MINUTES OF VIRTUAL / CONFERENCE CALL MEETING
RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT FULL BOARD
ORIGINATING AT THE CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
HERITAGE CONFERENCE ROOM
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
APRIL 10, 2024
9:30 A.M.

A virtual / conference call meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Full Board was held on April 10, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.

Present were Gary Thompson, Traill County Water Resource District; Keith Weston, Southeast Cass Water Resource District; Bruce Anderson, Barnes County Water Resource District; Tom Perdue, Grand Forks County Water Resource District; Rodger Olson, Maple River Water Resource District; Ben Varnson, Nelson County Water Resource District; Don Kemp, Bill Gunderson and Luann Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District; Arv Burvee, Richland County Water Resource District; Michael Wyum, Sargent County Water Resource District; Melissa Hinkemeyer, Secretary-Treasurer; Leilei Bao, Accountant; Carolyn Fiechtner, Administrative Assistant; Tasha Krueger, Steele County Water Resource District; Sean M. Fredricks, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.; Randy Gjestvang, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Jack Dwyer, North Dakota Water Users Association; Christie Fisher, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Danni Halvorson, International Water Institute; Brian Fuder, Red River Retention Authority (RRRA); Ted Preister, Red River Basin Commission; Duane Breitling, Cass County Commissioner; Kurt Lysne, and Nathan Trosen, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Mike Opat and Zach Herrmann, Houston Engineering, Inc., Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering, Co.; and Rob Sip, Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB). North Cass, Ransom County, Rush River, Steele County and Walsh County Water Resource Districts were absent.

Approval of agenda
It was moved by Manager Weston, seconded by Manager Wyum and unanimously carried to approve the order of the agenda, as presented.

Minutes
It was moved by Manager Varnson, seconded by Manager Olson, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2024, meeting.

Treasurer's report
Discussion was held on Certificate of Deposit rates for Red River Joint Water Resource District funds.

It was moved by Manager Perdue and seconded by Manager Burvee to do the following:

- Approve the Financial Report, as presented;

- Approve the letter of engagement to the Office of the State Auditor for 2023 audit services;
- Approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the *Red River Joint Water Resource District Resolution Approving 2025 Budget*; and
- Approve and authorize the Secretary-Treasurer to sign and return the North Dakota Insurance Reserve Fund proxy

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Sargent County WRD membership

Sean Fredricks noted the RRJWRD Executive Committee discussed the reduced RRJWRD membership dues received from Sargent County for 2024 at their meeting on March 13, 2024. Chairman Ihry and Mr. Gjestvang met with Sargent County Water Resource District and Sargent County Commissioners to discuss the RRJWRD budget process, the substantial cost-share directly received in Sargent County from the RRJWRD, and future cost-share opportunities through the RRJWRD for Sargent County. The Sargent County Commission misunderstood the RRJWRD budget request. The RRJWRD Executive Committee made a motion at their March 13, 2024, meeting concluding that Sargent County Water Resource District is not obligated to pay the remaining RRJWRD membership dues requested from Sargent County, and Sargent County Water Resource District remains eligible for RRJWRD cost-share funding. The Board further discussed ways to enhance future communications with member counties regarding RRJWRD budget requests.

Sheyenne River Bank Stability Study update

Mike Opat discussed the results of the Sheyenne River Bank Stability Study and described inventoried erosion sites, and categorization and prioritization of each site. Barnes County Water Resource District is planning to host a meeting in the future to allow time for individuals and organizations to review the study findings and consider moving forward with potential projects resulting from the study.

Cost-share request – Pembina County Water Resource District – Tongue River NRCS Watershed Plan

Manager Kemp reported the Pembina County WRD requests cost-share from the RRJWRD for the Pembina County Water Resource District – Tongue River NRCS Watershed Plan to construct the preferred alternative of the Plan. The project will restore approximately 1.8 miles of the Tongue River upstream of Lake Renwick.

