

**MILK RIVER INTERCOUNTY DRAIN DRAINAGE DISTRICT
DRAINAGE BOARD MEETING MINUTES
March 28, 2024**

A Milk River Intercounty Drain Drainage Board meeting was held on Thursday, March 28, 2024, at the City of St. Clair Shores City Hall, 27600 Jefferson Avenue, St. Clair Shores, Michigan, 48081.

Members Present

Michael R. Gregg, Chair, Michigan Dept. of Agriculture & Rural Development, State of MI
Elizabeth Barrera, Deputy Drain Commissioner/Assistant Division Director, Wayne County
Brian Baker, Chief Deputy, Public Works Office, Macomb County
Bryan Babcock, P.E., Director of Public Works/Water, City of St. Clair Shores
Heather Toutant, Director of Public Works, City of Harper Woods

Others Present

Kip Walby, Southeast Macomb Sanitary District
Pete Trombley, Southeast Macomb Sanitary District
Dianne Schelosky, Southeast Macomb Sanitary District
Brent Avery, Southeast Macomb Sanitary District
Jim Kowalski, City of Grosse Pointe Woods
Steve Schmidt, City of Grosse Pointe Woods
Russ Strassburg, Tetra Tech
Jessica Kenyon, Wayne County

1. Call to Order

Mr. Gregg called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Baker, Macomb County, moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Babcock, St. Clair Shores, supported the motion. Motion passed.

3. Approval of the Minutes for:

a. January 25, 2024, Milk River Intercounty Drain Drainage District Board Meeting

Ms. Toutant, Harper Woods, moved to approve the minutes for the January 25th, 2024, Milk River Intercounty Drain Drainage District Board Meeting. Ms. Barrera, Wayne County, supported the motion. Motion passed.

4. Reports

a. Operations and Maintenance

Mr. Trombley noted that there was an effluent sample pipe issue, the heat trace failed during a cold snap this winter, resulting in a crack in the pipe. Photos were presented.

Also noted were back-to-back discharge events at the end of January, specifically, on January 26th and 28th. This has been the wettest January in recent history, with 5.25 inches of rainfall. All compliance standards were met. There have been no further discharges since January.

SEMSD has a new HVAC contractor, DeCal, who was able to come out and repair the piping, adding heat wrap and insulation around the pipes to resolve any further issues.

A St. Clair Shores resident reported that there have been a lot of beavers around the Milk River resulting in damage to their trees and property in the area. DNR and EGLE have been contacted and no active beaver dam is observed at this time. They are evaluating their options and looking to move the beavers to a new location. The concern would be that the beavers could cause trees to fall into the river creating blockages. Photos of the damage were presented.

The SEMSD received three quotes to replace a 20-year-old explosion-proof unit in the pump house that uses water to keep the pumps cool. The repair went well. The unit can be remotely operated and integrated with the SCADA system.

Fiscal Year-end repairs include repairing the concrete that is deteriorating around the groundwater storage unit.

Periodic vactoring in the RTB has taken place, and the trucks have left large ruts in the ground, stone will be put down to help this situation.

A resident reached out to the SEMSD regarding the banks of the Milk River, concerned about erosion. Pictures were presented. In 1995 the river was dredged, and the entire river was lined with stone. The easement of the river is owned by the MRIDDD. It was determined that the stone has held up well, with a natural angle of repose. The MRIDDD makes periodic repairs as needed.

Historical pictures of the Milk River were installed in the building.

Mr. Walby gave an update on the progress of the new SEMSD building construction, noting that they are just waiting for the transformer from DTE. A video was shown of the new building.

Thirteen security cameras have been installed at the Milk River facility. They hold 30 days of memory and will have a dedicated screen in the control building.

Mr. Baker, Macomb County, motioned to receive and file the Operations and Maintenance report. Mr. Babcock, St. Clair Shores, supported the motion. Motion passes.

b. Priority 1B and Select Improvements Project

Mr. Strassburg reported on the Engineering Service Contract Summary Report, noting it has not changed since that last meeting. Spence is preparing the final PCO, which is expected shortly.

The flushing gate repair is being worked on; concentration is in Basin 1. They are waiting for cleaning to be completed, so they can get in to do more grinding. Scanners will then be brought in to see if it passes the quality check. Two of the eight basins are completed and are reported to be much improved.

Ms. Barrera, Wayne County, made a motion to receive and file the Construction Progress Update Report. Ms. Toutant, Harper Woods, supported the motion. Motion passed.

5. New Business

a. SEMSD Sewer Rates

Mr. Walby reviewed and explained in detail the FY25 sewer rates as presented in the board packet. It was noted that the new monthly rate for the MRIDDD is \$193,850.74, with an annual charge of \$2,326,209. This is an increase of approximately 3.2% over last year. The MRIDDD carries 7.87% of the total apportionment. Rates are driven by total flow and excess flow.

