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

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

Present were Josh Ihry, Steele County Water Resource District; Keith Weston, Southeast Cass Water Resource District; Tom Perdue, Grand Forks County Water Resource District; Andy Neset, Traill County Water Resource District; Michael Wyum, Sargent County Water Resource District; Bruce Anderson, Barnes County Water Resource District; 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); Brian Fuder, Red River Retention Authority (RRRA); Mike Opat and Zach Herrmann, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Nathan Trosen, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering Co.; LuAnn Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District Secretary-Treasurer; and Tasha Krueger, Steele County Water Resource District Secretary-Treasurer. Richland County and Pembina County Water Resource Districts were absent.

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

Minutes
It was moved by Manager Neset, seconded by Manager Weston, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2025, meeting, as presented.

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

Manager Weston moved to approve the financial report, as presented. Manager Neset seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Manager Neset moved to approve the payment of the wire transfers, as presented. Manager Weston seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

2024 Audit
Manager Weston moved, and Manager Wyum seconded to approve the 2024 Audit of the

Red River Joint Water Resource District. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Pledges of Assets

It was moved by Manager Neset and seconded by Manager Weston to approve the following Pledges of Assets:

- Alerus Financial, as per agreement executed October 11, 2022
- Old National Bank (Bremer Bank) – FHLB Letter of Credit dated July 7, 2025
- Bell Bank – FHLB Letters of Credit dated December 13, 2024, July 15, 2024, July 26, 2024, August 12, 2024, and March 19, 2025
- Dakota Heritage Bank $1,114, 046
- The Goose River Bank $5,340,000
- Stock Growers Bank – Forman $115,000
- Choice Bank – Grafton, as per agreement dated May 25, 2023
- BankNorth – Letter of Credit dated May 30, 2025

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Manager Perdue joined the meeting at this time.

2026 Budget

The Secretary-Treasurer reported a meeting was held recently with Grand Forks County regarding the 2026 requested budget amount. Discussion was held on the meeting and the RRJWRD policy regarding situations where member districts do not pay the full requested amount. The Board indicated they will follow the policy should any member district not contribute their full requested budget amount. The RRJWRD will be invited to a meeting with the Grand Forks County Commission at a later date to discuss the 2026 budget request.

Manager Perdue left the meeting at this time.

Cost-share request – Barnes County Water Resource District – Dam Inspections & Evaluations

Mike Opat stated that the Barnes County Water Resource District is requesting cost-share for dam inspections and evaluations of 9 existing small structures in their district. The investigation will include looking into the possibility of increasing the flood water storage capacity of some of these structures. Mr. Opat noted the project was determined to be ineligible for the NDDWR cost-share. The cost-share request is for 65% of the non-federal, non-state share of the project to exceed $19,500. Randy Gjestvang recommended the Executive Committee approve the request because there is the potential for additional retention opportunities.

The Board discussed whether the structures would likely be able to accommodate additional retention due to their small size. Bruce Anderson stated the district selected the structures most likely to provide additional retention.

Sean Fredricks discussed the methodology for creating a maintenance assessment district for structures where ownership has been transferred to the local water resource

district. Mr. Fredricks encouraged the member water resource districts to keep a current inventory of their facilities as the water resource districts are obligated to maintain the structures following the transfer of ownership.

Zach Herrmann noted in the aggregate the 9 structures that are part of this cost-share request have nearly 900 acre feet of storage.

A motion was made by Manager Weston to approve the Barnes County Water Resource District cost-share request regarding their project to inspect and evaluate Hansen Dam, Berckerley Dam, Heinze Dam, and Dazey Dam for up to 65% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share of the project, not to exceed $10,000. Manager Neset seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the following Managers voted for the motion: Weston and Neset. The following Managers voted against the motion: Ihry and Wyum. The motion failed.

A motion was made by Manager Neset to approve the Barnes County Water Resource District cost-share request regarding their project to inspect and evaluate 9 existing small watershed dams for up to 65% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share of the project, not to exceed $19,500. Manager Wyum seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the following Managers voted for the motion: Wyum, Neset, and Ihry. The following Mangers voted against the motion: Weston. The Chairman declared the motion passed.

