

Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District Meeting Minutes
August 12th, 2025 at 6:30 pm at the MFCRWD Office

Board of Managers Present: Ruth Schaefer, Jay Hedtke (arrived at 6:33 p.m.), Jeff Gertgen, Shane Braegelman (arrived at 6:40 p.m.), Amanda Toutges (departed 7:41 p.m.)

Staff & Guests Present: Andy Johnson – District Administrator; Leah Melges – Office & Finance Manager; Erin Vruwink – Water Resources Specialist; Gavin Radabaugh – Summer Intern; John Kolb – District Attorney; Dale Anderson – Kandiyohi County Commissioner; Susan Kolb – public; Timm Gabrielson – Calhoun Lake Association President

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 Gertgen, seconded by Manager Toutges. Motion passed unanimously.**
4. Consent Agenda
 - a. Financial Report
 - i. Finance Report & Cash Balances
 - ii. Approval of Payables & Expenditures
 - b. Regular Board Meeting Minutes – July 8th, 2025
Motion by Manager Toutges, seconded by Manager Gertgen to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.
5. Discussion / Business Items
 - a. Lake Calhoun Outlet Structures, Kandiyohi County Ditch 20; Conflict Waiver, Rinke Noonan
 - i. Resolution 2025-14, Acceptance of Rinke Noonan Conflict Waiver for Kandiyohi County Ditch 20
Rinke Noonan is the law firm that represents the MFCRWD on the Lake Calhoun Dams & Bridge Project, as well as representing Kandiyohi County Drainage Authority. Currently there is no evidence of placement of the original dams so the county would like to have a ditch proceeding to establish an official record. The county attorney recommended to the county board that the county waive the conflict of interest, and this will allow documentation in the file that the discussion has occurred with both parties.
Motion by Manager Gertgen, seconded by Manager Hedtke to authorize the execution of the waiver document and direct the attorney to prepare the petition. Motion passed unanimously.
 - b. Lake Calhoun Outlet Repairs Bid Results

- i. Resolution 2025-15, Award of Bid for Lake Calhoun Dams and Bridge Project
Tuesday, August 6th was the open bidding date for the Lake Calhoun Dams and Bridge Project with a mandatory pre-bid meeting held at the MFCRWD office, along with a site visit, followed by open bidding online. There was a total of 6 bids received, and the lowest bid came from Minnesota Native Landscapes at \$1,623,157.95 for the project. The agreement requires that the lowest bid is accepted, and Robert R. Schroeder Construction will be subcontracted by Minnesota Native Landscapes to do the bridge work. The project start date is dependent on when final permits are received from the Army Corp of Engineers, hopefully by December 2025, at which point the subcontractor is free to determine if bridge work will begin in winter of 2025 or wait until 2026.

Motion by Manager Gertgen, seconded by Manager Braegelman to approve Resolution 2025-15 Award of Bid for Lake Calhoun Dams and Bridge Project. Motion passed unanimously.

- c. MFCRWD 2026 Budget Draft

District Administrator Andy Johnson presented a draft version of the 2026 budget to the Board of Managers. Johnson showed a comparison of the 2025 levy amounts in comparison to the draft 2026 levy amounts. One large factor in the 2026 budget is that 2026 marks the year that the Survey and Data fund needs to be levied back to zero. Currently Survey & Data is in a deficit of \$168,000. In addition to paying off Survey & Data, Johnson's overall goal is to begin building fund balances in the special project funds for when project opportunities come up and match funds are needed. CD-47 is one special project fund that will continued to be levied for as the District is required to manage all maintenance and repairs on the project for the 25 year agreement timeline. Full board support was given to approve the preliminary certifications to the counties by the end of September with final certification by end of December and a budget hearing will be held on September 9th, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. prior to the regular monthly board meeting.

- d. Agenda Additions / Other Matters: None.

