

TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2006

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING HELD**

**STATE OF MINNESOTA)
DODGE COUNTY)**

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
MANTORVILLE, MN**

2006-06 C.O.W.

The Dodge County Commissioners met in Committee of the Whole March 28, 2006, in the Commissioner's Room at the Dodge County Courthouse Annex, Mantorville, MN, at 9:00 a.m. CST. David Erickson opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. CST.

Meeting Convened

The Chair acknowledged those present:

Those Present

Members present: Klaus Alberts District #1
Lyle Tjosaas District #2
David Erickson District #3
Don Gray District #4
David Hanson District #5

Members absent: None

Also present: David McKnight County Administrator
Becky Lubahn Deputy Clerk

Mower County Soil and Water Conservation District representative Bev Nordby and Dave Peterson of Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) provided the Board with a Cedar River flood reduction project review.

Cedar River Flood
Reduction Project
Review

The following people were also present for the discussion: Dave Santjer from the City of Hayfield, Harold Buck from Hayfield Township, County Engineer Guy Kohlnhofer, Paul Fiebiger and Bennie Bishop both of from Westfield Township, Environmental Quality Director Mark Gamm, SWCD representatives Darryl Faulkner, Arlo Toquam and Jim Hruska.

Ms. Nordby reported that the initial flood reduction committee was formed in November of 2004. The committee included Freeborn and Mower County staff including Engineers and Environmental Services staff, Turtle Creek Watershed District Board of Managers, Freeborn and Mower Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), City of Austin Engineer, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Accomplishments to date include an open dialogue and coordination between local government agencies regarding floor reduction, familiarizing themselves with other flood reduction projects, coordinated efforts in identification of needs throughout the watershed and securing a \$75,000 Challenge Grant through the Board of Water and Soil Resources for surface water management planning.

Objectives of the Board of Water and Soil Resources Challenge Grant are as follows:

- surface water management plan
- organization structure for upper Cedar watershed

Ms. Nordby discussed with the Board flood and peak flow reductions in Turtle Creek, Cedar River and Dobbins Creek, the prevention of structural damage in watershed area, the reduction of sediment and nutrient loading, protection and improvement of township, county, city and state infrastructure resulting from reduced levels of flooding and the protection of DOT Highway System including TH 251, TH 218, Interstate 90 and State Highway 56.

BWSR Representative Dave Peterson elaborated on the organizational structure. The Flood Reduction Committee recognizes the need for coordinated effort to manage surface water in the Cedar River Basin.

Options for organizational structure include Joint Powers Board or Watershed District.

Under a Joint Powers Board there would be an agreement. The agreement would state the purpose of the board and address the disbursement of funds.

Steps needed for a Joint Powers Board would include drafting an agreement, approval of the agreement by participating boards and moving into the planning stage for the watershed.

Commissioner Hanson wanted to know how the cost of a joint powers project would affect the tax payers of Dodge County.

Commissioner Erickson reported that a special taxing district can be formed just for the area affected.

Mr. Peterson confirmed that Commissioner Erickson was correct and that the whole county would not be taxed, only the people in the area in question if a special taxing district is formed.

Mr. Peterson discussed the steps for a Watershed District. The three options included enlarging the existing Watershed District, forming a new Watershed District which involves creating a joint powers agreement for flood reduction between the two Watershed Districts and last dissolving the Turtle Creek Watershed District and creating a new Watershed District.

Commissioners reviewed options for structuring a multi county flood reduction program. Options included doing nothing, the creation of a Joint Powers Board, or creating a new Watershed District.

Cedar River Flood
Reduction Project
Review - Continued

Commissioner Erickson stated that Dodge County needs to decide if we want to go with a Joint Powers Board or a Watershed District. Mr. Erickson noted that we do have our own Soil and Water Board. One of Commissioner Erickson's concerns is that we would have to administer the new program which would cost additional money that we have not budgeted for. Mr. Erickson was also concerned with how a new flood reduction project would affect the taxes of property owners in this area.

Mr. Peterson stated that one thing we need to consider is what to do if Freeborn stays with their Soil and Water program and the others decide to go with a joint powers agreement.

Commissioner Erickson wanted to know if the joint powers agreement would include cities. Mr. Erickson noted that we would need to work out who is included in the agreement.

Commissioner Alberts commented that he thinks some of the water on the map provided is flowing east.

Commissioner Erickson clarified that what they are referring to is only the water that drains towards the Cedar River.

Orlo Toquam wanted to know if somewhere down the line a Ripley Watershed District is needed if the people in this district will be paying double.

Dave Peterson indicated that boundaries are set to try to avoid this type of situation.

Commissioner Erickson reported that they are targeting Monday, April 17, 2006 to further discuss this issue.

The Board thanked Ms. Nordby, Mr. Peterson and the public for coming.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:30 a.m. CST.

Meeting Adjourned

ATTEST:

DAVID ERICKSON
CHAIR, COUNTY BOARD

BECKY LUBAHN
DEPUTY CLERK

DATED: