

DRAINAGE DISTRICT MEETING
DISTRICT RICHLAND #20
FEBRUARY 28, 2017

The Story County Drainage District Trustees met in the Public Meeting Room of the Story County Administration Building in Nevada, IA to receive the Engineer's Reports on Annexation and Reclassification (on file in the Story County Auditor's Office) for Drainage District Richland #20. Members present were Rick Sanders, chair, Marty Chitty, and Lauris Olson. Also present were County Engineer Darren Moon, Drainage Clerk Scott Wall, and Project Engineer Kent Rode and Tyler Conley of ISG.

Sanders called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Rode said that, as of yesterday, there is a signed agreement with the Union Pacific Railroad for them to pay up to \$330,700 for the installation of the new culvert under their right of way.

Rode talked about the Engineer's Report: Annexation. There are areas outside the current district boundaries that are within the district watershed. These areas should be annexed into the district so they can be included in future assessments. Richland #20 is unique in that it has an interior sub-district, Richland #20A, which uses Richland #20 as its outlet. Richland #20A also serves a larger area than is currently in its assessment schedule and will have additional lands annexed into it as well.

Rode would like to combine the hearings for annexation and reclassification into one hearing, which can be no less than 40 days from today. The earliest date for the hearing would be April 11.

Sanders asked about lands that are within the district currently that are not within the watershed.

Rode said those lands are not receiving any benefits and will not appear on the new assessment schedule.

Moon asked if the residents of #20A are sharing in the cost of this project.

Rode said because #20A uses #20 as its outlet it does benefit and will share in the cost of this project.

Conley said because the properties in #20A are small, they are quite a distance from the project, and they are on the east branch, their assessments will be relatively small.

Rode said #20A is, essentially, another branch of #20 but it was established as a separate district.

Sanders said if you live in #20A you share in the costs of work done in #20. If you live in #20, you do not necessarily share in the cost of work done in #20A.

Olson moved, seconded by Chitty, to accept the Engineer's Report: Annexation and the Commissioner's Report: Reclassification of Benefits and to set a public hearing for Tuesday, April 11 at 6:00 p.m. in the Public Meeting Room of the Story County Administration Building. Motion carried unanimously (MCU).

Rode spoke about reclassification of drainage districts. The new classification schedule for Richland #20 breaks the district into sub-districts. Currently everyone in the district shares the cost of all repairs in the district. Going forward landowners will only pay for repairs that directly benefit them. For this project, there will be an assessment against the entire district for repairs to the open ditch below the west and east branches and assessments against just the landowners on the west branch and just the landowners on the east branch for repairs on each of those branches.

Rode went over the five main factors considered in calculating benefits to drainage. They are benefitted acres, wet factor, proximity to outlet, facility use factor, and runoff factor. Rode handed out a pamphlet (on file in the Auditor's Office) that detailed how each of these factors are determined.

Conley went into detail on how the factors were used to assign benefits to each parcel in Richland #20 using a series of maps of the district, each of which graphically represented a factor or combination of factors. This process was repeated for the open ditch at the district outlet, for the west and east branches of the district, and for each of the lateral tiles on both branches. Once the reclassification is adopted, there will be 11 separate assessment schedules for the district.

Rode emphasized that the new classification schedules are based on the estimated final cost of this project. The actual cost may vary from the estimate so the actual assessments may be 100% of the reclassification or it may be 98% or 105% depending on the actual final cost of the project.

Olson asked how many assessments each parcel would receive. There are three schedules being used to pay for this project – the main open ditch, the west open ditch, and the east open ditch. Will each parcel get an assessment for each of these facilities or will each parcel get one assessment or will each parcel get two assessments?

Rode said the last part of Olson's question was correct. Parcels on the west branch will be assessed for the main and west open ditches and parcels on the east branch will be assessed for the main and east open ditches. Parcels on the main open ditch will only receive an assessment for the main ditch.

Sanders noted that Richland #20A is a sub-district of Richland #20, which serves the town of Fernald. There is also a Tile Branch A in Richland #20. Will it be confusing to have both a Branch A and a District #20A and can the trustees rename district facilities?

Rode did not have an answer as far as what is in the Code but did not believe this would be an issue. He worried that changing the names of facilities that have been in place for a century might add confusion.

Sanders asked Moon and Wall, since they work with this every day, do they feel having a Branch A and 20A cause confusion for them.

Wall said Secondary Roads has a tile crew that makes repairs then they tell him what area those repairs were made. So long as they know what branch they are working on they will get the correct information to Wall for billing. If the trustees were to change a facility name Wall would change #20A, perhaps by replacing the name Richland with Fernald.

Sanders said the first time he went through the reclassification process he was dead set against it. He felt that drainage districts should be assessed on a per acre basis. Once he had been through the process and understood how benefits were determined and why they are not consistent across a district he has become a convert.

Rode said work on the open ditch is proceeding and the contractor is approaching the upper end of the west ditch. The jack and bore to install the culvert under the Union Pacific is awaiting a right of entry agreement from the Union Pacific, which he expects within the next couple of days.

Sanders asked what is the time frame on completing installation of the culvert.

Rode said he hoped within a month or two. Certainly, before spring planting commences.

Olson asked that the pamphlet on the method of parcel classification be included with the online agenda posting for the April 11 hearing to give people more insight into the process before the hearing.

Chitty moved, seconded by Olson, to adjourn. MCU. Meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott T. Wall