

**Shell Rock River Watershed District
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 8, 2023**

Managers present: Al Bakken, Joe Pacovsky, Mike Hanson, Dan DeBoer, Mike Lee and Brad Kramer

Managers absent: Mick Delger

Vice-Chairman Kramer called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. on August 8, 2023 at the Shell Rock River Watershed District, 305 S 1st Ave., Albert Lea, MN 56007.

Manager DeBoer offered the following motion:

Move to approve the consent agenda as presented.

- a. Minutes of the July 11, 2023 SRRWD Monthly Board Meeting
- b. Minutes of the July 11, 2023 SRRWD Workshop
- c. July 2023 Treasurer's Report Subject to Audit
- d. July 2023 Project Fund Treasurer's Report Subject to Audit
- e. Authorize Payment of Claims
- f. Authorize Payment of Project Fund Disbursements

Manager Lee seconded the motion.

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

Manager Bakken offered the following motion:

Move to approve the agenda without additions, corrections, or deletions.

Manager Pacovsky seconded the motion.

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

A draft version of the 2023-2024 SRRWD Committee List was distributed at an earlier board meeting. Managers were instructed to review the list and decide if they wanted to be added or removed from committees.

Manager DeBoer offered the following motion:

Move to approve the 2023-2024 SRRWD Committee List.

Manager Lee seconded the motion.

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

Administrator Henschel explained that the Environmental Assessment Worksheet for the Fountain Lake In-Lake Habitat Restoration Project. Comments were received from two agencies, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) and the Minnesota Department of Administration's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The SRRWD addressed the comments leading to the Finding of Fact, Conclusion of Law, and Decision of the Environmental Assessment Worksheet.

Manager DeBoer offered the following motion:

Move to approve response letters regarding comments on the Fountain Lake In-Lake Habitat Restoration and the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW).

Manager Hanson seconded the motion.

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

Manager Lee offered the following motion:

Move to introduce Resolution 2023-04

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-04

Resolution on the recommendation for a Negative Declaration on the need for an Environmental Impact Statement.

WHEREAS, the Shell Rock River Watershed District (the "District") is the Responsible Governmental Unit (RGU) for the proposed Fountain Lake In-Lake Habitat Restoration project in Albert Lea, Freeborn County, Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) has been prepared for the proposed project in accordance with MN Rules Chapter 4410; and

WHEREAS, a public notice containing notice of availability of the EAW for public review was released on June 21, 2023 within the project area within five working days of the EAW distribution in Accordance with MN Rules Chapter 4410; and

WHEREAS, copies of the EAW were distributed to all people/agencies listed on the Environmental Quality Board Distribution List and made available to interested persons and provided to all requests as required; and

WHEREAS, comments from two (2) parties were received by July 20, within the 30-day comment period as required; and

WHEREAS, the district staff and consultants considered, evaluated, and prepared a response to substantive comments received; and

WHEREAS, the information gathered during the EAW process and the substantive comments received do not indicate a potential for significant environmental effects; and

WHEREAS, the District has considered the comments that were received, responses to the commenting public agencies, and the evidence in the Record;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE BOARD OF MANAGERS OF THE SHELL ROCK RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT, AS THE RGU, that a Negative Declaration on the need for an Environmental Impact Statement shall be issued.

Manager Bakken seconded the motion.

After discussion, a roll call vote was taken and the resolution was unanimously approved.

Administrator Henschel continued by discussing ISG's Professional Engineering Services Proposal for the Panicum Prairie Moist Soil Management Project. The total cost of services and disbursements will not exceed \$72,000.00. Funding was made possible by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council.

Manager Hanson offered the following motion:

Move to approve Engineering Service for Panicum Prairie.

Manager Lee seconded the motion.

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

Administrator Henschel discussed ISG's Professional Engineering Services for the Bancroft Creek Wetland Restoration north of Albert Lea. The total cost of services and disbursements will not exceed \$53,800.00. Funding for the acquisition and project were made possible by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council.

Manager Hanson offered the following motion:

Move to approve Engineering Service for Bancroft Wetland Restoration.

Manager Lee seconded the motion.

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

Administrator Henschel discussed transferring properties with completed restoration projects to the MN DNR including the Ashleson property north of Mud Lake, Church Lake property west of Church Lake, and the Glenville property by the Shell Rock River. The SRRWD is requesting that the MN DNR install a small access for canoes and kayaks due to the state water trail. The SRRWD is working with US Fish and Wildlife Service on transferring the Owen's Wetland area located on US Hwy 69 and Co Rd 17.

Hill, Benda, Skov & Bernau continue to work on the SRRWD audit. The Executive Committee plans to meet with Andy Bernau and then an update will be given at the next board meeting. The SRRWD will participate in the upcoming Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council hearings. The SRRWD ranked 16th out of 54 applicants and requested over \$5 million dollars for projects.

Administrator Henschel concluded with an update on the Fountain Lake Restoration Project. The SRRWD submitted the grant application to the MN DNR for bonding dollars. Administrator Henschel attended the Western Dredging Association (WEDA) conference and met with engineers interested in the project. An update will be given at the next board meeting.

Administrator Henschel requested moving the date of the next board meeting from September 12th to September 5th due to a scheduling conflict.

Manager Hanson offered the following motion:

Move to approve board meeting date change to September 5, 2023.

Manager DeBoer seconded the motion.

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

Manager DeBoer offered the following motion:

Move to adjourn the meeting.

Manager Lee seconded the motion.

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