MINUTES OF VIRTUAL / CONFERENCE CALL MEETING
RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ORIGINATING AT THE CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
MAY 11, 2022

A virtual / conference call meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Executive Committee was held on May 11, 2022, at 9:30 a.m.

Present were Gary Thompson, Traill County Water Resource District; Ben Varnson, Nelson County Water Resource District; Dan Jacobson, Southeast Cass Water Resource District; Arv Burvee, Richland County Water Resource District (alternate); Tom Perdue, Grand Forks County Water Resource District (alternate); Carol Harbeke Lewis, Secretary-Treasurer; Nina Stone, Accountant; Melissa Maertens, Administrative Assistant; Sean M. Fredricks, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.; Bruce Anderson, Barnes County Water Resource District; Randy Gjestvang, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Chuck Fritz and Danni Halvorson, International Water Institute (IWI); Matthew Lindsay, NDDWR; Zach Herrmann, Mike Opat and Gabe Bladow, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Kurt Lysne, Moore Engineering, Inc.; and Jack Dwyer, North Dakota Water Users Association. Josh Ihry, Steele County Water Resource District, and Larry Tanke, Walsh County Water Resource District, were absent.

Minutes

It was moved by Manager Jacobson, seconded by Manager Burvee and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2022, meeting.

Treasurer's report

Brief discussion was held on contacting project sponsors to update the Obligated Funding report.

Manager Varnson moved to approve the Financial Report and the payment of wire transfers, as presented. Manager Perdue seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

IWI LiDAR Tools Development – cost-share request

Chuck Fritz discussed a cost-share request from the IWI to update the hydro-conditioning for the development of LiDAR derived tools in the Red River Basin in North Dakota. Some of the previous hydro-conditioning work in the Red River Basin in North Dakota can be utilized again, lowering the cost of the work to $8.50 per square mile, with a total cost of $109,624 for the portion of the Red River Basin in North Dakota that is within the RRJWRD member counties. Randy Gjestvang indicated the North Dakota Department

of Environmental Quality (NDDEQ) is also interested in the data and may provide up to 60% cost-share for the hydro-conditioning work.

It was moved by Manager Jacobson and seconded by Manager Perdue to recommend the RRJWRD Full Board approve the request from IWI for 40% cost-share of hydro-conditioning work to update the IWI LiDAR-derived tools, not to exceed $43,850, and request Mr. Fritz obtain the remaining 60% cost from the NDDEQ. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

IWI River Watch and River of Dreams – cost-share request

Danni Halvorson reported the IWI was notified that the River Watch and River of Dreams programs were approved for a NDDEQ Section 319 grant. The grant requires 40% local cost-share for the programs, which the RRJWRD has previously funded. The 40% local match covers three years of the River Watch program at a cost of $107,520 and three years of the River of Dreams program at a cost of $60,301. Mr. Gjestvang recommended approval of the cost-share request from IWI for the programs.

It was moved by Manager Perdue and seconded by Manager Varnson to recommend the RRJWRD Full Board approve the cost-share request from IWI for the following commencing July 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2025:

- River Watch program, not to exceed $107,520
- River of Dreams program, not to exceed $60,301

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Missouri River Joint Water Resource District

Jack Dwyer stated the Missouri River Joint Water Resource District created a pilot project and hired Ken Royce as the Missouri River Coordinator to develop and implement projects and policies that enhance Missouri River water in North Dakota. Mr. Royce is currently raising funds for the project and the RRJWRD may be asked to participate in the project financially in the future.

Legislative updates

Discussion was held on legislative updates regarding water resource districts. Sean Fredricks and Mr. Dwyer updated the Board on the SB 2208 interim study.

Basin Wide Funding Plan

Zach Herrmann updated the Board on a potential pilot project for funding water conveyance projects in the Red River Basin through the RRJWRD. Mr. Herrmann indicated a survey has been sent out to member water resource districts to identify upcoming water conveyance projects in the Red River Basin and the associated costs and schedules. The surveys are due May 20, 2022. The Basin Wide Funding Plan will be developed with the input from the surveys.

Metro Flood Diversion Project report

Manager Jacobson updated the Board on the Metro Flood Diversion Project. The Public-Private Partnership developer is preparing to begin work later this year on the Diversion

Channel and Associated Infrastructure of the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Manager Jacobson stated Cass County Joint Water Resource District continues to acquire property rights necessary for the project, including flowage easements. The Corps of Engineers is on or ahead of schedule on the components of the Metro Flood Diversion Project that they are constructing.

NDDWR / State Water Commission report

Mr. Gjestvang reported on recent meetings and activities he has participated in.

The Lower Red River Regional Detention Analysis project is ongoing and is within budget.

High hazard dam rehabilitation studies in the Red River Basin are anticipated to be completed this year with design and construction following.

The NDDWR LiDAR data for the entire Red River watershed will be available by the end of the month. Discussion was held on potentially updating the LiDAR-derived tools in portions of Cavalier County and Griggs County as the data would benefit member counties of the RRJWRD. Mr. Gjestvang and Manager Varnson will contact Griggs County and Cavalier County to discuss the matter and bring information to a future meeting for further discussion.

Mr. Gjestvang reported the State Water Commission is considering updates to its cost-share policy and will host meetings regarding the matter this summer.

Discussion was held on flood events in various areas of the Red River Basin in North Dakota, including the ongoing erosion issues at Bourbanis Dam in Pembina County. Mr. Gjestvang stated a PRESENS sensor was installed at Bourbanis Dam to help measure the elevation of the water at the dam. The PRESENS sensor is a useful tool that could be implemented on all dams. Mr. Gjestvang said that based on preliminary numbers, the 2022 flood will rank in the top 5 of record for some portions of the watershed. The Civil Air Patrol obtained aerial imagery of much of the flooded areas and he expects drone imagery will be available for most dams that were in operation.

Sheyenne River bank stabilization project – Barnes County Water Resource District

Mike Opat discussed a potential bank stabilization pilot project along the Sheyenne River downstream of Baldhill Dam. Mr. Opat indicated the first step for the project is to conduct an inventory of issues along the Sheyenne River that impact public infrastructure. Barnes County Water Resource District requested cost-share for the project inventory through the North Dakota Department of Water Resources. Following a decision on the cost-share request by the NDDWR, Barnes County Water Resource District plans to prepare a project scope and budget and submit a cost-share request for the non-state share of the cost to the RRJWRD later this summer.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the RRJWRD Executive Committee will be held on July 13, 2022, at 9:30 a.m., originating at the Cass County Highway Department.

NDDWR / State Water Commission report continued

Matthew Lindsay reported the NDDWR is currently staffing an emergency operation center in Bismarck and continues to monitor dams in North Dakota, especially Bourbanis Dam. Two emergency staff positions, a hydrologist and water resource engineer, were recently authorized for the NDDWR to assist with the workload in those areas. The NDDWR has a number of open employment opportunities. Mr. Lindsay noted the NDDWR also created a new position, a regulatory program specialist, that will assist with permitting and other various items. Mr. Lindsay briefly discussed NDDWR work on legislative matters as well as ongoing work related to the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be considered by the Board, the meeting adjourned without objection.

APPROVED:

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Gary Thompson
Chairman

ATTEST:

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Carol Harbeke Lewis
Secretary-Treasurer