



Meeting Minutes

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board Meeting

April 28, 2022, 1 p.m., In-person and Teleconference using Zoom

Board Members in Attendance

Dakota County Commissioner Mike Slavik, Chair

Scott County Commissioner Tom Wolf, Vice Chair

Dakota County Commissioner Mary Liz Holberg, Secretary/ Treasurer

Others in Attendance

Larry Ring, Vermillion Township Board of Supervisors, Chair

Bruce Johnson, Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District, Supervisor

Mary Hamann-Roland, Dakota County Commissioner, VRWJPB Alternate via teleconference

Brian Watson, Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District, Manager

Mark Zabel, Dakota County, VRWJPO Administrator

Melissa Bokman-Ermer, Scott County, Watershed Co-administrator via teleconference

Travis Thiel, Dakota County, VRWJPO Senior Watershed Specialist

Mark Ryan, Dakota County, VRWJPO Watershed Engineer

Brita Moore-Kutz, Dakota County, VRWJPO Communications and Outreach Specialist

Paula Liepold, Dakota County, Water Resources Education Specialist via teleconference

Paul Beaumaster, Dakota County, Assistant County Attorney via teleconference

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Slavik, Holberg, and Wolf were in attendance.

3. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

There were no comments from the audience.

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of Minutes from the February 24, 2022, meeting
- c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- d. Approval of Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Consultant List for 2022-2023

Res. No. VRW 22-05: Motion by Commissioner Wolf, Second by Commissioner Holberg and passed on a 3-0 vote to approve the consent agenda.

5. Approval of Expenses

Mark Zabel presented the current expenses for approval as shown on item 5.

Res. No. VRW 22-06: Motion by Commissioner Wolf, Second by Commissioner Holberg and passed on a 3-0 vote to approve the expenses totaling \$86,137.79 incurred between February 16, 2022 and April 16, 2022.

Business Items

6a. Approval of proposed amendments to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) 2022 Budget

Mark Zabel presented proposed changes to the VRWJPO 2022 Budget which reflects new information based on the end of year financial reporting of revenues, expenses, and fund balance for 2021; new grant awards and commitments, and, expected needs for programs and projects. Mark described all changed line items as highlighted in Attachment A: Draft Revised VRWJPO 2022 Budget. Commissioner Slavik commented that the budget reflects a positive emphasis in getting projects planned and implemented.

Res. No. VRW 22-07: Motion by Commissioner Holberg, Second by Commissioner Wolf and passed on a 3-0 vote to approve the amendments to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization 2022 Budget.

6b. Authorization to submit 2021 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

Brita Moore-Kutz presented the report and commented that some programs and activities were impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic health and safety restrictions. The report provides a summary of programs and completed projects, and financial information for 2021. The format of the report was changed from previous reports to bring it in line with accessibility requirements following Dakota County digital accessibility formatting protocols.

Res. No. VRW 22-08: Motion by Commissioner Wolf, Second by Commissioner Holberg and passed on a 3-0 vote to approve authorization to submit the 2021 Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Annual Activity Report and Financial Statement to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.

6c. Delegation of a Limited Authority for Contracts and Purchase Agreements to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Administrator and Co-administrator

Mark Zabel reviewed the policy regarding the delegation of a limited authority for contracts. That policy provides that when there is a change in membership to the Joint Powers Board the delegation of authority be reauthorized. Mark also noted that there was a need to correct an omission in the previous authorization as it did not include authorization to the Co-administrator for projects occurring in the Scott County portion of the watershed. A new provision is included in the proposed version to authorize signing purchase agreements. This provision is included to address the need to process purchase agreements for the sale of wetland credits from the newly completed wetland bank (Wetland Bank #1740). This provides that the Administrator is authorized to sign such purchase agreements for sale of

credits from wetland banks in the Dakota County portion of the watershed and the Co-administrator would have similar authority within the Scott County portion.

Mark Zabel presented information about the current inquiries regarding the wetland bank and their status. It was also noted that more credits will be released for sale sometime in 2023 after certification by State and Federal authorities.

Res. No. VRW 22-08: Motion by Commissioner Holberg, Second by Commissioner Wolf and passed on a 3-0 vote to approve delegation of a limited authority for contracts and purchase agreements to the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Administrator and Co-administrator.

Staff Reports

Travis Thiel

Travis reported he was recently certified as a drone pilot and member of the Dakota County Drone Team. The team flew drones at the Middle Creek and Highview project and at the Foxborough Park Basin project hoping to be able to use the level of detail in the photos to do as-built level surveys.

Regarding water conservation, Apple Valley is rolling out a “Water Smart Program.” Cities implementing this program allow citizens to use this portal to monitor their use real time with the possibility of finding unusual use and a potential leak. This would also detect unusual use in irrigation systems indicating possible leaks or breaks. Commissioner Wolf commented that he has a real time water meter on his home and has found it very useful for detecting leaks in his system.

Travis plans to attend the Alimagnet Lake Association meeting on May 5. to inform association members about a potential alum treatment project by the VRWJPO and cities Burnsville and Apple Valley. The alum treatment will trap phosphorus into the bottom sediment of the Lake.

There have been reports of beaver activity on trout stream sections of the river which have been referred to DNR and their contracted trapper.

