

**MINUTES OF THE ROSEAU RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT BOARD OF
MANAGERS SPECIAL MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 8, 2022**

ORDER: Chairman Carter Diesen called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. at the Meeting Room in the Roseau County Courthouse

MANAGERS PRESENT: Carter Diesen, Tony Wensloff, Jason Braaten, and LaVerne Voll.

STAFF PRESENT Administrator Halstensgard

OTHERS PRESENT: Roseau County Commissioners Falk, Swanson, Walker, and Wicklund. Attorney Kurt Deter, Roseau County Coordinator Jeff Pelowski, County Auditor Martha Monsrud, County Highway Engineer Stephen Slick, County Highway Assistant Engineer Daryle Dahl, and Administrative Assistant Joleen Kezar.

The purpose of the meeting was to meet with the Roseau County Board of Commissioners to communicate information on the County Ditch 16 (CD 16) Improvement project. Commissioner Swanson started the conversation and Coordinator Pelowski talked about the previous meetings held on the with staff concerning funding for the project. Administrator Halstensgard provided notes from those meetings and pertinent Minnesota 103E drainage statutes.

Attorney Deter spoke about the legal process when landowners petition for an improvement or other drainage project. As the law currently stands, counties are the governmental entity tasked with providing the funding mechanism for drainage projects. The auditor is responsible for creating or updating the benefitted area and allocating the taxes levied for the drainage system. The CD 16 project has been appealed to the District Court of Appeals by a benefitted landowner. Because of this appeal, it was Attorney Deter's opinion that the County should wait to make decisions on how to fund the project. There was discussion on how to determine the total dollar amount that would need to be either bonded or paid from County reserve funds and how interest would be allocated. There was also discussion about landowners paying their total benefit upfront instead of having them financed for 20 years. Auditor Monsrud stated that the earliest this levy could be added to the property taxes would be collectable 2023 taxes. Coordinator Pelowski discussed at length the potential impact to the County's financial planning when they have to consider funding drainage projects.

Commissioner Swanson asked the Watershed Managers if they would be interested in entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the County. An example from Jackson County & Heron Lakes Watershed District was provided to attendees. The purpose of the MOU would be to improve transparency and improve financial planning ability on the part of the County. Chairman Diesen asked if they would be asking the other watershed districts in the county to also enter into agreements, and Commissioner Swanson stated that they would be asking those districts as well.

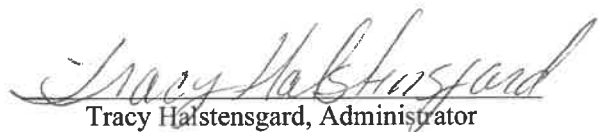
The group also discussed the Watershed Ditch #4 which is a new system that was petitioned to the Watershed last year. Auditor Monsrud stated that there was already a WD #4 in Roseau County in Two Rivers Watershed District and requested the name be changed to avoid confusion. The RRWD will amend the name at the final hearing.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



LaVerne Voll, Secretary



Tracy Halstensgard, Administrator