RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ORIGINATING AT THE CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
TUNDRA CONFERENCE ROOM
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
MARCH 12, 2025
9:30 A.M.

A meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Executive Committee was held on March 12, 2025, at 9:30 a.m.

Present were Josh Ihry, Steele County Water Resource District; Don Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District; Arv Burvee, Richland County Water Resource District; Andy Neset, Traill County Water Resource District (alternate); Melissa Hinkemeyer, Secretary-Treasurer; Amy Hepper, Accountant; Elizabeth Smith, Administrative Assistant; Rita Nelson, Accounting Assistant; Sean M. Fredricks, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.; Randy Gjestvang and Yaping Chi, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Dani Quissell, North Dakota Water Users Association; Brian Fuder, Red River Retention Authority (RRRA); Mike Opat, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Kurt Lysne and Nathan Trosen, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Duane Breitling, Cass County Commissioner; Robert Sip, Red River Watershed Management Board; Lucas Siemieniewski, Sargent County Water Resource District; LuAnn Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District; and Tasha Krueger, Steele County Water Resource District. Keith Weston, Southeast Cass Water Resource District and Tom Perdue, Grand Forks County Water Resource District, were absent.

Approval of Agenda
It was moved by Manager Kemp, seconded by Manager Neset, and unanimously carried to approve the agenda, as presented.

Minutes
It was moved by Manager Neset, seconded by Manager Kemp, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2025, meeting, as presented.

Appointment of Treasurer
It was moved by Manager Burvee, seconded by Manager Neset to appoint Melissa Hinkemeyer to serve as Treasurer for the remainder of calendar year 2025. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

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

Manager Kemp moved to approve the following:
- Financial report, as presented
- Payment of the wire transfers, as presented

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

Cost-share request – Sargent County Water Resource District - Silver Lake Dam Improvement Study

Nathan Trosen stated the Sargent County Water Resource District is requesting cost-share to complete the design, plans, specifications, and obtain permits for the Silver Lake Dam Improvement Project. The proposed project will repair existing erosion and prevent future erosion on the dam.

Sargent County Water Resource District is requesting 65% of the non-federal, non-state share of the project to improve the Silver Lake Dam, not to exceed $10,400. Randy Gjestvang recommended the Executive Committee approve the request.

A motion was made by Manager Kemp to approve the Sargent County Water Resource District project to improve the Silver Lake Dam for up to 65% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share of the project, not to exceed $10,400. Manager Burvee seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Cost-share request – Pembina County Water Resource District - Olson Dam and Olga Dam Trash Rack Replacements

Manager Kemp stated the Pembina County Water Resource District is requesting cost-share to replace the current trash racks at the Olson Dam and Olga Dam. The current trash racks are deteriorating and require replacement to ensure safe operation of the dam. The trash racks have also been found to be difficult to operate during emergency conditions. The Pembina County Water Resource District has worked with a local metal shop to develop an improved trash rack design.

Pembina County Water Resource District is requesting 65% of the non-federal, non-state share of the project to replace the trash racks, not to exceed $5,668. Randy Gjestvang recommended the Executive Committee approve the request.

A motion was made by Manager Neset to approve the Pembina County Water Resource District project for the Olson Dam and Olga Dam trash rack replacements for up to 65% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share of the project, not to exceed $5,668. Manager Burvee seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Cost-share request – Barnes County Water Resource District - Study for Sheyenne Riverbank Stabilization – revised recommendation

Randy Gjestvang reviewed the July 15, 2022, cost-share request from Barnes County Water Resource District for the Sheyenne Riverbank Stability Study, extending from Baldhill Dam to the confluence with the Red River. Mr. Gjestvang stated that after further reviewing the cost-share request, he feels that his initial recommendation should have been worded differently.

Sean Fredricks prepared a proposed *Amended Cost-Share Agreement* to approve 50% of the entire estimated cost for the Phase 1 Study for the Lower Sheyenne Riverbank Stability Study, not to exceed $16,250, based on the total cost estimate of $32,500.

A motion was made by Manager Kemp to approve the *Amended Cost-Share Agreement* with the Barnes County Water Resource District. Manager Burvee seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Education / Legislative update

Dani Quissell reported on legislative items impacting Water Resource Districts, including HB 1020, HB 1218, HB 1280, and SB 2276. In addition, the Water Resource District Association continues to work with the Water Commission regarding the Association's request for an increase in cost-share funding for drains. Discussion was held on how these items might affect Water Resource Districts, particularly regarding cost-share percentages, economic analyses, and an interim study on watershed districts. Ms. Quissell encouraged the Managers to reach out to legislators regarding water funding.

A motion was made by Manager Kemp and seconded by Manager Burvee to authorize Moore Engineering, Inc. to testify to the North Dakota Legislature on behalf of the RRJWRD regarding HB1218. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/approval of benefits summary for RRJWRD

Randy Gjestvang reviewed a document summarizing the benefits all member counties of the RRJWRD receive. Mr. Gjestvang asked for any feedback the Board had on the document. The Board discussed the benefits summary document.

A motion was made by Manager Kemp and seconded by Manager Neset to approve the benefits summary document for RRJWRD member use. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Red River Retention Authority update

Brian Fuder discussed reinstating the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Red River Retention Authority (RRRA), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

Mr. Fuder discussed progress on the RRRA Priority Projects List for 2025. Mr. Fuder will present the final draft to the RRRA at their next meeting. Mr. Fuder also discussed submitting Congressionally Directed Spending requests for three projects in Minnesota that are in or are ready for construction. The Board discussed approving a letter of support on behalf of the RRJWRD.

A motion was made by Manager Kemp and seconded by Manager Neset to approve and authorize the Secretary to send a letter of support regarding the RRRA Congressionally Directed Spending request for funding of projects in the Red River Basin. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Letter of engagement to the Office of the State Auditor for 2024 audit services
A motion was made by Manager Neset and seconded by Manager Burvee to approve the Letter of Engagement to the Office of the State Auditor for 2024 audit services for the Red River Joint Water Resource District. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Member WRDs project reports
Manager Neset reported that Traill County Water Resource District is working on maintenance of drains and culverts and are working with Riverview Dairy on a possible drain reconstruction.

Manager Kemp reported that Pembina County Water Resource District is working to improve and extend one of their smaller drains, improve drop structures, and are working to resolve two complaints.

Manager Burvee reported that Richland County Water Resource District is preparing to resume drain repair work and they are testifying on various legislative items.

Manager Ihry reported that Steele County Water Resource District is working to resolve two complaints, looking into potential drain reassessments, and finishing up FEMA projects.

Education
Mr. Fredricks reviewed the statutes regarding Water Resource District complaints.

RRJWRD Executive Committee Alternate Position
Josh Ihry appointed Michael Wyum as the second alternate for RRJWRD Executive Committee. The position is currently vacant.

FEMA 10-year flood plain study proposal
Mr. Gjestvang briefly discussed the FEMA 10-year flood plain study proposal. Mr. Gjestvang inquired about inviting the International Water Institute to a future meeting to discuss this type of project. The Board agreed.

Next meeting
The next RRJWRD Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2025, at the Cass County Highway Department, West Fargo, North Dakota.

The next RRJWRD Full Board meeting is scheduled for April 9, 2025, at the Cass County Highway Department, 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