

Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District Meeting Minutes
March 13th, 2024 at 6:30 pm at the MFCRWD Office

Board of Managers Present: Ruth Schaefer, Jay Hedtke, Jeff Gertgen, Shane Braegelman, Amanda Toutges (arrived at 6:36pm)

Staff & Guests Present: Dan Coughlin, District Administrator; Andy Johnson, Project Manager; Jon Morales, Program Manager; Leah Melges, Office & Finance Manager; Chris Meehan, District Engineer

Attending Virtually: Hannah Schacherl, Rinke Noonan (sitting in for District Attorney John Kolb)

1. President Schaefer called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.
2. President Schaefer recited the District's mission statement: "We exist for the protection and preservation of water quality in the Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District."
3. Approval of Agenda: A motion to approve the updated distributed agenda was made by Manager Braegelman, seconded by Manager Toutges. Motion passed unanimously.
4. Consent Agenda
 - a. Financial Report / Expenditure Report / Approval of Payables
 - b. Approval of Annual LMCIT Liability Coverage Waiver Form
 - c. Regular Board Meeting Minutes – February 14th, 2024
Motion by Manager Toutges, seconded by Manager Braegelman to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.
5. Discussion / Business Items
 - a. LCCMR 2025 ENRTF Grant
Resolution 2024-02, Authorization to Request ENRTF Funding:
The Board authorized District Administrator Coughlin to submit a grant request for the Nanobubble Project. If we are not a recipient of the state bonding request, this will be a fall back. The board acknowledges that if awarded funds, we would be responsible for 25% local match. Motion made by Manager Gertgen, seconded by Manager Braegelman to approve. Motion passed unanimously.
 - b. Updates on the Proposed New London / Lake Monongalia Nanobubble Project
Resolution 2024-03, Approval of Services Agreement with the University of Minnesota:
The Services Agreement authorizes a partnership with the U of M Saint Anthony Falls Laboratory and Professor Miki Hondzo. Hydrogen sulfide probes and a floating telemetry unit will be measuring flow, pH, and temperature. This data will be used to create a sediment oxygen demand to determine what size of a nanobubble unit will be necessary to treat the area. Professor Hondzo will collect core samples without additional financial charges. The total requested amount is \$25,113. Funding for this

partnership will come from 1W1P FY24, \$25,000 WBIF grant. Motion to approve made by Manager Toutges, seconded by Manager Gertgen. Motion passed unanimously.

Hydrogen Sulfide Sensor System:

Due to the MPCA being unable to loan us the air quality monitoring equipment, District staff and the Project Committee met with GDS Corp about gas detection equipment with 2 different sensor units. The City of New London has allowed us access to mount the controller and sensors near the dam. Total cost: \$19,000 for the equipment and \$85 monthly subscription fee for the telemetry. Remaining Lake Monongalia project funds will be used to cover these expenses.

c. CD-47 Project Updates:

Andy continues to work with the Army Corp of Engineers regarding permit process concerns related to supposed additional wetland impacts. Diversified Foundations was interested in sticking with the existing contract even with the project start date delay due to permit delays, but asked for a change order to temporarily release the performance bond for the project until late fall, prepaying \$25,000 to secure current pricing with the rock supplier, and to allow for a fuel adder clause that would adjust for any increases in diesel prices that potentially could happen over the period of project delay. This is projected to be able to start next December (2024), as an estimated 60-day project from start to completion. The board agreed that we will make adjustments to the contract to keep it with Diversified Foundations.

d. AIS Management Seminar Update:

Friday, March 15th, 2024 is the James Johnson Aquatic Plant Management Seminar. There are 27 attendees registered and Board President Schaefer will request a power point presentation from him that we can put this on our website.

e. Review of the Legislative Day at the Capitol:

Manager Gertgen sat down with Representative Baker and discussed the Nanobubble Project at the Legislative Day at the Capitol. It would be beneficial to ensure Representative Baker has an adequate understanding on the science behind the Nanobubble technology so he can speak to it and advocate for it.

Shell Rock Watershed District has spent \$29 million on dredging so far, receiving funding from Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) almost yearly. District Administrator Coughlin will look into applying for this funding as well for the Nanobubble Project.

f. Meeting Date Change Consensus:

2nd Tuesday of the month will be the new monthly board meeting date starting in August, with notice being posted regarding the meeting date change starting in July.

- g. Resolution 2024-04, Authorization for 2024 Seasonal Employment/Internship to Erin Vruwink:

Erin will be able to receive advanced college internship credits for her internship with us this summer for her participation in helping with the Lake Monongalia updated study project. This position would be Grade 2 Step 3 on the compensation schedule. Motion to approve by Manager Gertgen, seconded by Manager Hedtke. Motion passed unanimously.

- h. Agenda Additions / Other Matters:
Implementation of the new replacement server.

6. Reports & Updates

- a. Administration – Dan Coughlin:

Dan reported the new server is on site and running, and the official cut-over will take place Friday late afternoon. The building's HVAC system has all new control boards and thermostats that have been installed. The server and HVAC system will be insurance claims.

- b. Program Manager – Jon Morales:

Jon met with the DNR to begin the process of getting a permit established for the New London / Lake Monongalia nanobubble project. The DNR is looking at using this process to help standardize its permitting of future nanobubble projects.

- c. Project Manager – Andy Johnson:

Andy is still working on the 319 work plan draft. A meeting has been set with the City of Atwater for April 11, 2024 for an initial discussion regarding the stormwater study funded in part by WBIF grant dollars. 1W1P FY24 Agreement needs to be signed once it is available to present to the Board. Paddle the Crow event is scheduled for June 1st, 2024. Earth Day Event at PWELC is scheduled for Saturday, April 20th, 2024 where Jon will be running 2 education sessions at the event.

- d. Finance Manager – Leah Melges:

Leah reported that the focus this past month has been working on getting everything set to run our first payroll in-house. March 22nd will be the last payroll processed by CDS, and then April 5th we will start. We will import all of Quarter 1 payrolls from CDS into Banyon Payroll and then pick up from there. Ashley from Abdo will assist in processing the first few payrolls to make sure everything is processing correctly.

Banyon clean-up for audit prep continues. Revising the Chart of Accounts and working on the Expense and Revenue Analytics to reclass entries.

The new website is active now and we are continuing to add content to it.

Chase Ink Card- working with former Administrator to close this account.

- e. District Engineer – Chris Meehan:
Josh Kavanaugh from DNR continues to work on the process to get the Lake Calhoun JPA in effect.
- f. District Attorney – Hanna Schacherl (Filling in for John Kolb): No report.
- g. Other Reports from Managers / Staff:
Manager Gertgen reported that a large area of land around Diamond Lake was purchased by a mega-farmer. He repaired and pulled out tiles draining a wetland and the outlet drains directly into Dogfish Bay. There were no permits required for this, and as long as the outlet is higher than the lake, it is permissible. The District Attorney’s advice is to partner with downstream landowners to implement a sediment project. Manager Gergen will update on this next month, they will have to get around data privacy with the USDA.

Manager Hedtke reported that in the beginning of August he will have his farm show again highlighting cover crops, strip till/no till, and seeding practices.

- 7. Public Access Forum: No public input was received.
- 8. Adjournment: Motion made by Manager Braegelman, seconded by Manager Gertgen to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting declared adjourned by President Schaefer at 7:48pm

Submitted by,

Leah Melges
Recording Secretary
Office & Finance Manager