RCWD BOARD OF MANAGERS WORKSHOP
Monday, December 11, 2017, 1:00 p.m.

Rice Creek Watershed District conference room
4325 Pheasant Ridge Drive NE, Suite 611, Blaine, Minnesota

The Board convened workshop at 1:00 p.m.

Attendance: Board members, Patricia Preiner, John Waller, Steve Wagamon, and Mike Bradley.

Absent: Barbara Haake.

Others: Administrator Phil Belfiori; Public Drainage Inspector Tom Schmidt (portion of meeting); Water Resources Specialist Kyle Axtell (portion of meeting); Permit Coordinator/Wetland Specialist Nick Tomczik (portion of meeting); Lake and Stream Specialist Matt Kocian (portion of meeting); Office Manager Theresa Stasica; and District Engineers Chris Otterness, Dennis McAlpine (portion of meeting), Larry Kramka (portion of meeting)-Houston Engineering (HEI) (portion of meeting), Drainage Attorney John Kolb-Rinke Noonan (portion of meeting), Barbara Haake via telephone (listening only).

Discussion and Update on Hansen Park Project.

Water Resources Specialist Kyle Axtell and District Engineer Dennis McAlpine reviewed with the Board a draft RCWD letter to the city regarding the city’s on-going conversations with concerned landowners that live adjacent to the park regarding the approved grading plan. Water Resources Specialist Axtell informed the Board that the District’s contractor has informed the District that they will begin work on-site at the end of December. With this schedule, it would be impossible for a revised plan to be approved by the District since the Board’s next meeting is January 10th. The Board discussed with staff and consultants that time has run out for any project plan changes and by consensus agreed to staff providing a revised letter which will reflect the Board’s discussion at the December 13th meeting for Board action.

Water Resources Specialist Axtell gave a project update to the Board which included the discovery of a foot bridge that was outside of the original scope of work which needs to be raised due to seasonal flooding caused by the modified hydrologic regime of the new dam. He discussed HEI Task Order 2016-23 additional services request #2 which dealt mainly with the engineer’s work involving the landowner concerns, a summary of pending change orders and a contingency increase request. These items are within the budget numbers.

These items will be on the Board’s 12/13/17 agenda for action.
Discussion on Strategic Direction Process.
Staff along with the District Engineers provided a presentation introducing the process for the first stage of the Districts' water management plan for the Board ranking of priority issues for the District. A tentative timeline was reviewed with the Board. The Board agreed by consensus to hold separate strategic planning workshops the Monday before the 4th Wednesday of the month Board meeting. Administrator Belfiori asked for consensus by the Board on the team for this process: Kyle Axtell-project manager, HEI’s core team: Larry Kramka-facilitator, Rachel Olm and Mark Deutschman-policy, Chris Otterness-technical. The Board by consensus agreed to process presented and the team.

Discussion on Determining District Facilities Flow Chart.
District Staff and consultants reviewed the draft flow chart with the Board which was developed as a decision-making tool for the District. It provides a process that will assist staff in defining facilities and help in Board decision making. Staff will use the District’s database to track inspections and maintenance of these facilities.

Discussion on Columbus I-35 Corridor Hydrologic Assessment.
District Engineer Otterness reviewed the modeling results of the report with the Board which concluded that an increase in flood elevation to the east has a limited footprint due to slope. Administrator Belfiori informed the Board that the report findings were presented to the City of Columbus and that this area was a prime candidate for a stormwater management plan. This effort would have to be led by the city since it is the land use authority. The District also informed the city that cost share may be available to assist them if they were to conduct a feasibility study.

Discussion on DNR Requested Floodplain Modeling Work.
District staff informed the Board that DNR has contacted the District regarding DNR securing a 2018 FEMA grant that would update the flood map for the entire metro area. The DNR’s proposal to the District would cover 100% District’s cost of mapping and modeling of the watershed district. It would be a pass-through grant from FEMA and the DNR would communicate with municipalities. District Engineer Otterness explained what the benefits would be an upgraded model of the District in a widely used format and budget funds that were allocated for the updating of the District’s model could be used for other projects. Potential concerns would be that municipalities and landowners may be concerned by the Districts role in the project, the RCWD model and FEMA model will not align forever (due to the District’s annual maintenance of the model), and these new mapped/modeled areas may draw landowners into and out of the District rules/regulatory program. Staff/consultants provided a conceptual timeline for this work. The Board agreed that it would be a good idea to participate in the proposed modeling update as the work would be pursued by DNR regardless of the District’s involvement and staff should proceed to an agreement.
Permit Coordinator/Wetland Specialist Nick Tomczik distributed a revised Engineer’s Report 17-085 from the engineer report that was in the 12/13/17 Agenda Packet and review/explained the revisions.

**Update on Browns Preserve Wetland Bank Credit Table.**
District Engineer Chris Otterness reviewed the table with the Board. These numbers are estimates only used for District planning/budgeting purposes. The Board discussed the need to continue to investigate potential wetland banking sites for the future project needs of the District.

**Follow-up Discussion on Purchase of Mobitrac Equipment.**
District Public Drainage Inspector Tom Schmidt provided additional information to the Board regarding the potential purchase of the Mobitrac including a quote for the machine and accessories, areas of use, cost of insurance, maintenance costs, and potential storage options. He also discussed the potential for other governmental units to rent/use the equipment and the re-sale value of the equipment. This item will be on the Board’s 12/13/17 agenda for action.

**Update on Blaine Ditch Inspection Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).**
District Public Drainage Inspector Tom Schmidt informed the Board that their prior MOA with the City of Blaine to inspect their ditch systems has expired and the City would like to renew the agreement for an additional 5 years. He reviewed the revisions with the Board. This item will be on the Board’s 12/13/17 agenda for action.

**Update on Rice Creek Water Trail.**
District Lake and Stream Specialist Matt Kocian gave an update to the Board on a recent meeting with water trail partners Ramsey and Anoka County Parks Departments. They discussed the logistical differences between the upper and lower part of Rice Creek. At the conclusion of the meeting, the partners agreed that they will promote and maintain the middle Rice Creek part of the trail because it is located within public lands and the will not promote the lower part of Rice Creek due to private ownership, access issues, and public safety issues. The Board discussed with staff the need to update the website, removing any mention of the lower Rice Creek, remove any signage on lower Rice Creek water trail, and clearly post that the water trail ends at the beginning of the lower reach.

The workshop was adjourned at 4:32 p.m.