

**Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District Meeting Minutes  
October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 6:30 pm at the MFCRWD Office**

**Board of Managers Present:** Jay Hedtke, Jeff Gertgen, Shane Braegelman, Amanda Toutges  
Not present: Ruth Schaefer

**Staff & Guests Present:** Andy Johnson – District Administrator; Erin Vruwink – Water Resources Specialist

1. Vice President Hedtke called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.
2. Vice President Hedtke 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 Toutges, seconded by Manager Braegelman. Motion passed unanimously.**
4. Consent Agenda
  - a. Financial Report
    - i. Finance Report & Cash Balances
    - ii. Approval of Payables & Expenditures
  - b. Regular Board Meeting Minutes – September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025.  
**Motion by Manager Toutges, seconded by Manager Braegelman to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.**
5. Discussion / Business Items
  - a. Resolution 2025-19 Authorization of Removal from Probationary Status and Scheduled Step Increase for Erin Vruwink  
District Administrator Johnson stated that Erin had received a great performance review for her first 6 months of employment at the District and was recommending to approve her to be removed off her probationary status and to Grade 4 Step 0 as outlined in our policy.  
**Motion by Manager Gertgen, seconded by Manager Toutges to approve Resolution 2025-19 Authorization of Removal from Probationary Status and Scheduled Step Increase for Erin Vruwink. The motion passed unanimously.**
  - b. MN Paid Leave Discussion  
Administrator Johnson presented to facts below on new MN Paid Family Leave program which is effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, MN Paid Leave will provide payments, up to 90% of your wage, and job protections for necessary time off for Medical Leave for yourself, or Family Leave to care for family members. The employee will have to apply for MN Paid Leave on the state’s website, not through the District, and any payments that are received will come directly from the state, not the District. To fund these payments, the state is requiring premiums be paid in, by all employers and employees,

of .88% for 2026. Employers may choose to pay the full premium amount (.88%) or they may split the premium with the employee (.44%) each. In the event that our District qualifies as a 'small business', of which Johnson stated that it should and is expected the employer portion is reduced to (.22%) and the employee portion remains (.44%). The District will need to notify employees by December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025 and develop a policy for the employee handbook regarding MN Paid Leave outlining information and process. Manager Toutges said she did not want to make a motion on payment splits until our handbook was updated to reflect benefits that were not to be duplicated, manager Braegelman agreed, and Manager Gertgen wanted to make sure that the District policy would be in legal compliance if making changes of benefits and waiting to hear from the state if we qualify as the small business for premiums. Discussion to shelf the MN Paid Family Lave item until the next board meeting.

- c. Reminder – Administrator Johnson reminded everyone that the November board meeting is on Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup> due to Veteran's Day.
- d. Agenda Additions / Other Matters: none

#### 6. Reports & Updates

- a. Administrator – Andy Johnson:  
District Administrator Andy Johnson mentioned updates with the Calhoun dam and bridge project and that our permits required from the ACOE was on hold from the government shutdown but the Kandiyohi County ditch meeting would still be scheduled for next month and move forward.
- b. Finance Manager – Leah Melges: Not present, written report as follows:  
The account at Home State Bank has been officially closed and the subscription for the mfcrow.org email accounts for the Managers have been cancelled. 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Payroll Tax Returns have been filed and the reimbursement for Quarter 3 for the Calhoun Project has been submitted to the DNR. By the November meeting, written notifications/acknowledgments for the MN Paid Leave will be provided, as well as a drafted policy for the employee handbook outlining the information and process for MN Paid Leave.
- c. Water Resources Specialist – Erin Vruwink:  
Water Resources Specialist Erin Vruwink reported that the regular monitoring season has ended and that she has thanked all the volunteer monitors for helping with grabbing samples. Erin has also winterized the boat and is now focused on finalizing the monitoring data to submit to the MPCA and DNR
- d. District Engineer – Nick Wyers: Written report provided.
- e. District Attorney – John Kolb:  
Not physically present, available via phone. 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*):  
None present to speak
- 8. Adjournment: Motion made by Manager Toutges, seconded by Manager Hedtke to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting declared adjourned by Vice President Hedtke at 7:16 p.m.

Submitted by, Andy Johnson  
District Administrator