Advocates for the Knife River Watershed
Board Meeting Minutes: January 7, 2021

Board Members Present: Shary Zoff- Chair; Julie Johnson – Secretary;
Corlis West- treasurer; Paul Trygstad; Leo Babeu; Rodney Johnson; Peg Zahorik – recorder

Treasurer Report :
Checking- $2,591.80; Savings- $55.38. Corlis stated that membership remained the same.

Secretary Report:
Julie reported on an email received from Pat Schmeider who is currently serving as a representative with Coop Light and Power (CLP). The email provided information about a new CLP citizen's advisory group which is being formed for citizens to look at issues such as right of way practices (pesticide use, cutting, etc) and other topics, some of which include land use practices. Pat wanted board members to be aware that CLP is looking for people who would like to serve on this group, to spread the word to those who may be interested in joining, and she'd like each of us to consider participation in this advisory group as well .

Julie shared a thank you letter from Tim Rutka who thanked all members who participated in the bud capping and cage moving work in the Knife River Community Forest during fall of 2020.

Old Business:

Annual Meeting:
Corlis made a motion to postpone the annual membership due to COVID and related meeting complications, The motion was stated as: the 2021 annual membership meeting and elections be postponed until Feb. 2022 with specific date to be determined. Following board discussion a vote was taken. The motion passed with a vote of 4 -Yes, 2 -No, 1- abstain

After discussion, the 3 members whose terms were to end as of Feb. 2021 were asked if they'd be willing to continue their position until the annual meeting in Feb. 2022. Each of said board members, Paul, Shary, and Corlis, said yes to continue until 2022. Julie made a motion to accept the Board members offer to extend their terms one more year due to COVID. The motion passed unanimously.

Julie will send an email to membership to inform them of the annual membership meeting postponement and board member continuation.

Membership Dues:
Rodney motioned that we extend "no dues" for membership for an additional year due to COVID. Motion was passed unanimously. Dues are projected to resume as of the 2022 annual membership meeting. Julie will inform members of this decision.

TMDL:
Rodney submitted version 3 of a TMDL draft letter which the board has access to through AKRWaters. There was much discussion regarding this letter which included a recommendation that board members also review wording of TMDL on the MN Pollution Control Website with focus on pgs 27 and 28 which provides information from DNR study of fisheries above and below beaver dams. Rodney added thoughts from this meeting to draft and saved as version 4.

Nancy Hanson- DNR Wildlife TH Office –
Shary noted that a connection with her has not yet been made. This was tabled until our next meeting.

Deserae H./DNR regarding continued beaver dam removal:
Board members expressed concerns regarding beaver dam removal practices continuing with no change after Deserae had reviewed Hannah and Emma's research. A meeting with Deserae is being considered. Julie suggested viewing Hannah's presentation and Josh Dumke's written report prior to meeting stating that these could assist us in how to frame our discussion and concerns with Deserae. Julie will keep us posted about Emma's results on the Stanley.

The idea of a walk with Deserae and board members was proposed and would include discussing why we would continue to blow out dams on which research has been done that suggests the opposite practice. This could also be for board members only.
Concerns about large areas of reed canary grass were again mentioned as a major concern.

Paul suggested a possible presentation with Josh Dumke focused on water temps and fish tagging results.

Dave Zentner/Watershed practices –
Tabled. Dave Zentner has not yet been contacted regarding watershed practices and "big picture" practices.

New Business

Farmer Assisted Forest Migration Project:
Shary reported on a tree purchasing and planting project she learned about from David Abaz. This project is potentially money making for participants, is in partnership with Nature Conservancy, and includes the purchase and planting of trees including oak, white pine, and yellow birch which are all projected to be replacing trees such as balsam and other species leaving due to climate change. Shary will speak with David Abaz to learn more about tree purchasing.

Website for AKRW
Gail Trygstad spoke with the board about a website for AKRW and stated that she would be willing to get a website established and running. Board members shared ideas for website and expressed much gratitude for Gail's expertise and willingness to take on this project. Thank you, Gail.