

Meeting Minutes
Bois de Sioux Watershed
Advisory Committee Meeting
January 9, 2019 at 9 am

Committee Members:

Jay Backer	Joe Montonye
Scott Bauer	Beau Peterson [Absent]
Duane Duin [Absent]	Ron Staples
Dean Frisch [Absent]	Mark Summers
Doug Jahnke	Vernell Wagner [Absent]
Eric Klindt	John Walkup [Absent]
Tom Monson	

Also Present:

Engineer Chad Engels
Technician Troy Fridgen
Bois de Sioux Watershed President Linda Vavra
Administrator Jamie Beyer

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Introductions**
- 3. Policies**

New Attorney: Attorney Thomas Athens retired. Lukas Croaker, of Ohstad Twichell, was hired. In 2019, the attorney, engineers, and staff will conduct a compilation and review of all district policies, procedures, rules, and by-laws.

Policy Changes: Private crossings on legal ditches, side inlet culverts, and repair authorization. The Drainage Committee approved language which states that the ditch fund will pay for the cost of the replacement culvert, less the cost of a 24 inch culvert, and the private landowner is responsible for all other costs including installation, associated materials, and maintenance. The policy will continue to encourage consolidation of private crossings where possible. They also approved policy language related to side inlet culverts. It was decided that landowner or road authority initiated side inlet installations shall require a permit and they are at the expense of the project sponsor, but the Ditch Authority may provide cost share from the ditch fund on as needed basis. Ditch authority initiated side culvert installations shall be paid by the ditch. Board Managers approved a policy to allow Troy Fridgen to make ditch repair decisions up to \$10,000 per ditch if time is of the essence and ditch benefits and funds exceed \$10,000. Staples and Backer reported that their county highway departments have a \$15,000 repair threshold.

Trap Gates: Bauer asked if unpermitted trap gates are a problem in the District; Engels confirmed that they are. As ditch retrofits are completed, trap gates are addressed. The District also has a Trap Gate Agreement that must be signed as part of the permitting process. Enforcement is an issue that will need to be discussed with the new attorney.

Southern Boundary Change: A petition to change the southern boundary the District (East of Highway 75) of has been received, and hearings are currently being held. The basis for the petition was a situation in which a landowner wanted to permit a tiling project. The landowner applied for a permit from the Upper Minnesota River Watershed but, because the water would flow North to the Bois de Sioux Watershed, the permit was denied. The landowner then approached the Bois de Sioux Watershed but, because the tile would be installed in the Upper Minnesota River Watershed, Board Managers had no jurisdiction to approve the tile installation. So far, very few comments have been received on this change, which will now be forwarded to BWSR for their consideration and approval.

4. Permitting

Fridgen reported that the District processed the following permits:

2018: 111 permit applications
2017: 88 permit applications
2016: 98 permit applications
2015: 150 permit applications
2014: 202 permit applications
2013: 208 permit applications
2012: 245 permit applications

5. Ditch Projects

Fridgen described repairs made in 2018 to the drainage systems, accompanied by before and after photos. Beavers are a major issue; the District has beavers trapped first, and then has the associated dams removed. Fridgen was informed at a recent conference that beavers and trees may be removed from DNR public waters, but landowners are encouraged to notify the DNR area hydrologist before removing trees. Ditch clean-out work averaged \$7,000 per mile, but the cost was highly variable, dependent upon the amount of silt that was removed from the bottom of the ditch. Silt depths ranged from 6" to 2 ½'. District-wide, aging culverts are a concern, and will require future attention. Cattail spraying continued this year, with 1/3 of the district receiving treatment.

TCD #52: The Committee was presented with a time lapse video of the development of a run-off sediment peninsula in Lake Traverse, at the outlet of TCD #52. In 2018, the District moved forward with plans and permitting for a 3-Phase repair to TCD #52, its outlet, and surrounding area. Some repair work was completed this fall, as landowner support was gained. Engels reported that one area has channelized 20'. Costs for each phase are estimated to be: Phase 1/Outlet - \$500,000; Phase 2/Ditch Adjacent to Highway 27 - \$500,000; Phase 3/Top of Hill TCD #52 - \$2,000,000. The District submitted applications to the MPCA's 319 Grant and BWSR's Projects and Practices Grant, but neither were funded. Staff will continue to pursue funding opportunities.

TCD #23: Wagner Excavating quickly completed repairs and culvert replacement. There is one culvert left to install by a private landowner; the work will be done Spring 2019.

6. Watershed Projects (including RCPP)

Doran Creek: Four of six required review points are completed. Engels recommended a February landowner meeting to discuss the potential alternatives and their feasibilities.

North Ottawa: Fridgen noted that birds preferred water levels drained to the mudflats. An operation agreement has not been reached with the DNR.

Redpath: Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant money was not allocated for Redpath. The project cannot proceed without further grant money.

7. Buffers

The Bois de Sioux Watershed submitted their Buffer Rule, but have not received official approval from BWSR.

8. 1W1Plan

This week, the Policy Committee and Bois de Sioux Watersheds will consider a consultant contract with Houston Engineering and a grant agreement with BWSR. If approved, monthly meetings will commence, with the goal of having a BWSR-approved comprehensive water plan in 2021.

9. Adjourn