RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
VIRTUAL / CONFERENCE CALL MEETING
ORIGINATING AT THE CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
HERITAGE CONFERENCE ROOM
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
AUGUST 14, 2024
9:30 A.M.

A virtual / conference call meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Executive Committee was held on August 14, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.

Present were Josh Ihry, Steele County Water Resource District; Keith Weston, Southeast Cass Water Resource District; Don Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District; Arv Burvee, Richland County Water Resource District; Tom Perdue, Grand Forks County Water Resource District (alternate for Ben Varnson, Nelson County Water Resource District); Melissa Hinkemeyer, Secretary; Leilei Bao, Treasurer; Carolyn Fiechtner, Administrative Assistant; Sean M. Fredricks, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.; Randy Gjestvang, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Dani Quissell, North Dakota Water Users Association; Brian Fuder, Red River Retention Authority (RRRA); Zach Herrmann, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Nathan Trosen, Moore Engineering, Inc.; and Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering Co. Ben Varnson, Nelson County Water Resource District, was absent.

**Approval of Agenda**
It was moved by Manager Weston, seconded by Manager Burvee, and unanimously carried to approve the agenda, as amended.

**Minutes**
It was moved by Manager Weston, seconded by Manager Burvee, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2024, meeting, as presented.

**Treasurer's report**
The Treasurer presented the RRJWRD financial report to the Board.

Manager Burvee moved to approve the following:
- Financial report, as presented
- Payment of the wire transfers, as presented
- Renewal of the United Valley Bank – Cavalier CD maturing August 23, 2024, at a rate of 4.5% for 19 months.

Manager Kemp seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**RRJWRD Executive Committee appointment – Gary Thompson resignation**
Chairman Ihry reported member Gary Thompson, Traill County Water Resource District,

has resigned from the RRJWRD Executive Committee, effective July 17, 2024. Chairman Ihry stated he has appointed alternate member Arv Burvee to replace Gary Thompson on the RRJWRD Executive Committee, for the remainder of Gary's term. Chairman Ihry also indicated he will update the RRJWRD Full Board on the matter and inquire if there are any members interested in serving as an alternate to the RRJWRD Executive Committee, in the position Arv Burvee held that is now vacant.

**Cost-share request – Maple River Water Resource District – Maple River Dam A-170 Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Update**

Zach Herrmann reported to the Board that the Maple River Dam is a high hazard dam owned by the Cass County Joint Water Resource District (CCJWRD). The Dam is located within Maple River Water Resource District, which is a member of the RRJWRD. The most recent EAP for the Maple River Dam was completed in 2013. Since that time, the North Dakota Department of Water Resources (DWR) has updated their Dam Safety Standards resulting in differing requirements to define downstream risk within the EAP. Mr. Herrmann stated that the project is broken into various tasks to be completed:

- Clerical updates
- Breach analysis
- Mapping updates
- Coordination with plan holders and contacts
- EAP tabletop exercise

Maple River Water Resource District is requesting 65% of the non-federal, non-state share of the Maple River Dam A-170 EAP Update, not to exceed $16,120. Randy Gjestvang recommended approval of the request.

Manager Weston moved to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the *Cost-Share Agreement* with Maple River Water Resource District for up to 65% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share regarding the Maple River Dam A-170 EAP Update, not to exceed $16,120, contingent upon receipt of State Water Commission cost-share funding for the project. Manager Burvee seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**Cost-share request – Walsh County Water Resource District – EAP updates for ten dams**

Mr. Herrmann stated the Walsh County Water Resource District is pursuing EAP updates for ten dams in the District. Breach analysis and mapping will updated as part of the project, leveraging recently completed hydrology and hydraulic models that were developed in the ongoing Natural Resources Conservation Service dam rehabilitation planning studies.

Walsh County Water Resource District is requesting 65% of the non-federal, non-state share of the project to update EAPs for ten dams in the District, not to exceed $29,705. Randy Gjestvang recommended the Executive Committee recommend approval of the request to the Full Board.

Manager Kemp moved to recommend approval of the Walsh County Water Resource District project to update EAPs for ten dams to the RRJWRD Full Board, for up to 65% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share of the project, not to exceed $29,705. Manager Purdue seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**Proposed amendments to RRJWRD *Cost-Share Policies and Procedures, Cost-Share Application*, and cost-share agreement**

Sean Fredricks reviewed the proposed changes to the RRJWRD *Cost-Share Policies and Procedures, Cost-Share Application*, and cost-share agreement with the Board.

After discussion, Manager Perdue moved to approve the following amended documents, as presented:

- RRJWRD *Cost-Share Policies and Procedures*
- RRJWRD *Cost-Share Application*
- RRJWRD cost-share agreement

Manager Weston seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Fredricks noted the RRJWRD Full Board will be notified of the changes made to the documents at their next meeting.