A motion to approve the FY25 Sewer Rates was made by Mr. Babcock, St. Clair Shores. Ms. Barrera, Wayne County, supported the motion. Motion passed.

b. SEMSD O & M Fee

The FY25 O & M monthly Service fee was presented and noted to be \$58,900.51. This is an increase of 3.1% from last Fiscal Year. The MRIDDD holds one-third of the cost while two-thirds are absorbed by the SEMSD. The increase is driven mostly by salaries, hospitalization, and standby pay. Mr. Walby reviewed the changes in detail as noted in the board packet. The ratios that create the budget have not changed since 2019. This invoice will be sent out monthly to Wayne County, as it is an approved expense. The pass-thru costs will be sent to Wayne County once approved by the board.

Mr. Baker, Macomb County, motioned to approve the FY25 O&M rates, effective July 1st, 2024, for \$58,900.51. Mr. Babcock, St. Clair Shores, supported the motion. Motion passed.

c. FY25 Budget

Ms. Kenyon, Wayne County, reviewed the budget in detail, noting the summary of the total cost is broken out by municipalities, explaining that Wayne County invoices the communities quarterly. The debt is billed out separately. Ms. Kenyon noted that Mr. Seidel, AEW, does an excellent job of breaking down and displaying the historical assessments. The SEMSD monthly fee comes from \$738,806, with the pass-through being noted as \$921,500. Legal fees are projected to be lower as the contract gets settled.

Mr. Walby noted that the pass-through categories have been updated to better reflect and simplify expenses. The FY25 Capital Projects were reviewed, showing a total expected budget of \$202,500, while the total SEMSD Pass Thru budget is noted to be \$921,500. The budget reflects a decrease of \$64,500 from FY24.

Mr. Babcock, St. Clair Shores, motioned to approve the FY25 MRIDDD budget as presented in the board packet. Mr. Baker, Macomb County, supported the motion. Motion passed.

6. Unfinished Business

a. Generator

Mr. Strassburg presented an overview of the standby power history for the Milk River. As it stands currently, two utility feeds are coming into the facility. The service area entails Harper Woods, Grosse Pointe Woods, and St. Clair Shores. There are about 40,000 people with 12,000 household services within the area. The current transformers are 52 and 64 years old. Outages for the facility include a complete outage in 2003, where both feeds went down. Also in 2003, there was a transformer down, and then again in 2019, another transformer went down. The DTE transformers have not been upgraded, and DTE does not agree to upgrade them at this time. All equipment coming down from the transformers has been updated. Alternate power sources for standby power have been studied. Under consideration have been solar, wind, and battery options. These have been found to not be efficient options. Permanent generators have also been studied, with the main options being diesel and natural gas. Mr. Strassburg reviewed three configured options regarding generator capacity as needed concerning the percentage of occurrences. The percentage of occurrences was based on historical data. Option #1 provided five generators, which would pick up 100% of events. Configuration #2, which was recommended, provides two generators and would cover 84% of events. The third option provided one generator and would support 67.7% of events. The location placement of the generators was discussed. A structural analysis of the facility would have to be done if the generators were to be placed on the building. Location #1 would be adjacent to the Grosse Pointe Woods Public Works. This is the best and recommended location. Noise issues will also have to be considered, as it could pose an issue with the surrounding residents. Fuel sources were also reviewed.

Keynotes to consider for this project include:

- Integrating SCADA systems and PLC additions
- Transfer switch gear
- Power distribution paralleling equipment
- Integration with existing power systems – possible new building to house new equipment

The projected cost for the supporting equipment is \$3 million. The equipment, production, and lead times are 12-24 months, following shop drawings.

The recommendation is option #2, covering 84-90 % of storm coverage. The total estimated cost of option #2 is \$7 million. The cost would go back to the communities, particularly Harper Woods and Grosse Pointe Woods, should they want to invest in the risk reduction the generators would supply. Mr. Strassburg will provide a draft report to the cities for review and consideration. He will also draft a letter to DTE outlining their responsibility should a transformer go down. The estimated life expectancy of the generator is 20 years. A finalized report will be provided for the MRIDD board members and city authorities.

Ms. Toutant, Harper Woods, moved to receive and file the Generator report. Mr. Babcock, St. Clair Shores, supported the motion. Motion passed.

7. Approval of the SEMSD Operations and Maintenance Invoice

Mr. Walby reviewed the SEMSD invoice and pass-thru costs as presented in detail in the Board Packet, noting that they are 72% spent through February 2024.

Mr. Baker, Macomb County, made a motion to approve Pass-Thru invoice #202729 for \$104,313.78. Mr. Babcock, St. Clair Shores, supported the motion. Motion passes.

8. Public Comment

Mr. Gregg announced Public Comment and asked for any public participants to identify themselves before making a public comment. No public attendance or comment was noted.

9. Next Drainage Board Meeting

The next regularly scheduled board meeting is planned for Thursday, May 30th, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting is scheduled to be held at St. Clair Shores City Hall, 27600 Jefferson, St. Clair Shores, MI 48081.

10. Adjournment

Ms. Barrera, Wayne County, moved to adjourn the March 28th, 2024, MRIDDD meeting. Ms. Toutant, Harper Woods, supported the motion. Motion approved.

There was no further discussion to come before the Drainage Board. The meeting was adjourned at 11:54 a.m.



Brian Baker, Chief Deputy Macomb County Public Works Commissioner

NOTE: The foregoing minutes are subject to Milk River Intercounty Drain Drainage Board approval.