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

A meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Full Board was held on April 9, 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; Jay Colwell, North Cass Water Resource District; Don Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District; Richard Sundberg and William A. Hejl, Rush River Water Resource District; Michael Wyum, Sargent County Water Resource District; Andy Neset, Traill County Water Resource District; Larry Tanke, Walsh County Water Resource District; Melissa Hinkemeyer, Director, Secretary; Amy Hepper, Accountant; Elizabeth Smith, Administrative Assistant; Rita Nelson, Accounting Assistant; Sean M. Fredricks, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.; Randy Gjestvang, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Brian Fuder, Red River Retention Authority Executive Director; Zach Herrmann, Mike Opat, and Erik Jones, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Kurt Lysne and Nathan Trosen, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Dani Quissell and Julie Ellingson, North Dakota Water Education Foundation; Rob Sip, Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB); Chuck Fritz, International Water Institute; and LuAnn Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District. Nelson County, Ransom County, and Richland County Water Resource Districts were absent.

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

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

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

2026 Budget

A motion was made by Manager Anderson and seconded by Manager Kemp to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the *Red River Joint Water Resource District Resolution Approving 2026 Budget*. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Manager Wyum joined the meeting at this time.

Cost-share request – Pembina County WRD - Renwick Dam – Investigation for Dam Safety Improvements

Manager Kemp stated the RRJWRD Executive Committee approved the Pembina County Water Resource District cost-share request for the investigation needed because of a bank failure that occurred on the spillway outlet channel of the Renwick Dam during the week of March 24, 2025. This investigation will develop a recommendation, design, and cost estimate for the repair.

The Executive Committee approved 65% of the non-federal, non-state share of the project to investigate Renwick Dam safety improvements, not to exceed $19,448 at the April 9, 2025, meeting.

Cost-share request - Pembina County WRD - Olga Dam and Olson Dam Trash Rack Replacements

Manager Kemp stated the RRJWRD Executive Committee approved the Pembina County Water Resource District cost-share request 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.

The Executive Committee approved 65% of the non-federal, non-state share of the project to replace the trash racks, not to exceed $5,668 at the March 12, 2025, meeting.

Cost-share request - Sargent County WRD - Silver Lake Dam Improvement Study

Nathan Trosen stated the Sargent County Water Resource District requested 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.

The Executive Committee approved 65% of the non-federal, non-state share of the project to improve the Silver Lake Dam, not to exceed $10,400 at the March 12, 2025, meeting.

Cost-share request - Barnes County WRD - Sheyenne River Bank Stabilization Study – revised recommendation

Manager Anderson 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. Mike Opat stated that after the cost-

share request was further reviewed it was advised that the initial recommendation should have been worded differently. This recommendation was approved by the RRJWRD Executive Committee at the March 12, 2025, meeting.

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 Weston to approve the *Amended Cost-Share Agreement* with the Barnes County Water Resource District. Manager Neset seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Legislative Updates

Dani Quissell reported on legislative updates regarding water resource districts including HB1020, HB1218, HB1280, SB2180, SB2210, SB2276, and SB2379. The Board discussed the bills in more detail.

10-year Flood Inundation Map Development

Erik Jones presented a 10-year Flood Inundation Map in Minnesota that is used to help reduce damage to farmland by providing information regarding a 10-year storm event. The Board discussed how they and individual property owners might utilize the map. Discussion was also held on the cost of developing the map in the Red River Basin in North Dakota, how the map would be accessed, and currently available alternatives.

A motion was made by Manager Weston and seconded by Manager Tanke to authorize Randy Gjestvang to work with International Water Institute, Houston Engineering, Inc. and the Red River Retention Authority to explore development of a 10-year Flood Inundation Map in the Red River Basin in North Dakota with FEMA and prepare a document of the comparison between the North Dakota Risk Assessment Map and the Minnesota 10-year Flood Inundation Map. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Culvert Inventory of Red River Basin in ND

Mr. Jones presented a brief overview of the culvert inventory pilot project in the Roseau River Watershed District in Minnesota. Rob Sip noted that funding through FEMA is no longer available for the project. The Board thanked Mr. Jones for the presentation and indicated that it is unlikely the project could occur in North Dakota without federal funding.

RRJWRD Benefits Summary Document

The Secretary briefly reviewed a document summarizing the benefits all member counties of the RRJWRD receive. The Secretary noted this has been sent to all Board Managers and Water Resource District Secretaries for use as they see fit.

