

Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District Meeting Minutes
May 13th, 2025 at 6:30 pm at the MFCRWD Office

Board of Managers Present: Ruth Schaefer, Jeff Gertgen, Shane Braegelman
Absent: Jay Hedtke, Amanda Toutges

Staff & Guests Present: Andy Johnson – District Administrator; Leah Melges – Office & Finance Manager; Erin Vruwink – Water Resources Specialist; Chris Meehan – District Engineer; and John Kolb – District Attorney; Dale Anderson – County Commissioner; Jeff Martinka – United Prairie Bank

1. President Schaefer called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.
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. Additions / Corrections to the Agenda: **A motion to approve the distributed agenda made by Manager Braegelman, seconded by Manager Gertgen. Motion passed unanimously.**
4. Consent Agenda
 - a. Financial Report
 - i. Finance Report & Cash Balances
 - ii. Approval of Payables & Expenditures
 - b. Regular Board Meeting Minutes – April 8th, 2025.
Motion by Manager Gertgen, seconded by Manager Braegelman to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.
5. Discussion / Business Items
 - a. Board Term Appointment for Ruth and Shane
Board Manager Shane Braegelman was reappointed as the Stearns County representative and Board Manager Ruth Schaefer was reappointed as the Kandiyohi County representative and Oaths of Office were completed.
 - b. MFCRWD Bank Proposals
District Administrator Andy Johnson sent out a request for proposals to the local banks within our watershed district seeking services, mainly focusing on an interest-bearing account for us to be able to earn interest based on our account balance. A comparison of the various banks was presented to the Board, with a recommendation for United Prairie Bank in Spicer, who offered the highest interest-earning rate while also providing all the necessary banking and cash management services. **A motion to move MFCRWD banking services to United Prairie Bank in Spicer, made by Manager Gertgen, seconded by Manager Braegelman. Motion passed unanimously.**
 - c. Resolution 2025-11 – Annual Resolution Appointments & Designations
 - i. Calendar Year 2025 Board Officer & Advisory Committee Appointments

- ii. Official Depositories, Newspaper and other Designations
- iii. Review Meeting and Holiday Dates

A motion to accept Resolution 2025-11 – Annual Resolution Appointments & Designation was made by Manager Braegelman, seconded by Manager Gertgen. Motion passed unanimously.

d. Potential Projects

- i. City of New London Parking Lot- This specific area ties back to the 2016 AIG Stormwater Study and has been identified as the highest area of need within New London. Current plan is to lift the parking lot up 5-6 ft and alter the current stormwater design to channel stormwater into an underground storage tank to be filtered through gravel before exiting and entering the Mill Pond. In addition, storm sceptors would be placed along Norwood Street for stormwater before it re-enters the Mill Pond. Funding for this project could be comprised of 319 grant, 1W1P funding and the New London fund. Johnson will present this project to the 1W1P group, however they will require complete bids before approving any projects.
- ii. Rosenquist Bioreactor- Administrator Johnson is looking at the possibility of installing a second, and maybe third, bioreactor on the Rosenquist field before the tile drainage enters Diamond Lake. The estimate for this project is around \$80,000 and Johnson could request 1W1P funding for this project, however, the District would need to provide the match. District Attorney John Kolb highlighted that his project presents a unique opportunity to implement pre-project monitoring to see how many nitrates and total suspended solids are presently leaving the field prior to the bioreactor being installed and continue monitoring after the bioreactor is implemented to evaluate effectiveness.
- iii. Peace Church Overflow Parking Lot- This area is the 3rd highest sub-watershed for total suspended solids in the New London area. The current concept design is to create a drainage basin with an underground pipe that will flow and connect into the existing stormwater system. This project is estimated to be around \$125,000 - \$150,000 and it is in the 319 grant area, as well as 1W1P eligible, so Johnson believes majority of the project could be covered by these grants with the remaining funding from the New London fund.
- iv. Elkhorn Lake- A large algae bloom develops on the west side of the lake where stormwater drainage enters Elkhorn Lake. Potential plans could include a drainage basin and rain garden. This project is also in the 319 grant area and estimated cost for this project is around \$78,000.
- v. Atwater Fishing Pier- Majority of the funding for the aluminum fishing pier/dock on Upper Lake will come from DNR Get Out More funding. However, due to the rising costs of materials the final cost is \$5000 over DNR budget. Administrator Johnson went to the city council meeting and the city agreed to provide the additional \$5000 and Johnson committed District

efforts to improving water quality on/near Tadd and Upper Lake through a sub watershed study that can be funded by 1W1P.

e. MFCRWD Comprehensive Goals

Administrator Johnson presented the idea for the MFCRWD to develop their own comprehensive plan (aside from the 1W1P comprehensive plan that MFCRWD has also adopted). Having this plan could help remain focused on our long-term, district-wide goals, while also assisting in management of short-term / pop-up projects that arise occasionally. Creating this comprehensive plan would be beneficial to the District in developing annual budgets and identifying where fund balances may need to be built up. Full board support was given to Administrator Johnson to start working on how we begin developing this comprehensive plan, starting with having Board Managers provide priority ratings on District projects.

- f. Agenda Additions / Other Matters: Full Board approval was given for Board Managers Ruth Schaefer and Jeff Gertgen to be representatives at the MN Watersheds Summer Tour in Roseau on June 24-26, 2025. Erin Vruwink was welcomed back as our new Water Resources Specialist and summer intern, Gavin Radabaugh, will begin tomorrow and he will be assisting Erin with monitoring.

6. Reports & Updates

a. Administrator – Andy Johnson:

District Administrator Andy Johnson had no further reports in addition to the agenda items reviewed above.

b. Finance Manager – Leah Melges:

Finance Manager Leah Melges' monthly updated included completion of the April bank reconciliation, filing of the 2025 – Q1 quarterly tax returns (both state and federal) as well as the 2024 audit. Schlenner Wenner was on-site for field work on Wednesday, April 30th and the audit report should come later this summer. Updates to the payroll system have continued as we have onboarded Erin Vruwink and will look to onboard Gavin Radabaugh tomorrow. A final supplemental payroll was completed to pay out Jonathan Morales' vacation balance. Morales and Coughlin have been inactivated in the payroll system, as well as being termed in MN PERA.

c. Water Resources Specialist – Erin Vruwink:

No report.

d. District Engineer – Chris Meehan: Written report provided.

District Engineer Chris Meehan reported that CD-47 project is completed and they are in the final steps of re-seeding and project clean-up. 90% design meeting was held for the Lake Calhoun Outlet Project and 100% design-phase will be done by mid-June with plans to go out for bids in July and come back with a bid award in August. Construction on the project is set to begin in mid-September. Meehan has been evaluating HSW and

Diamond Lake sub-watershed and how to best leverage the resources that are currently there and limit potential loading.

- e. District Attorney – John Kolb:
No report.
 - f. Other Reports from Managers / Staff: No additional comments offered.
7. Public Access Forum (*those desiring to speak, please share your name for the meeting record*):
County Commissioner Dale Anderson urged the District to consider being conservative in their 2026 budget creation as he continues to hear feedback from constituents about tax increases, especially as the Kandiyohi County taxes will be increasing for 2026. Jeff Martinka expressed gratitude for confidence in United Prairie bank. Manager Jeff Gertgen reported on his workings with County Administrator Kelsey Baker on blue-green algae and that DLARA is looking at possibly implementing wake-boat restrictions. DLARA also expressed ability to financially assist in furthering research and monitoring efforts on Diamond Lake's aquatic plant management.
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 8:07 p.m.

Submitted by,

Leah Melges
Recording Secretary
Office & Finance Manager