MINUTES OF RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT FULL BOARD
ORIGINATING AT THE CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
JANUARY 8, 2025
9:30 A.M.

A meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Full Board was held on January 8, 2025, at 9:30 a.m.

Present were Josh Ihry, Steele 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; Gerald Melvin, Maple River Water Resource District; Don Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District; Arv Burvee, Richland County Water Resource District; Richard Sundberg, Rush River Water Resource District; Michael Wyum, Sargent County Water Resource District; Andy Neset, Traill County Water Resource District; Josh Forde, Nelson County Water Resource District; Melissa Hinkemeyer, Director, Secretary; Leilei Bao, Treasurer; Elizabeth Smith, Administrative Assistant; Rita Nelson, Accounting Assistant; Sean M. Fredricks, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.; Jack Dwyer, North Dakota Water Users Association; Randy Gjestvang, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Brian Fuder, Red River Retention Authority Executive Director; Ted Preister, Red River Basin Commission (RRBC); Duane Breitling, Cass County Commissioner; Zach Herrmann and Mike Opat, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Kurt Lysne and Nathan Trosen, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering, Co.; Danni Halvorsen, International Water Institute; Dani Quissell, North Dakota Water Education Foundation; Bill Gunderson and LuAnn Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District; and Eric Olson, Abercrombie Resident. North Cass, Walsh County, and Ransom County Water Resource Districts were absent.

Approval of agenda
It was moved by Manager Sundberg, seconded by Manager Neset, and unanimously carried to approve the order of the agenda, as amended.

Minutes
It was moved by Manager Weston, seconded by Manager Perdue, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2024, meeting, as presented.

Financial Report
It was moved by Manager Perdue and seconded by Manager Sundberg to approve the Financial Report, as presented. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment – Eric Olson
Eric Olson discussed the Conditional Water Permit application submitted by the Riverview Dairy to the NDDWR The application is to secure water for their planned operations. Mr. Olson expressed his concerns regarding the amount of water requested in the application

in comparison to water needs in the area. Mr. Olson asked the Board to reach out to the NDDWR to request that the process regarding the permit application is not rushed.

Brian Fuder stated the Red River Retention Authority had preliminary conversations with Riverview Dairy regarding potential partnership for a retention feature as part of their operating system. It was determined that the retention feature would not be feasible at this location.

Randy Gjestvang discussed how the NDDWR processes water permits and noted approximately half of the water needs will be supplied from runoff on their property.

Chairman Ihry thanked Mr. Olson for attending and providing comments on the matter and encouraged him to continue communications with NDDWR staff.

2025 Executive Committee elections

Sean Fredricks stated the RRJWRD Executive Committee positions currently held by Josh Ihry, Ben Varnson, and Don Kemp are up for election this year. The alternate position on the RRJWRD Executive Committee currently held by Tom Perdue is also up for election.

Mr. Fredricks opened nominations for the position held by Josh Ihry on the RRJWRD Executive Committee. Manager Burvee nominated Josh Ihry for the position. There were no other nominations, nominations were then closed. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Josh Ihry opened nominations for the position held by Ben Varnson on the RRJWRD Executive Committee. Manager Ihry nominated Tom Perdue for the position. There were no other nominations, nominations were then closed. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Josh Ihry opened nominations for the position held by Don Kemp on the RRJWRD Executive Committee. Manager Ihry nominated Don Kemp for the position. There were no other nominations, nominations were then closed. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Josh Ihry opened nominations for the alternate position held by Tom Perdue on the RRJWRD Executive Committee. Manager Burvee nominated Andy Neset for the position. There were no other nominations, nominations were then closed. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

2026 Budget

Mr. Fredricks reviewed the RRJWRD budget process. He noted the budget process is beginning earlier this year to ensure adequate time for communication with member districts and to complete the process. The Board discussed and recommended 1.5 mills for the 2026 budget. Manager Weston suggested increasing the education line item in the budget in years where projects may not be ready to request cost-share funding.

Cost-share request - Lower Red River Regional Detention Study

Mr. Gjestvang provided an overview of the Lower Red River Regional Detention Study. The Corps recently indicated their funding has been exhausted for the Study. Mr. Gjestvang noted the original time frame for the Study has also been exceeded. The Corps provided a new cost estimate to finish the Study. The RRJWRD portion of the local share is $77,990, the Red River Watershed Management Board has approved their portion in the amount of $77,990.

Ted Preister indicated the Study is very important and he believes there is a path forward to completing the study. Zach Herrmann briefly discussed the status of the Study in terms of progress.

A motion was made by Manager Anderson and seconded by Manager Kemp to approve the cost-share request for the Lower Red River Regional Detention Study in the amount of $77,990 and authorize the Chair to sign a letter of support to the RRBC requesting the RRBC pursue an updated agreement with the Corps for the Study. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Legislative Updates

Jack Dwyer, Dani Quissell, and Mr. Fredricks reported on legislative updates regarding water resource districts including HB1141, SB2069, SB2027, HB1041, and SB2118. Mr. Fredricks stated it is very important for water resource managers to contact legislators in their districts regarding water resource district matters. Mr. Fredricks discussed creation of a technical committee for determination of benefits for future water resource district projects.

Manager Perdue made a motion to create the Assessment Benefits and Methodologies Technical Group for benefits determination for future water resource district projects. Manager Wyum seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Education

Mr. Fredricks reviewed Robert's Rules of Order and indicated all non-procedural votes require roll call votes.

Next meeting

The next scheduled Full Board meeting is Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. at the Cass County Highway Department in West Fargo, North Dakota.

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