Zach Herrmann explained to the Board that this is a restoration project due to severe erosion from a 2013 event. The project will consist of using a channel hardening process and elevating the channel bottom. The project will help reduce sediment deposits into Renwick Dam. Mr. Herrmann noted Pembina County Water Resource District is requesting 90% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share of the project, under Article X of the RRJWRD *Cost-Share Policies and Procedures,* not to exceed $596,385. Randy Gjestvang recommended approval of the cost-share request from Pembina County Water Resource District and stated the RRJWRD Executive Committee recommended approval of the cost-share request for 90% of the non-federal, non-state share regarding the

Tongue River NRCS Watershed Plan project, not to exceed $596,385, in accordance with Article X of the RRJWRD *Cost-Share Policies and Procedures*.

Manager Varnson moved to approve the cost-share request from Pembina County Water Resource District for 90% of the non-federal, non-state share regarding the Tongue River NRCS Watershed Plan project, not to exceed $596,385, in accordance with Article X of the RRJWRD *Cost-Share Policies and Procedures*. Manager Weston seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

NDAWN all-season weather gages – phase 2

Randy Gjestvang stated the RRJWRD previously funded 15 all-season weather gages, of which 14 have been installed. The remaining gage will be installed this year. NDAWN is seeking funding to install an additional 7 all-season weather gages throughout the Red River Basin. The additional gages will help provide more accurate data throughout the Red River Basin and NDAWN data can be accessed by the public for free at www.ndawn.info. The all-season weather gages have an estimated lifespan of 20 years and are typically installed in the summer.

It was moved by Manager Weston and seconded by Manager Burvee to approve and allocate funding for 7 additional NDAWN all-season weather gages in the Red River Basin in North Dakota and authorize the Chairman to sign the *Agreement* regarding the gages with NDAWN / North Dakota State University. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

***Sublease Agreement* with the Red River Basin Commission**

Ted Priester presented to the Board the *Sublease Agreement* for the RRJWRD (NDDWR) office space for 2024. The office is used by Mr. Gjestvang.

Manager Varnson moved to approve the *Sublease Agreement* between the Red River Basin Commission and the RRJWRD for the RRJWRD (NDDWR) office space for 2024. Manager Perdue seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Manager Weston exited the meeting.

RRJWRD logo

Randy Gjestvang presented RRJWRD logo options to the Board. The Board discussed the logo options in more detail.

Manager Weston rejoined the meeting.

After discussion, Manager Burvee moved to adopt two logos, as modified. Manager Olson seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Potential meeting with the RRWMB and RRRA

Brian Fuder discussed holding a joint RRJWRD, RRWMB and RRRA meeting that would

allow for a discussion among the Boards to learn about the status of current projects and identify current needs and issues, and areas the Boards can collaborate on. Mr. Fuder is tentatively planning the meeting for July 31, 2024, and would invite others to the meeting, such as Congressional delegates. Mr. Fuder requested the RRJWRD fund half of the cost of the meeting, not to exceed $2,000.

It was moved by Manager Weston and seconded by Manager Varnson to approve 50% cost-share for a joint RRJWRD, RRWMB and RRRA meeting, not to exceed $2,000. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Baldhill Dam Water Control Plan update

Mr. Gjestvang reported on the Baldhill Dam Water Control Plan update stating that the Corps of Engineers will be hosting a second set of meetings and a comment period on alternative water control plans for Baldhill Dam in May. May 8, 2024, is the public meeting and May 10, 2024, is the agency meeting, both will be held in Valley City.

Legislative Updates

Mr. Fredricks and Jack Dwyer reported on legislative updates regarding water resource districts, including SB 2372.

Mr. Dwyer then discussed three proposed bills stemming from the North Dakota Red Tape Reduction initiative which pertain to the following North Dakota Century Codes:

- N.D. Cent. Code § 61-32-03
- N.D. Cent. Code § 61-03-22
- N.D. Cent. Code § 24-03-08

Next Meeting

The next RRJWRD Full Board meeting is scheduled for June 12, 2024, at the Pembina County Courthouse in Cavalier, North Dakota.

Adjournment

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

APPROVED:

_____

Josh Ihry
Chairman

ATTEST:

_____

Melissa Hinkemeyer
Secretary-Treasurer