Water Day Festival O'Fun Participation

Julie Ellingson discussed the opportunity for the RRJWRD to participate in the Water Day Festival O'Fun at the North Dakota State Fair on July 24, 2025. There are several

exhibitors and the cost of a booth is $130. The Secretary indicated the office staff is unfortunately unable to attend due to budget hearing conflicts. Chairman Ihry stated if any Board members are interested in participating they should contact the Secretary.

A motion was made by Manager Kemp and seconded by Manager Neset to approve and authorize the Secretary to register the RRJWRD for one booth at the Water Day Festival O'Fun in the amount of $130 and approve travel costs for any Board members that wish to attend on behalf of the RRJWRD. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

RRRA Update

Brian Fuder stated the RRRA 2025 Priority Projects booklet has been published. The RRRA will be starting an advertising partnership with WDAY Weather and Ag in Focus. Mr. Fuder briefly described the WDAY Weather and Ag in Focus 'Here We Grow' campaign. Mr. Fuder noted the RRRA has requested to participate in the study regarding SB2210.

Mr. Fuder discussed a proposed cost-share agreement for project development between the RRJWRD and the RRWMB. The purpose of the agreement is to pursue federal funding for projects in the Red River Basin. The RRJWRD cost associated with the proposed cost-share agreement will not exceed $60,375. The RRWMB will be the primary contracting entity in this agreement.

A motion was made by Manager Melvin and seconded by Manager Kemp to approve and authorize Chairman to sign the cost-share agreement for project development with the RRWMB not to exceed $60,375. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Member WRDs project reports

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

Manager Anderson reported that Barnes County Water Resource District completed the Little Dam hazard mitigation project in Valley City. Manager Anderson indicated they will begin work on the Brown Dam hazard mitigation project next, the Clausen Springs Dam study, and are processing applications for subsurface water management systems.

Manager Perdue reported that Grand Forks County Water Resource District is working through some personnel issues, are working to remodel a drain in south Grand Forks, and are processing applications for subsurface water management systems.

Manager Melvin indicated there is a group of property owners working on establishing a new legal assessment drain. The Maple River Water Resource District recently had North Dakota Game and Fish reach out interested in opening hunting on the Maple River Dam retention area. The District is also working on a low head dam hazard mitigation project.

Manager Colwell reported that the North Cass Water Resource District has been working with landowners who are interested in turning the Costello Drain into a legal assessment drain and working on slide repairs and other maintenance projects.

Manager Kemp indicated that Pembina County Water Resource District has been working on a plan to repair the spillway outlet channel of the Renwick Dam, working with landowners who are interested in developing a legal assessment drain and have an upcoming meeting with Cavelier County to discuss shared facilities, and processing applications for subsurface water management systems.

Manager Sundberg reported that Rush River Water Resource District has been processing applications for subsurface water management systems, working with the Metro Flood Diversion Authority on some of the transitions into the FM diversion channel, and doing some initial planning on side slopes flattening on the Rush River.

Manager Wyum stated that some members of the Sargent County Water Resource District have been participating in legislative session in Bismarck, the Board is looking into extending two of their drains, are conducting a safety study on Drain #8, and are processing applications for subsurface water management systems.

Manager Weston indicated the Southeast Cass Water Resource District has been working on the Wild Rice River Low Head Dam hazard mitigation project, working with the Cass County Joint Water Resource District on some Regional Conservation Partnership Program projects, and are wrapping up design for the Amenia levee project.

Manager Neset reported that Traill County Water Resource District has completed their Elm River Dam projects, are processing applications for subsurface water management systems, and are doing some general maintenance on their facilities.

Manager Tanke reported that Walsh County Water Resource District is making some changes to their assessment districts.

Chairman Ihry indicated that Steele County Water Resource District is working through a few drainage complaints, processing applications for subsurface water management systems, processing an application for surface drain, finished up a few FEMA projects, and are working with landowners on a beaver dam removal cost-share program.

Education

Mr. Fredricks briefly discussed benefit determination efforts that are currently underway. Mr. Fredricks encouraged member water resource districts to continue to proceed with projects. Brief discussion was held on possible state cost-share percentage changes for conveyance projects.

Next meeting

The next scheduled Full Board meeting is Wednesday, June 11, 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