6. Reports & Updates

- a. Administrator – Andy Johnson:

District Administrator Andy Johnson shared the news that Chris Meehan, the former District Engineer from Stantec, resigned and Nick Wyers will be taking over for him. Johnson is looking forward to project planning for the 319 grant area and has been meeting with the city administrators and city engineers for Spicer and New London to discuss potential projects and any upcoming street repairs/enhancements where projects could be partnered on. He also plans to have similar talks with the cities of Belgrade and Atwater. There are two projects in the works with the City of New London and a sub-watershed study for the City of Atwater that can be reimbursable from 1W1P funding. Johnson also recapped summer events including attending the Introduction to Environmental Engineering training in Redwood Falls,

Kids Day for education outreach at the Kandiyohi County Fair and time with the Westby Intern who assisted with monitoring efforts during her days assisting here. On July 28th, there was an open house for the Lake Calhoun Dams and Bridge Project with about 40 people in attendance to learn, and ask questions, about the project. Lastly, Johnson announced that Summer Intern Gavin Radabaugh's last day will be August 20th and praised him being a superb help to the District this summer, often times going above and beyond to learn and be involved during his time here this summer.

b. Finance Manager – Leah Melges:

Finance Manager Melges reported that following the 2024 Audit Report the 2024 Year-End Audit Journal Entry has been made in Banyon and the books are closed on fiscal year 2024. The 2025 clothing order was submitted to MN Screen Print, and we have received part of the order back already. The District received the second quarter reimbursements from the Calhoun Project, as well as WPLMN. Much of July was spent pulling and crunching numbers with District Administrator Johnson for the 2026 budget draft and notifying vendors that we receive direct deposit payments from that we have a new bank account for all future deposits. Calculations of final anticipated debits coming out of Home State Bank are being tabulated so that we can request the account balance be transferred over to United Prairie Bank by the end of August.

c. Water Resources Specialist – Erin Vruwink:

Water Resources Specialist Erin Vruwink reported that this season's monitoring is going well and is currently ahead of schedule so each site got 2 profiles. Volunteer monitoring has been successful as well. She enjoyed Kids Day at the Kandiyohi County Fair and reported that Summer Intern Gavin Radabaugh has been an excellent help this summer with monitoring and sampling.

d. Summer Intern – Gavin Radabaugh:

Summer Intern Gavin Radabaugh shared that he has enjoyed his time this summer being the District's intern, from monitoring and sampling tasks to other non-environmental tasks such as office work. Gavin's major is Wildlife and Fish Science, and he will be headed back to college at SDSU next week.

e. District Engineer – Nick Wyers: Not present.

f. District Attorney – John Kolb:

District Attorney John Kolb will work on preparing the petition for the CD-20 proceeding, as well as working with District Administrator on getting ready for the 2026 budget public hearing.

g. Other Reports from Managers / Staff: Manager Gertgen inquired about the City of New London's willingness to finance the electricity costs of a nanobubble generator for the Mill Pond Hydrogen Sulfide issue if funding is approved at the state legislative level. District Administrator reported that there would have to be numerous more

conversations about the logistics of the project if approved at the state level. Manager Gertgen also wondered if water quality reports can be added to our website as DLAR would like to see monthly monitoring data to evaluate Diamond Lake's status. DLARA is also considering privately hiring a company to take water samples and have them analyzed, and then would be willing to share this data with the District. They would like to evaluate the levels of phosphorus entering the lake at all 12 inlets.

7. Public Access Forum (*those desiring to speak, please share your name for the meeting record*): Lake Calhoun Timm Gabrielson Lake Association President inquired about the September 15th date to have all boats off Calhoun Lake and if that is still expected. District Administrator Johnson clarified that is no longer the expectation as permitting has not come back yet to close the bridge in September.

County Commissioner Dale Anderson addressed additional monitoring efforts on Diamond Lake and stressed not just testing inlets, but also various spots along the lakeshore as well. He cautioned as that may single out farmers and does not account for lakeshore owners. He also shared that he received a phone call from an area visitor praising projects that are being done in our area.

8. Adjournment: Motion made by Manager Gertgen, seconded by Manager Braegelman 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