

**Heron Lake Watershed District (HLWD) Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 20, 2016 6:00 p.m.**  
**Heron Lake Watershed District office**  
**Heron Lake, MN**

**ATTENDANCE**

Paul Pietz, Marv Zylstra, Allen Jensen, Naomi Hill, Rose Schultz, Jerry Christopherson, Mona Henkels, Rod Sankey, and Catherine Wegehaupt, Erin Nordquist, and Jan Voit, HLWD

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Minutes**

The minutes of the June 28, 2016 HLWD Advisory Committee meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Allen Jensen and seconded by Rod Sankey to approve the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

**3. HLWD Board of Managers Meeting Observations**

- June – The meeting was short, to the point, and well run – a normal meeting.
- July – Conduct at the meeting was way better than in the past. There was reasonable dialogue. It was a normal meeting.
- August – It was good that HLWD Advisory Committee members were there to observe the behavior, not just of the managers, but of the audience as well.
  - The HLWD Advisory Committee felt the need for the Survey and Data Acquisition Fund (SDAF) was documented and explained. The \$50,000 was not an unreasonable figure, especially when the information regarding the actual cost to the residents was provided.
  - Harvey Kruger explained the necessity for the SDAF from the board's perspective.
  - It was the HLWD Advisory Committee's opinion that Jim Buschena showed good leadership.
  - The HLWD Advisory Committee believes it is important to mention that this is the first time in nine years that the HLWD has raised additional funds. There are no other government entities that can say they have gone nine years without raising taxes.
  - The HLWD Advisory Committee supported the SDAF at the June meeting. The end result was the adoption of the SDAF by a four to one vote.
  - The HLWD Advisory Committee is proud of the board for their conduct at the meeting, as well as their adoption of the SDAF.
  - Once the budget hearing was done, the monthly meeting was orderly.

**4. Discussion Items**

- *Clean Water Partnership (CWP) Loan Program*

Jan Voit reported that the CWP loan agreement was executed by MPCA on July 18, 2016. Through this project, the HLWD proposes to replace 30 SSTS over the three-year period. The HLWD can borrow up to \$450,000 at a rate of two percent. The landowner pays three and one half percent interest and can borrow up to \$15,000. The loan is assessed to the property. Semi-annual payments are made over seven years and collected with the property tax payments. Each respective county collects the payments and disburses the funds to the HLWD twice a year.

- *Reports Update*
  - The final report for the Heron Lake Phosphorus Reduction Project was approved on July 5, 2016.
  - The HLWD Aquatic-Upland Prairie Restoration Final Report was approved on July 5, 2016.
  - The Heron Lake Sediment and Phosphorus Reduction Implementation Projects Final Report was approved on July 18, 2016.
  - The semi-annual report (SAR) for the Heron Lake Third Crop Phosphorus Reduction Effort was approved on July 18, 2016.
  - The SAR for the Major Watershed Project Phase 2 was approved on July 14, 2016.
  - The interim report for the Cover Crop Champions grant was approved on July 18, 2016.
  - The Jack and Okabena Creek Sediment Reduction Project final report was submitted on August 30, 2016.
  - The WFDNR Targeting and Prioritizing Endeavor SAR was approved on September 20, 2016.
  
- *Water Management Partners Training*

Four HLWD, four Kanaranzi-Little Rock Watershed District (KLRWD), and five Okabena-Ocheda Watershed District (OOWD) managers, as well as three HLWD staff, two KLRWD, and one OOWD staff participated in the training workshop on July 26, 2016. Presenters Steve Woods, Tara Ostendorf, and Mark Doneux covered the topics of Watershed Districts, Board of Water and Soil Resources, and the World; Watershed Districts' Legal Powers and Purposes, The Value of Your Watershed Management Plan; Your Role as a Leader; and Government Basics. Costs for the event were split equally between the three watershed districts.
  
- *HLWD 2017 General Operating Levy and SDAF*

At the HLWD meeting on August 23, 2016, the managers unanimously approved the \$250,000 general operating levy. The SDAF was approved on a four to one vote. The levies were certified to the county auditors in Nobles, Jackson, Murray, and Cottonwood Counties on August 30, 2016. Time spent providing information regarding incorrect statements made at the August 23 budget hearing)
  
- *Property and Project Site Visit*

Managers and staff met at the HLWD office on August 30, 2016 and traveled to the Jackson County Judicial Ditch (JD) 30 Branch A-1, Lateral, and Mainline. At each stop, Kyle Sammons provided an update on project progress.

Managers and staff then traveled to HLWD properties in Sections 21 and 29 of Seward Township in Nobles County and Section 35 of Bondin Township in Murray County.
  
- *Seward 29 Property*

It was brought to the HLWD's attention that maintenance is needed on the outlet pipe on the flood storage structure on the Seward 29 site. The project was installed in 1976. The pipe has corroded. The corrosion has caused water to pour out the side of the pipe during high flow events, in turn eroding the structure.

The 1976 Easement and Agreement for the Seward 29 dam project states that the HLWD is responsible for installation, repair, maintenance, and inspection. Managers asked what happens after the 50-year time period stated in the Easement and Agreement has expired. The document was sent to Mike Tow, HLWD legal counsel, for review and comment.

On September 1, 2016, Catherine Wegehaupt met with Russ Hoogendoorn and Mike Skoglund, engineers from Southwest Prairie Technical Service Area (SWPTSA). After the site check was done, the drainage area was calculated. It is over 3,000 acres. With a project of this size, the engineers need time to complete a survey, designs, and compile the information for a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) permit and a DNR Dam Safety permit. The site will be surveyed this fall. The designs will be done during the winter and then the permit applications will be submitted.

Catherine Wegehaupt contacted Brian Nyborg, DNR Hydrologist and Russ Hoogendoorn, SWPTSA Engineer about the Seward 29 Flood Storage Structure. Both thought that rock would help slow erosion until construction can begin in the spring. The hole is about 16.3 cubic yards. The engineer estimated the cost to fill the eroded hole with rock would be around \$1,450.00. The cost estimate includes materials, trucking, and installation. The DNR is willing to work with the HLWD to install rock in this location to prevent more erosion from happening. If the HLWD board chooses to move forward with this process, the next step would be to secure a contractor to do the work as soon as possible.

- *Judicial Ditches*

Construction continues on Jackson County JD #30.

- *Clothing*

T-shirts, polo shirts, and jackets bearing the HLWD logo were ordered and distributed to managers and staff in August. HLWD Advisory committee members thought that clothing provides a more professional look.

## **5. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Jerry Christopherson and seconded by Marv Zylstra. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Allen Jensen

Secretary