

**BOIS DE SIOUX WATERSHED DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 19, 2026**

- CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order by President Vavra at 9:00 a.m. Present in the District Office: Linda Vavra, Jason Beyer, Doug Dahlen, Steven Deal, Scott Gillespie, Steven Schmidt, and Allen Wold. Absent: Ben Brutlag, John Kapphahn. Also present: Administrator Jamie Beyer, Attorney Sarah Wear, District Engineer James Guler, and Engineer Chad Engels.
- AGENDA** Upon motion by Wold, seconded by Dahlen and carried unanimously, the Regular Agenda was approved.
- CONFLICTS OF INTEREST** No conflicts of interest were declared.
- PUBLIC COMMENT** No public comment.
- CONSENT AGENDA** Upon motion by Dahlen, seconded by Wold and carried unanimously, the Consent Agenda was approved.
- BARTELL  
GCD #32 PETITION** Upon motion by Gillespie, seconded by Dahlen and carried unanimously, the public hearing on the petitions for Michael Bartell and Terry Bartell requesting authority to use Grant County Ditch #32 as an outlet was opened for: Parcel #09-0143-500, Portion of the NW1/4, 55 Acres, Section 32, Range 44, Logan Township (127), Grant County and Parcel #09-0142-000, Portion of NE1/4, 110 Acres of Section 32, Range 44, Logan Township (127), Grant County. Engineering staff presented a map of the project area and TCD #32 benefit area. Administrator Beyer stated that, following the submission of the petitions, it was found that only the 100 Acres are being improved with drainage in the NE1/4, Parcel #09-0142-000, and required a petition and approval. The contributing subwatershed area crosses into Stevens County, but the current assessment district is limited by the county line to Grant County. No public comment was presented. Attorney Wear read the Order Authorizing the Use of the Outlet, which included terms of an outlet fee of \$772.13 and benefits of \$444.00. Upon motion by Dahlen, seconded by Deal and carried unanimously, the order was approved. Upon motion by Gillespie, seconded by Beyer and carried unanimously, the hearing was closed.
- GCD #3  
CLOSEOUT  
HEARING** Upon motion by Gillespie, seconded by Deal and carried unanimously, the public hearing was opened to review the engineer's contract completion report for the repair of Grant County Ditch #3, pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 103E.555, showing the contract price, the amount paid on certificates, the unpaid balance, and the work that is completed under the contract for Grant County Ditch #3. District Engineer James Guler presented information on the current contract and the construction completed. The Final Balancing Change Order of -\$43,645.00 was presented, along with a Final Pay Application in the amount of \$23,905.20. The following public comments were received: Landowners requested additional time after snowmelt to confirm project completion; stated concerns regarding sloughing and slide repairs, tree growth, spot checking of sediment remaining in the channel; and discussed a culvert that was shortened. Engineering staff confirmed a 1-year warranty period for any project defects by the contractor, but advised that the areas of landowner project concerns be addressed before contract close-out, and encouraged landowners to contact the Bois de Sioux Watershed District Drainage Inspector regarding ongoing maintenance needs. A comment regarding the length of the most upstream culvert was made. This culvert was replaced recently by the landowner, before the project, but needed to be replaced by the project as it did not match legal ditch grade or repair size. However, they wished for this field approach to have the same top width. The Board gave directions to correct this culvert for the landowner. Upon motion by Beyer, seconded by Gillespie and carried unanimously, the hearing was recessed and will reconvene at a later date.
- CD TRANSFER** Upon motion by Beyer, seconded by Gillespie and carried unanimously, staff are authorized to transfer funds from savings to CD's, after evaluating 2026 construction cash flow needs.
- AGRICULTURAL  
LEASE BIDS FOR  
2026** Administrator Beyer stated that rent due March 1, 2026 is outstanding for: Redpath Lease #26-03 (\$137,711.36); Redpath Lease #26-04 (\$162,058.00); North Ottawa Lease #26-05 (\$95,270.00); North Ottawa Lease #26-06 (\$12,487.50); Redpath Section 15 Lease (\$500.00); Moonshine Lease

#24-01 (\$52,274.82); Redpath Lease #24-06 (\$102,167.00); Redpath Lease #24-07 (\$134,212.00); Redpath Lease #24-08 (\$50,800.00). Mr. Truman Raguse stated that he believes payment can be made in full prior to Friday, March 27, 2026. Lease terms vary between the leases – half of the leases provide seven days for a lessee to remedy a default, upon written notice of the default; half of the leases state that upon written notice of a default, the leases may be terminated. All of the outstanding leases contain provisions for interest to be charged for non-payment. Upon motion by Gillespie, seconded by Beyer and carried unanimously: 1) notices of termination will be issued, but if rent payments are received prior to close of day Friday, March 27, 2026 the default will be considered remedied and 2) the leases must provide a letter of credit from their financial institutions by close of day Monday, March 23, 2026; receipt or non-receipt of this documentation has no bearing on the ability of the leases to remedy default. Administrator Beyer provided summaries of the 2024 and 2026 lease bid results. Upon motion by Gillespie, seconded by Beyer and carried unanimously, if the lease defaults are not remedied by the prescribed deadline, staff are authorized to continue to contact the next highest lease bidder until a contract for 2026 rental can be secured for each lease. New leases for the 2026 growing season only will be offered. Attorney Sarah Wear stated that all of the outstanding leases contain provisions for interest, but that some of the leases stated that interest would begin March 6<sup>th</sup>. Dahlen motioned, seconded by Wold, to charge interest as described in the leases. Roll call vote: Gillespie – aye; Deal – aye; Wold – aye; Beyer – nay; Vavra – nay; Dahlen – aye; Schmidt – aye. Motion carried.

**27<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
JOINT  
CONFERENCE**

President Vavra provided an update on information presented at the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint Conference hosted by the Red River Watershed Management Board and Flood Damage Reduction Workgroup. Conference attendees included a wide range of Red River Valley project developers and regulators, including representatives from: Red River Valley watershed districts, Minnesota Watersheds, Board of Water and Soil Resources, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, National Resource Conservation Service, International Water Institute, Red River Basin Commission, and North Dakota State University. Presenters described proposed legislature by BWSR to amend recently made changes to the Wetland Conservation Act, tuse of a Soil Health Program to facilitate payments from municipal wastewater treatments plants for practices upstream that reduce phosphorus contributions, and projects under construction in the Red River Valley. Staff from the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy provided information on why they feel there should be additional regulations, permitting, and environmental assessments for drainage projects to address Minnesota River conditions.

**DNR TILE SETBACK:  
NRCS LATERAL  
EFFECT OR  
BWSR DRAINAGE  
SETBACKS**

Administrator Beyer stated that she has been notified that several landowners have contacted legal representation regarding DNR double-sided setback orders on the placement of subsurface drainage tile in areas that also have public watercourses. Recently, DNR staff have notified landowners that public watercourses have mandatory setbacks depending on which of two wetland lateral effect calculators produce more restrictive results: the 2022 NRCS Lateral Effect Distances for the Prairie Pothole Region tool or the 2012 BWSR Drainage Setbacks by County table. Administrator Beyer stated that the 2022 NRCS tool is difficult for the public and staff to use, as it requires understanding of technical provisions and specialized knowledge. The tool references NRCS soil surveys, but the accuracy and low resolution of the soil survey maps are not scaleable for the detailed design of subsurface drainage projects in parcels with watercourses. Administrator Beyer stated that it is not clear at this time how the District can support landowners with setbacks that may constitute rights deprivation for activities taking place outside of the bed and bank of public watercourses.

The meeting was adjourned.