**Lower Red River Regional Detention Study – NDDWR cost-share extension request**

Mr. Gjestvang updated the Board on the Lower Red River Regional Detention Study that is a joint effort with the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) and the Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) in coordination with the Corps of Engineers. The Study is not yet complete, as the Corps of Engineers continues to work on the modeling for the Study. The Board will need to request an extension of the *Agreement for Cost-Share Reimbursement* with the State Water Commission for cost-share funding for the Study.

A motion was made by Manager Kemp and seconded by Manager Weston to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign a letter to the NDDWR requesting an extension of the *Agreement for Cost-Share Reimbursement* regarding the Lower Red River Regional Detention Study. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**RRJWRD potential project list updates**

Mr. Gjestvang briefly reviewed the RRJWRD potential project list. The Board directed the Secretary to contact the sponsors of the projects on the potential project list and invite them to the next RRJWRD Full Board meeting to provide an update on their project.

**RRRA updates**

Brian Fuder stated to the Board that the 2024 RRRA Partner Summit was held in East Grand Forks, Minnesota on July 31, with approximately 55 people in attendance. The morning was filled with presentations from the RRJWRD, RRWMB, RRBC, and RRRA. Former Congressman Peterson presented on the Midwest Council on Agriculture and the Farm Bill. The afternoon was a productive strategic discussion on what is going well in

the Red River Basin, current struggles, and what the RRRA can do to assist with issues in the Basin in the future. Mr. Fuder stated that many constructive and positive comments were given and heard from attendees.

Mr. Fuder also discussed the RRRA's work on proposing and advocating for changes to the Natural Resources Conservation Service PL566 program.

The RRRA has also been advertising and promoting through WDAY Weather and Ag. The RRRA promoted the Elm River Dam Nos. 1, 2, and 3 construction projects in a recent commercial. The RRJWRD is a cost-share funding partner of the Elm River Dam Nos. 1, 2, and 3 construction projects.

Mr. Fuder also discussed a proposed idea to partner with solar farms for retention on solar farm properties. The RRRA is exploring the idea further.

**Legislative updates**

Dani Quissell updated the Board on legislative items regarding water resource districts and stated the North Dakota Water Users have joined the Keep it Local ND Coalition regarding Measure 4 that will be on the North Dakota ballot. Ms. Quissell encouraged the Board members to write letters to the editor for their local newspapers regarding the impacts passage of Measure 4 would have on local communities and the concerns of replacement funding for necessary services. Ms. Quissell mentioned that the September Water Topics Overview Committee meeting is slated to be held in Fargo on September 12, 2024.

Mr. Fredricks briefly reported on legislative updates regarding water resource districts.

**Member Water Resource Districts project reports**

Member Water Resource Districts reported on current activities in their districts.

Manager Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District, reported on the Manitoba border dike, weed control, and interest in installation of NDDWR PRESENS sensors to better monitor the dams in the District.

Manager Burvee, Richland County Water Resource District, reported that maintenance continues on their facilities. The District is working on a legal assessment drain reconstruction project and the District is also considering expanding their involvement in the Natural Resources Conservation Service Regional Conservation Partnership Program.

Manager Perdue, Grand Forks County Water Resource District, stated the two dam projects the RRJWRD previously approved cost-share funding for have been completed. The District is conducting annual weed control, using more precise drone spraying this year instead of helicopter spraying. Manager Perdue also stated that a drain reconstruction project at the south end of Grand Forks is in the process of permitting.

Chairman Ihry, Steele County Water Resource District, reported they are processing subsurface water management system applications, are reassessing various legal assessment drains, and stated the construction on Elm River Dams Nos. 1, 2 and 3 is progressing well. The District is also completing weed control and general necessary maintenance.

Manager Weston, Southeast Cass Water Resource District, discussed a channel reconstruction project on Drain #10. The District is also working with the Metro Flood Diversion Authority regarding impacts from the Metro Flood Diversion Project on various legal assessment drains in the District. The District is also requesting State Water Commission cost-share funding for annual snagging and clearing of the Sheyenne and Wild Rice Rivers.

**Education**

Mr. Fredricks noted the State Water Commission has recently amended their cost-share agreement to include a provision that the cost-share recipient is responsible to comply with all applicable laws.

**Next meeting**

The next RRJWRD Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2024, at the Cass County Highway Department, West Fargo, North Dakota.

**Gary Thompson recognition**

It was moved by Manager Weston and seconded by Manager Burvee to approve and authorize the Secretary to organize recognition of Manager Gary Thompson at the November 13, 2024, Executive Committee meeting to recognize his years of service to the RRJWRD. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**FEMA 10-year flood plain study proposal**

A motion was made by Manager Weston and seconded by Manager Perdue to authorize Manager Weston to investigate the feasibility of submitting a proposal to FEMA for a project to develop methods to identify areas susceptible to inundation from a 10-year flood event in the Red River Basin. A similar project proposal was funded by FEMA in Minnesota recently. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

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

APPROVED:

_____
Josh Ihry
Chairman

ATTEST:

_____
Melissa Hinkemeyer
Secretary