Manager Wyum encouraged Barnes County Water Resource District to reach out to the NDDWR to reconsider their cost-share request.

Cost-share request – Pembina County Water Resource District – Renwick Dam Safety Project

Mr. Herrmann stated that the Pembina County Water Resource District is requesting cost-share for repair of the bank failure that occurred on the spillway outlet channel of the Renwick Dam during the week of March 24, 2025. The RRJWRD previously approved cost-share for investigation and analysis needed to develop a recommendation, design, and cost estimate for the repair. Mr. Herrmann discussed the proposed project in more detail. The cost-share request is for 90% of the non-federal, non-state share of the project to exceed $198,280. Mr. Herrmann indicated the request is for 90% due to the necessity of completing the project this year and limited funding availability locally.

A motion was made by Manager Weston to recommend approval of the Pembina County Water Resource District cost-share request regarding the Renwick Dam Safety Project to the Full Board for up to 90% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share of the project, not to exceed $198,280. Manager Neset seconded the motion.

Discussion: Manager Weston stated the Renwick Dam should not have had this type of failure at its current age. The Board asked the Pembina County Water Resource District to convey the message to the NRCS.

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Cost-share request – Pembina County Water Resource District – Emergency Action Plan Updates - Amendment

Mr. Herrmann stated the Pembina County Water Resource District is updating Emergency Action Plans for 8 of their dams on the Tongue River. Additional work is needed to complete the updates of these Plans. The RRJWRD previously approved a cost-share request for this project at their January 10, 2024 meeting. Mr. Herrmann stated the request today is for 65% of the non-federal, non-state share of the project not to exceed an additional $10,413. The total cost-share amount would then be $26,611.

A motion was made by Manager Weston to recommend approval of the Pembina County Water Resource District cost-share request regarding their Emergency Action Plan Updates to the Full Board for up to 65% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share of the project, not to exceed a total amount of $26,611. Manager Neset seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Benefits Methodology Study

Mr. Fredricks reviewed a North Dakota Supreme Court case that impacts how political subdivisions determine benefits for their projects. The RRJWRD is currently funding a study to determine a methodology water resource districts can adopt for identifying benefits on a per parcel basis. Discussion was held on the timeline of the Study. More information on this matter will be brought to a future meeting.

Upcoming Hearings and Studies

Mr. Gjestvang updated the Board on upcoming hearings and studies happening at the NDDWR. Studies include cost-share funding availability for future water projects and large water supply projects. The NDDWR is hosting hearings in Fargo and Bismarck in August to discuss proposed changes to the North Dakota Administrative Code. Brief discussion was held on the proposed updates to the Administrative Code.

Red River Retention Authority update

Brian Fuder updated the Board on the activities of the RRRA. The RRRA is organizing a basin wide summit for 2026. More details to come at a later date. The RRRA is also partnering with the Red River Basin Commission to host a meeting to discuss the future of flood protection in the basin this August.

Mr. Fuder said the RRRA is looking at creative ways to implement retention, not only for flood damage reduction but also to have stored water available for various uses in times of drought. The Board discussed the possibility of purchasing available property to use for right of way and negotiations for future retention projects.

Member WRDs project reports

Manager Weston reported Southeast Cass Water Resource District is reconstructing portions of Drain #10 and Drain #27 and is continuing to analyze the cause and repair methods for slope failures in the district.

Andy Neset reported that Traill County Water Resource District is working on a drain reconstruction and is installing new crossings.

Michael Wyum reported that Sargent County Water Resource District is working on a renovation and extension of Drain #9.

Josh Ihry reported that Steele County Water Resource District is processing applications for subsurface water management systems, finishing construction on the Elm River Dams, working on a reconstruction of Drain #4 and a vote on reconstruction of Drain #1. Steele County Water Resource District was impacted by recent severe weather in their district.

Legislative update

Mr. Fredricks reported SB 2180 is effective August 1, 2025. Mr. Fredricks briefly discussed SB 2210 regarding watershed districts.

Next meeting

The next RRJWRD Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for August 13, 2025, at the Cass County Highway Department, West Fargo, North Dakota.

The next RRJWRD Full Board meeting is scheduled for September 10, 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