—Freeborn Cty Auditor/treasurer.

Pete made a motion to accept the July 2024 minutes as presented seconded by Jeff and carried.

The Treasures report showed \$192,794.72 in checking and \$206,171.53 in the money market. Pete made a motion to accept this report subject to audit seconded by Jon and carried.

Jon distributed the Bank Reconciliation and Financial Report dated July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, there was no discussion.

The following bills were submitted for approval to be forwarded to the Freeborn County Auditor:

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Jones, Haugh, Smith, Inc  | \$ 9,404.00 (McRae Lateral)                  |
| Jones, Haugh, Smith, Inc. | \$ 3,078.72 (Main open ditch)                |
| Jones, Haugh, Smith, Inc. | \$ 960.00 (repair beaver dams on Deer Creek) |
| Jones, Haugh, Smith, Inc. | \$ 3,959.50 (routine maintenance)            |
| Mark Behrends             | \$ 812.50 (ditch viewer)                     |
| Wesley Dahl               | \$ 1,100.00 (ditch viewer)                   |

Pete made a motion to approve and forward the bills second by Dave and carried.

The following bills were submitted for payment by the district:

|                       |                                       |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Austin Newspapers     | \$ 132.60 (Budget hearing Austin)     |
| Austin Newspapers     | \$ 132.60 (Budget hearing Albert Lea) |
| Olson Tree Service    | \$ 2,840.31                           |
| Cedar River Watershed | \$ 2,411.14 (monitoring costs)        |
| Mower SWCD            | \$ 12,245.53                          |

Pete made a motion to pay the bills seconded by Dave and carried.

An application for permit was submitted by Larry Reynen for a Wetland permit in part of the SW ¼ section 15 Riceland Twsp Freeborn Cty T103N R20W to outlet into private open ditch. Adjacent landowners have signed this application. Contractor has yet to be determined. Pete made a motion to grant this permit seconded by Jeff and carried. Permit number 08-01-24.

Steve gave a bid estimate for brush control from B & W Brush control of \$19,000.00. Pete made a motion to authorize Steve to approve the brush control seconded by Jeff and carried.

At 515 P.M. Pete made a motion to suspend the regular meeting for the public hearing seconded by Dave and carried. Chairperson Michelle called to order the public hearing on CD #31 Redetermination of Benefits. Att'y John Kolb prepared the agenda including board deliberation guide, Findings and Order adopting Redetermination Benefits and explained the purpose of the Hearing and procedural requirements.

Att'y Kolb then verified the Record of Notice Requirements from the Freeborn County Auditor's office, and ask of any question for him from the Board and/or the group. Hearing none he invited Mark Behrends as the Viewer to present the Viewing process information which he included the 5 areas to determine the value, the meetings with each landowner and the history of Ditch #31.

Hearing no public comment for Mr. Behrends the hearing was closed to public comment and Att'y Kolb continued and explained the Board Deliberation and action.

Pete made a motion to adopt the Finding and Order adopting the Redetermined Benefits and Damages as presented seconded by Dave and carried. Jeff, aye, Jon, aye, Dave, aye, Pete, aye, Michelle aye.

Pete made a motion to adjourn the hearing and return to the regular watershed board meeting seconded by Jeff and carried.

Chairperson Michelle called to order the hearing for the Turtle Creek Administrative budget. Jon presented the proposed budget figures as follows:

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| 1. Attorney Fees (Rinke Noonan )           | \$10,000.00   |
| 2. Recording Secretary /Expenses           | \$ 7500.00    |
| 3. Managers                                | \$ 10,000.00  |
| 4. Administrative Services (Mower SWCD)    | \$ 19,000.00  |
| 5. Audit and Monthly Financial Services    | \$ 7,000.00   |
| 6. Viewers Association and MAWD Dues       | \$ 3,500.00   |
| 7. Insurance                               | \$ 2,200.00   |
| 8. Advertising and Postage                 | \$ 1,000.00   |
| 9. Rent                                    | \$ 800.00     |
| 10. Water Monitoring and Water Plan        | \$ 6000.00    |
| 11. Incentives, Cost Sharing, Conservation | \$ 22,900.00  |
| 12. Tree Removal                           | \$ 15,000.00  |
| 13. Beaver Tails                           | \$ 2,500.00   |
| 14. Clean Water Legacy                     | \$ 10,000.00  |
| Total                                      | \$ 117,400.00 |

Pete offered the following resolution and moved for its adoption for the budget of \$117,400.00 seconded by Jeff and carried. Nancy will forward copies of the signed certification to both county auditors.

Pete made a motion to close the administrative budget seconded by Dave and carried.

Att’y Kolb presented information related the initiation of redetermination of benefits proceedings from Freeborn County Ditches 30 and 81. The Board initially considered and initiated actions for the redeterminations at is May meeting. Att’y Kolb presented the Board with formal findings and orders initiating the redeterminations of benefits and the secretary’s orders directing the appointed viewers to qualify and execute their oaths. Pete moved, seconded by Dave to adopt the initiating orders as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Jeanine Vorland attended the meeting and reports Geneva Lake water levels have returned to near normal for the summer. The water clarity is poor due to green algae, but overall, the lake is supporting good vegetation. Submersed vegetation including Important wildlife food plants such as sago pondweed and wild celery is common with dense stands found in many places across the lake. These plants are important food for waterfowl, cover for small fish and invertebrates, and help to stabilize the lake bottom and protect shoreline areas from wave action and erosion. This is good news considering the stormy June and flooding in late spring and early summer. Flooding conditions in the first part of the growing season can have significant negative impacts on these habitats. Emergent vegetation such as rushes and cattails has died back to near the minimum amount observed on the lake over the years.

Plans for additional wetland restoration at Wo Wacintanka Wildlife Management Area should be finalized soon.

Steve gave a FEMA report stating they have 6 projects at this time. Steve attended a FEMA disaster fund meeting and learned we would have to report damages on Mower County’s disaster relief application since the tree are down in Mower County, he will continue to work with FEMA and monitor the sites.

James distributed the financial audit statements; Nancy will forward a copy to Dave Copeland Board of Water and Soil.

The Viktora crossing was discussed. After discussion Dave made a motion to table further discussion until the September meeting when the Viktora's could be present for the discussion seconded by Jon and carried.

Jon and James have been working on multiple tree removal projects since the floods subsided. Trees were already removed and they will accept a bid for trees down in another location also.

Jon reported on his attendance for the One Watershed One Plan tour.

Jeff made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Dave and carried.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy K. Finley,  
Recording Secretary