

MINUTES

Apple River Protection and Rehabilitation District (ARPRD)

Board of Commissioners' Meeting

Saturday, April 24, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Amery City Hall, Amery, WI

1. Chairman Roland Peterson called the meeting to order, set the agenda, and verified that the official notice was published in Amery Free Press and posted online.
2. Board members present were Roland Peterson, Angie Johnson, Paul Isakson, Billie Jo Schleusner, and Fran Duncanson. Dave Schleusner was also present.
3. Reports:
 - a. The Minutes of the Board of Commissioners' Meeting on July 18, 2020 were approved.
 - b. The Treasurer's Report was approved:
 1. Bank balance as of April 24, 2021 was \$24,988.66; the truck was paid in January.
 2. The bank balance as of Dec. 31, 2020 was \$22,931.52.
 3. When new harvester is in water, we will pay \$1,000 to Auto Owners from Leadholm Insurance to cover it, and Workman's Comp of \$516.00 is due on May 1.
 - c. The Audit Committee report for July 1, 2020-December 21, 2020 was approved; Audit Committee was Rosemary Slaughter, Isaac Wieczorek, and Erin Schleusner.
 - d. Dave Schleusner reported on harvesting plans. The permit has been approved. The new harvester should be delivered around May 4 and will be put immediately in the water to try to get as much early Curly Leaf Pondweed harvested, which should cut down on hours later. This will be the earliest that harvesting has started. The old harvester should start around May 15 in the north end. The equipment is ready after a trip to Milwaukee to get new belting for the old harvester that he was able to install. Dale Richardson donated money for the purchase of a new GPS. The Board will send him a thank you note for his generosity and for all of his many volunteer hours and engineering expertise to help with harvesting in the past. The old harvester will be kept at Roland Peterson residence when not in use; the old conveyer will be pulled out when not in use. Staffing is all set. Insurance has been obtained for all equipment. Operators will harvest approximately 14 weeks. In July they will work on Coontail. He believes the new harvester will help harvest more with larger capacity and with reduced travel.
 - e. The Clean Boats/Clean Water grant for 2021 was approved. Steve Schieffer will lead the project again and is looking for inspectors to monitor the Lincoln Landing.
 - f. Paul Isakson reported that the No Wake Zone application for the narrow area north of North Park as requested by residents has been submitted, and we're waiting for approval to put the markers in place. Fran Duncanson reported the new Polk County Recreational Officer plans to be on the river during Bass Tournament to encourage compliance with No Wake Zones if the new boat arrives in time. Also, two No Wake Zone 18x12 signs will be placed on the Cameron Bridge.
4. New Business:
 - a. The Board discussed the ARPRD's long term finances. There is concern because the budget had planned for \$35,739.96 in funds to be carried over into 2021. However, the actual amount carried over was only \$22,931.52. After the Workman's Comp and insurance payment, the balance will be approximately \$22,500. Our current budget is functioning, but unforeseen costs such as increased fuel costs and other unknown costs are causing concerns. In looking ahead, ARPRD could find itself with a bank balance that may be close to a deficit. Of concern is the increase in costs which are somewhat unknown at this time. We do know that fuel costs will be increasing far more than was anticipated when we made the 2021 budget. We have benefited

from a cash gift and some volunteer time for repairing equipment. However, we are entering this new season with several financial uncertainties. We know we cannot function with a deficit bank balance.

The board reviewed the issue extensively. Chair Peterson shared a “proposal” for a tax increase and how it would impact his personal costs. He had gathered the tax facts on his property in consultation with Amanda Nissen, the Polk County Treasurer. His taxes for 2021 would have increased about \$55 for the year with a \$15,000 increase. His property has a market value in the \$250,000-\$280,000 range. The current tax mill rate is \$1.37/\$1000 property value; the proposed tax increase would change the mill rate to \$1.63/\$1000. Of course, any amount of tax less than \$15,000 would lower his amount due.

The board determined to watch the costs for May, June and July to see what we may be experiencing. At the July Board meeting, we will determine if any tax adjustment must be proposed. Any possible change in a tax amount would be presented at the ARPRD Annual meeting in August.

b. The Board approved the nomination of Billie Jo Scheusner to serve as Treasurer for 2022-24.

c. Fran Duncanson reported that Polk County received a \$10,000 grant to test water on 100 homes in Wapogasset Lake watershed this year. Next year Polk County will apply for a grant to test water in the Apple River watershed. The plan is to try to eventually study every watershed in Polk County. The data from 30 years ago needs updating. Also, the County is considering hiring a full-time person to look at nuisance issues such as animals close to water.

d. The date for the next Board of Commissioners’ Meeting is July 17, 2021 at Amery City Hall.

e. The date for the ARPRD Annual Meeting is August 21, 2021 at Amery City Hall.

5. The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Angie Johnson
Secretary