

**Heron Lake Watershed District (HLWD) Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Monday, March 20, 2017 8:00 a.m.**  
**Heron Lake Watershed District office**  
**Heron Lake, MN**

**ATTENDANCE**

Paul Pietz, Doug Goodrich, Jerry Christopherson, Kevin Stevens, Mona Henkels, Naomi Hill, Dave Thiner, Jim Eigenberg, and Jan Voit

**1. Call to Order**

Paul Pietz called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. Introductions were done.

**2. Minutes**

The minutes of the December 20, 2016 HLWD Advisory Committee meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Allen Jensen and seconded by Mona Henkels to approve the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

**3. HLWD Advisory Committee membership**

Wayne Smith provided names for potential Nobles County members. Jan Voit will contact these landowners and report at the June meeting. She will meet with Paul Pietz to discuss potential Jackson County members.

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

- December 2016 – It was nice to attend the meeting. It went smoothly. There were some jokes. No one was on the defensive.
- January 2017 – The meeting was positive. Managers had conversations afterward. It is a complete turnaround.
- February 2017 – There is a new level of humanity and productivity. There is discussion with give and take, which is normal. The way meetings were in the past had to be draining when the people that were in opposition were given free reign. Now the tension is gone and the atmosphere is relaxed.

**5. Discussion Items**

Jan Voit provided the following update.

***Annual Information***

Annual information, Order Appointing Advisory Committee Members, HLWD Policies Handbook, HLWD Personnel Policy, Manager and Staff Orientation, and the Annual Work Plan and Budget were reviewed on January 4, 2017. I discussed these documents with Jim Buschena. Documents were updated at his direction and distributed to managers for review before the January meeting. All of the documents were approved at the January 12 board meeting.

***Nobles County Work Session***

On January 31, 2017, the Nobles County Board held a work session. One of the discussion topics was buffer enforcement. Gary Ewert, Bruce Leinen, and I attended this session.

***Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) Annual Meeting***

The MAWD Annual Meeting observations were sent to the MAWD Board of Directors on January 10, 2017. Ruth Schaefer, MAWD President, responded on January 18, 2017. She requested additional, clarifying information. Jim Buschena and I drafted a response which was approved at the February meeting and sent to MAWD.

### ***Local Partner Meeting***

The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) hosted a Local Partner Coordination Meeting on February 8, 2017 in Marshall. The meeting consisted of breakout sessions discussing mission statements, essential services, and possible shared services; a presentation regarding waterway and terrace designing; and discussion about “other waters” as it relates to the buffer law.

### ***Jackson County Water Plan Meeting***

Time was spent creating a PowerPoint presentation about 2016 activities. Following a discussion with Chris Bauer, Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), another presentation was created addressing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS). The presentation was given at the Jackson County Water Plan meeting on February 9, 2017. It was also given to the managers at their February board meeting.

### ***Drainage and Wetland Conference***

Bruce Leinen, Gary Ewert, Harvey Kruger, Wayne Rasche, and I attended the Drainage and Wetland Conference at the River’s Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud on February 13, 2017. Topics covered were Public Waters: Minn. Stat. 103E and 103G; Public Drainage and Engineering-Consideration of Alternative Measures; Navigating the Minnesota Public Drainage Manual; Public Drainage Case Law Review; Public Drainage System Best Management Practices; and Real Estate Issues for Water Management Projects.

### ***Excel Training***

Catherine Wegehaupt and I attended training on the Excel program on February 14 and 15, 2017 at the Ramada Inn in Sioux Falls.

### ***Cover Crop Meeting***

On February 21, 2017, Jerry and Nancy Ackermann sponsored a cover crop meeting. The event was held at the American Legion Hall in Okabena. Information was provided regarding local farmers and businesses that have strip till, interseeding, and high clearance equipment, as well as aerial seeding services. Tom Cotter, a farmer near Austin, Minnesota, was the featured speaker. He gave a PowerPoint presentation about his experience with cover crops. A crop consultant, NRCS staff person, and seed salesman also gave short presentations. The HLWD provided a laptop, projector, and screen for this event.

### ***MPCA Internal Meeting***

On February 28, 2017, Jerry and Nancy Ackermann and I traveled to the Dakota Lodge in West St. Paul. We each gave a presentation regarding cover crops efforts. A panel discussion followed. There were approximately 100 MPCA staff in attendance.

### ***HLWD Annual Report***

Throughout the months of January and February, work was done on the HLWD Annual Report. The draft narrative and supporting documentation were sent to the printer on January 31, 2017. Revisions were made throughout February and early March. The report should be delivered the week of March 20.

### ***Summer Interns***

Three interviews with potential intern candidates were held on March 2, 2017. The fourth interview was held on March 8. The interview committee consisted of Jerry Christopherson and Sherry Shoewe, North Heron Lake Game Producers Association, Catherine Wegehaupt, and me. Adam Franck and Michael Roeder were unanimously recommended. Adam is pursuing a two-

year degree in Environmental Science at Iowa Lakes Community College in Estherville. Michael is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree at the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Life Sciences with an emphasis in Environmental and Natural Resources Management at Clemson University in South Carolina.

## **Grants**

### *Major Watershed Project (MWP)*

The Local Work Group meeting was held on February 23, 2017. The purpose of the meeting was to recognize the purpose and goals of a watershed citizens group in the development and completion of the WRAPS report. The result of the meeting was identification and analysis of potential watershed stakeholders to serve on the citizen group.

### *Conservation Corps 2017 Clean Water Fund Project*

On January 31, 2017, the HLWD was notified that the HLWD Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Project grant application was approved. We will be coordinating with the Conservation Corps Minnesota crew for four days (200 hours) of work within the watershed.

### *Third Crop Phosphorus Reduction Effort*

On February 9, 2017, Catherine Wegehaupt and I completed the mailing to 30 landowners within the watershed. The purpose of the mailing was to inform them about the five-year cover crop trials and solicit interest. On February 23, 2017, I met with Dave Pomerence regarding the cover crop trial. He confirmed his participation on March 1, 2017.

## **Public Drainage Systems**

### *Jackson County Ditch (CD) 3*

On February 24, 2017, time was spent reviewing and correcting name and address information in the Property Owners' reports. On February 27, the Order was sent to the *Tri County News* for publication. On February 27 and 28, additional changes were made. Printing the reports started on February 27 and continued on February 28. The mailing could not be done until the redetermination of benefits report was submitted. The revised version was submitted on 1. The mailing was completed on March 2, 2017. Following the mailing, several calls and emails were received, as well as office visits. Information received was sent to Chuck Brandel, Ron Ringquist, Bruce Sellers, and Mike Tow.

On March 15, 2017, the viewers met with Chuck Brandel in the HLWD office. Discussion was held regarding several ditch systems. Preparations were made for the CD 3 informational meeting that was held at 10:00 a.m. Following the informational meeting, individual meetings were held with the viewers. Several changes were brought to the viewers' and engineer's attention. Revisions will be made to the viewers' and engineer's reports.

### *Nobles County Ditch (CD) 12*

Dwayne Haffield, City of Worthington, contacted me on January 20 regarding a proposed flood mitigation project on Nobles CD 12. The HLWD is the drainage authority for this system. He submitted preliminary information that I forwarded to Mike Tow for review. This project will require a petition under Minnesota Statutes 103E.227 for impounding, rerouting, and diverting drainage system waters.

On March 16, 2017, Justin Klabo, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc. contacted me regarding the status of CD 12. Because they are on a tight time schedule, he would like to move forward with the process as quickly as possible. I spoke with Jim Buschena

regarding this subject on March 16, 2017. I sent the report and the questions to Mike Tow for review.

#### *Jackson County Judicial Ditch (JD) 14*

The correspondence and petition, as well as the signature pages, and bond information was forwarded to Mike Tow for review. In correspondence dated February 16, 2017, the HLWD was advised that the bond did not meet statutory requirements. It was returned to the petitioners' legal counsel.

The Order Appointing Engineer was drafted and sent to Mike Tow for review. The document was finalized on February 23, 2017. This will be considered by the managers once the revised bond has been submitted.

#### *Projects 2, 4, and/4A*

In 2015, the Jackson County Commissioners ordered redetermination of benefits on Projects 2, 4, and 4A. These projects were established by the Middle Des Moines Watershed District and are actually HLWD ditches. In order to correctly follow the statute, the HLWD will issue orders for these redeterminations. After the orders are drafted, they will be submitted to Mike Tow for review.

In addition, a petition for abandonment of a portion of Project 2 was submitted to Jackson County. This petition has been forwarded to Mike Tow for review.

On February 16, 2017, I discussed these ditch systems with Mike Tow. Before an order can be drafted, I will need to get copies of the original petitions and orders from the courthouse in Jackson.

On March 6, 2017, the orders for redetermination of benefits for Projects 2, 4, and 84-4A were drafted and sent to Mike Tow. He reviewed the documents and provided comments on March 7. The documents were revised and sent to Mike. They were approved on March 8. The orders were sent to Ron Ringquist, Kevin Nordquist, Dave Macek, and Chuck Brandel on March 13, 2017.

#### *Jackson County JD 2 Informational Meeting*

Dave Macek contacted me regarding Jackson County JD 2. This ditch system is located within the HLWD. Landowners are considering an improvement project. Preliminary work has been done and an informational meeting will be held in early March. A mailing list was generated and a memo drafted. The memo was sent to Chuck Brandel for review on February 20, 2017. The mailing was done on February 21.

#### *Jackson CD 2*

On March 8, 2017, an informational meeting was held for landowners on the Jackson County JD 2 system. Chuck Brandel gave a preliminary update. Discussion was held regarding the pumping station, current assessments and improvement costs, and adequacy of the outlet. A petition has been drafted and some signatures have been obtained.

#### *Jackson County JD 19*

On February 20, 2017, a request for an additional \$100,000 bond was submitted to M&M Insurance Agency. Expenditures related to surveying and administration fees for the project total are less than \$4,000 below the \$200,000 increased bond limit and will soon be insufficient to cover additional costs and expenses related to the improvement project.

Discussion was held regarding cover crops in Department of Natural Resources food plots, One Watershed One Plan, and buffer enforcement.

**6. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Jerry Christopherson and seconded by Allen Jensen. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Allen Jensen

Secretary