Brita Moore-Kutz

Brita and Travis led students from the School of Environmental Studies supporting their Earth Day service learning program to do live staking on North Creek on a reach just north of 190th Street in Farmington. Live staking was done with local Red Osier Dogwood that was cut from live shrubs nearby and inserted into the bank and near bank area of the creek.

Brita was at Rambling River Park on Saturday, April 23, for Vermillion River Day with students from Farmington.

Brita will staff a table at the Lakeville Earth Day Celebration and Watershed Clean-up Day Saturday, April 30. An Adopt-A-Drain exhibit will also be at the event.

We are still looking for three new members for the Vermillion River Watershed Planning Commission, two from Dakota County and one from Scott County. We had an expression of interest, unfortunately that person did not reside within the watershed.

Brita is actively participating with other Dakota County staff in development of the “We Are Water” exhibit and events.

The VRWJPO Spring Newsletter was sent earlier this month.

Mark Ryan

Mark Ryan reported on a meeting held recently with a group of landowners concerned about drainage issues around an area west of the City of Vermillion. Commissioner Slavik, Mark Ryan, Brian Watson of the Dakota SWCD and Todd Howard, Dakota County Transportation Department met at a wetland complex on County Road 62 west of the City of Vermillion to talk about high water issues experienced over the past several years. One of the follow up issues involved looking into any wells associated with the Dakota County Agriculture Chemical Reduction Effort (ACRE) program that might be located close enough to assist with monitoring groundwater levels in the area of these landowners' concern. Consideration had been made about placement of a new monitoring well in the area, however site conditions for a well would not allow effective placement. Commissioner Slavik complimented staff on engaging landowners to address concerns. Mark indicated that staff may follow up on wetland and river water levels this summer to gather more information.

Mark reported that Dakota County released a request for proposals (RFP) for the final design work on the Ravenna Ravines Stabilization/ Ravenna Trail Project so that could go forward in design in 2022 and implementation in 2023.

Mark mentioned a possible collaboration project with the City of Lakeville in renovating ponds that are part of the City stormwater management system and the Crystal Lake Golf Course. The City will look at possibly incorporating more of these ponds into the Golf Course irrigation system or expanding an existing pond for increased water reuse.

Commissioner Slavik asked if there was an update regarding working with Townships on ordinance development and adoption. Mark mentioned that he had met with the Ravenna Township Board where he provided some additional documentation that they had requested. Mark mentioned that he would be meeting with Larry Ring of Vermillion Township after the VRWJPB meeting to discuss these issues for Vermillion Township. Commissioner Slavik mentioned a fact sheet Mark had developed. Mark mentioned that, in conversation with Larry Ring, he is considering some changes to the two page fact sheet addressing some questions we anticipate Township Board members would have.

Mark Zabel

Mark Zabel reported that now that we have returned to open water season with recent ice out on lakes and ponds we have received reports of fish kills at several locations, most notably on East Lake in the City of Lakeville. Winter "freeze out" on shallow lakes and ponds is a naturally occurring phenomenon in our region. Generally, it is more prominent in years when there is a heavy snow cover on the ice for an extended period over the winter. Under these conditions water below the ice in shallow lakes and ponds is depleted of oxygen to levels where fish cannot survive. In the case of East Lake, reports of large numbers of Carp and Goldfish are dead along the shore. This diminishes the numbers of these invasive species, however, it also eliminates the predator fish that would eat the carp and goldfish eggs and young. As a result, any surviving Carp or Goldfish (which are more tolerant of low levels of dissolved oxygen) will be able to repopulate the Lake without competition.

Mark mentioned that the Board, and Commissioner Slavik particularly, mentioned a desire to do a strategic planning session soon. Mark commented that it may be prudent to do that before the next budget development cycle. Mark mentioned that May usually has a lighter agenda and thus would be a good time for a strategic planning session; without a strategic planning session, however, we might

cancel the May meeting as we are not expecting critical items for Board consideration in May. The other option would be to try to have a session associated with the June regular meeting. June is also the time we begin budget planning for the next year. Commissioner Slavik commented that he felt there was some transformational change that occurred after the last time the VRWJPB had done strategic planning resulting in a greater focus on project development and implementation. Commissioner Slavik asked for input and discussion from other members. Commissioner Wolf commented that he was open for June. Commissioner Holberg commented that the May meeting could be cancelled especially as it occurs leading into the Memorial Day weekend. Mark requested Board members provide him with any topics for discussion or any areas of focus for the strategic planning session. Commissioner Slavik mentioned looking at our communication and outreach efforts and where we want to go on a long term basis with those efforts. Commissioner Holberg mentioned wanting to consider what we might need to do looking at a constrained budget model as it appears we are entering an economic downturn. Mark requested Board members contact him if they had further input on topics for the strategic planning session.

Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Wolf, Second by Commissioner Holberg and passed on a 3-0 vote to adjourn the meeting at 1:57 p.m.


Next Meeting Date: Thursday, May 26, 2022, at 1 p.m. in Conference Room A at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center, 4100 220th Street West, Farmington, MN.

Respectfully submitted by

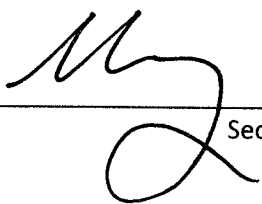
Mark Zabel

Administrator for the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

Attest



Commissioner



Secretary/ Treasurer

6-23-22
Date