Managers present: Brad Kramer, Al Bakken, Mick Delger, Mike Hanson and Joe Pacovsky

Managers absent: Gary Pestorious and Dan DeBoer

Vice Chairman Delger called the Regular Meeting to order June 11, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. at the Albert Lea City Council Chambers, 221 East Clark Street, Albert Lea, MN 56007.

Manager Kramer offered the following motion:

Move to approve the consent agenda as follows:

a. Minutes of the April 17, 2019 Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting
b. Minutes of the May 14, 2019 SRRWD Monthly Board Meeting
c. May 2019 Treasurer’s Report Subject to Audit
d. May 2019 Project Fund Treasurer’s Report Subject to Audit
e. Authorize Payment of Claims
f. Authorize Payment of Project Fund Disbursements

Manager Pacovsky seconded the motion.

After discussion, a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

Administrator Henschel reported that this year’s Omnibus legacy bill, including Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) funding recommendations, was passed by the House and Senate. Among the LSOHC provisions is $2.04 million for the Shell Rock River Watershed District, Phase VIII. The bill that included Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) recommendations passed the House and Senate. Provision include adding comprehensive watershed management plans to existing statewide or regional strategies published by the PCA to the definition of what a “TMDL implementation plan” can mean for purposes of the Clean Water Legacy Act. The provisions also updates WRAPS requirements, including requiring the PAC and BWSR to coordinate the schedule, budget, scope, and use of WRAPS and requiring completion of WRAPS for the state’s major watersheds by June 30, 2023. Additionally, watershed district managers may now be compensated up to $125 per day for per diem. This is an increase from the $75 limit already in statute. No bonding bill was passed so no investments in flood hazard mitigation for Albert Lea were funded. The lack of bonding bill will require the SRRWD to be very strategic in our approach for dredging.
Administrator Henschel gave an update on the Fountain Lake Restoration project. Dredging began in April. The dredging contractor, J.F. Brennan, worked with the city of Albert Lea to temporarily relocate the fishing pier so that area could be dredged closer to shore. The District did receive a variance from the DNR in order to dredge due to the habitat exclusion zone. Administrator Henschel continued with a Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) Cells 2&3 update. Veit & Company, Inc. will begin working on the site next week.

Project/Program Manager, Courtney Phillips, gave an update on the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) grant application and the associated projects and benefits of the Phase 9 Habitat Restoration Program including:

- Acquiring 207 acres of key targeted acquisitions to project land along the Shell Rock River, establish upland prairie, and improve nesting habitat and waterfowl food sources.
- Enhance 26 acres of streambank habitat for fish, amphibian, and waterfowl benefit.
- Reestablish 95 acres of wetland basins from row crop agriculture, reversing wetland loss and habitat degradation.
- Enhance 300 acres of vegetation in Panicum Prairie, an important flyway that is critical to nesting waterfowl, upland game, and other wading bird species.

Courtney continued with an update on the credit trading program. Using the workplan as a reference, she reported that activity 1 is largely complete and activity 2 is underway. After a recent meeting with the MPCA, she reported that a large number of items were agreed upon. The program is on time and within budget.

Finally, Courtney discussed the One Watershed, One Plan progress. The contract with RE/SPEC Inc. was signed and a public kick-off meeting is being planning for the week of July 8th.

During manager’s items, Manager Mick Delger reported that the Freeborn County Commissioner’s discussed the upcoming SRRWD Board of Manager’s appointments. He also reported that the Personnel Committee will meet following the board meeting. Andy explained the features of the Upper Twin Lake project. Manager Brad Kramer raved about the success of the Albert Lea Floats and Plays — a free boating event held at the Golden Point Launch.

Manager Hanson offered the following motion:

Move to adjourn the meeting.
Manager Pacovsky seconded the motion.
After discussion, a vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.