

Pomme de Terre River Association
Joint Powers Board Meeting Minutes
November 8, 2024, 9:00 a.m.
Morris Fire Hall and Virtually via Teams

Chair Mahoney called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

Present: Larry Mahoney, Ken Johnson, Jeff Klages, Paul Groneberg, Alan Golden, Ken Johnson, Dan Morrill. Others present: Sophia Maruska, Watershed Coordinator; Aaron Larsen, TAC Chair; Dalton Herrboldt, TAC Vice Chair; Erik Jones, Houston Engineering (HEI); Mike Kelly, MN DNR (proxy DNR rep for Emily Siira); Tracey Anderson & Payton Prieve, UMN Morris.

The agenda was approved as amended on a motion by Paul Groneberg and second by Alan Golden. Motion passed unanimously.

The October 11, 2024, JPB Minutes were approved on a motion by Jeff Klages and second by Paul Groneberg. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer/Fiscal Rep. Chris Staebler was unable to attend the meeting, so the Treasurer's Report was presented by Watershed Coordinator, Sophia Maruska. The Treasurer's Report was approved on a motion by Alan Golden and second by Paul Groneberg. Motion passed unanimously. Ken Johnson inquired about a transaction labeled as "Balance Adjustment," however Chair Mahoney and the Coordinator were unsure what this transaction was for. Sophia will connect with Chris and email the board a clarification on this transaction.

A motion was made by Jeff Klages to approve a \$1,200 credit card limit. Seconded by Alan Golden. Motion passed unanimously. Discussion was had on the difference between a purchasing limit for the Coordinator vs. a credit limit for the card. Since the card is a credit card instead of debit, a \$500 total limit, which may include more than one purchase, would be too small.

The Bills to Pay of \$21,703 were unanimously approved on a motion by Dan Morrill and seconded by (?). Motion passed unanimously.

PDTRA Business

Grant Updates

- Sophia showed the board the PDTRA-BWSR Grant Timeline
- FY23 WBIF
 - Almost all project funding is encumbered.
 - One completed shoreline project came in underbudget, and the TAC recommended leaving that money in the shoreline project category for now. The grant doesn't expire until December 2025, so there is a decent chance the funds could be used on another shoreline project. If not, the TAC will recommend an adjustment.
 - Big Stone has \$2,000 allocated for staff time expenses, however nothing has been spent and they have no projects planned. TAC Chair Aaron Larsen explained that these funds will most likely be used to cover overages from other LGUs, but for now it will stay with Big Stone in case they have a project come up.
- FY25 WBIF
 - There is still only one large WASCOP planned, and Sophia shared that it is almost completed. LGUs have started to tap into the WBIF25 funds for staff time.
- FY24 CRP Incentive Pilot Grant

- Sophia has submitted reimbursement requests to BWSR for the completed projects so far and is waiting for approval for repayment from BWSR. The USDA is still continuing resolution so no new CRP contracts are being issued.
- FY25 CRP Incentive Grant
 - No contracts/planned projects due to USDA continuing resolution. The Board asked Pete Waller if there will be extensions for this grant if the resolutions inhibit project completion. Pete Waller thinks BWSR would be accepting grant extensions if needed.
- Perkins Lake Project
 - PDTRA has submitted a third reimbursement request to the DNR for work completed by HEI on this project and is awaiting payment.
- Crissy Dam Project
 - Erik Jones and Mike Kelly were introduced and gave background about the dam modification projects. Mike Kelly briefly went over the Scope of Work distributed to Board members and clarified the main difference between the Crissy Dam project and Perkins Project was that HEI was looking at four alternatives for Crissy due to the project complexity. The TAC committee recommends the board approve the Scope of Work.
 - HEI and the DNR will start acquiring the necessary permits in the next month, and then will complete an Environmental Assessment Worksheet, as required by the State of Minnesota.
 - Board member Groneberg asked if HEI had an estimated cost for the entire project. Mike Kelly, DNR Rep, answered that the DNR has allocated \$2.5 million from the “Get Out More” grant fund for this project, however both the DNR and HEI expect the project to be under budget.
 - Board member Johnson asked about a timeline and if there is a possibility of the grant expiring before project completion. DNR Rep Kelly had no concerns of the grant expiring before project completion because the expiration is June 2029. Erik Jones estimated the project will be completed in summer 2026, due to the extensive surveying required for this project and the expectation that the Environmental Assessment Worksheet will take around five months to go through the proper channels.
 - A motion was made by Alan Golden and seconded by Jeff Klages to approve the Crissy Dam modification Scope of Work provided by HEI to the PDTRA. Motion passed unanimously.

1W1P Midpoint

- Sophia shared that next year (2025) is the midpoint for Pomme de Terre Association’s CWMP. Per the BWSR CWMP Program Policies and PDTRA’s own CWMP, the TAC and JPB must complete a midpoint evaluation. Sophia shared examples from other watershed districts, however there are only a few in the state which have completed these evaluations due to the program being relatively new. Board member Klages asked if there was any difference between having a contractor complete the assessment (such as Houston Engineering) or doing it internally. Pete Waller clarified that BWSR had no preference on which entity completes the assessment. Board member Morrill asked if the cost for a contractor would come from the 2025 PDTRA Budget. Sophia shared details of a BWSR Midpoint Evaluation Grant. The Board discussed having a contractor perform the first assessment and completing future assessments in house once we have a baseline. Sophia will bring more details to the December meeting.

Coordinator Report

- Besides the reporting and research covered in Grant Updates, the Watershed Coordinator, Sophia Maruska, also attended BWSR Academy this past month. She attended sessions on eLink, Outreach/marketing, hosting meetings, and 1W1P.
- Sophia has also spent time processing Q3 timesheets and invoices.
- She has also looked at all expenditures reported in eLink and cross-checked with the PDTRA’s records to make sure everything has been accounted for and is up to date, since there have been multiple people reporting this past year. She shared the expenditure report put together from eLink. Sophia found a few inaccurate expenditures reported, but none were off by over \$10 and they were adjusted.

Upcoming Meetings

- Sophia informed the Board that it is almost the time of year to have a budget meeting for 2025. TAC Chair Larsen added this year's meeting shouldn't take long due to not having 319 Grants or hired staff. The Board agreed to have it before the January scheduled meeting and Sophia will send out an email to confirm. Budget committee members are: Chair Mahoney, Vice Chair Gronberg, Secretary/Treasurer Ennen, Jeff Klages, Ken Johnson, TAC Chair Aaron Larsen, Fiscal Agent rep Chris Staebler, and Watershed Coordinator Sophia Maruska.
- The Board discussed having a Soil Health Subcommittee meeting in preparation for a potential annual Soil Health meeting in March 2025. Sophia will send out an email to those on the 2024 committee to coordinate.

TAC Report

- TAC Chair Larsen and Vice Chair Herrboldt didn't have any additions to the grant/project updates already discussed. Larsen confirmed that the TAC will be looking at budgets and expenses for next year.

Closing

There were no agency reports.

The next meeting will be held on Friday, December 13 at 9:00am.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Ennen, Secretary/Treasurer

Date