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

A meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Executive Committee was held on November 12, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m.

Present were Josh Ihry, Steele County Water Resource District; Don Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District; Keith Weston, Southeast Cass Water Resource District; Tom Perdue, Grand Forks County Water Resource District; Arv Burvee, Richland County Water Resource District; Andy Neset, Traill County Water Resource District (Alternate); Melissa Hinkemeyer, Director, Secretary; Amy Hepper, Treasurer; Elizabeth Smith, Administrative Assistant; Rita Nelson, Accounting Assistant; Sean M. Fredricks, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.; Yaping Chi, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Brian Fuder, Red River Retention Authority (RRRA); Dani Quissell, North Dakota Water Users Association; Kurt Lysne, Nathan Trosen, and Lyndon Pease, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Mike Opat, Houston Engineering, Inc.; and Chuck Fritz, International Water Institute.

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

Minutes
It was moved by Manager Burvee, seconded by Manager Neset, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the August 13, 2025, meeting, as presented.

Public Comment
There were no speaker cards submitted for public comment at this meeting.

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

Manager Neset moved to approve the financial report and the payment of Check #3780 and the wire transfers, as presented. Manager Burvee seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Manager Burvee and seconded by Manager Neset to do the following:

- Authorize the Treasurer to make any minor year-end transfers to balance the RRJWRD 2025 budget;

- Authorize the Treasurer to make transfers to and from obligated funds, if necessary; and
- Authorize the Treasurer to amend the RRJWRD 2025 budget.

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Cost-share request - International Water Institute (IWI) – Map Portal Updates

Chuck Fritz discussed the updates needed to the IWI map portal. Mr. Fritz is requesting cost-share from the RRJWRD as well as other entities for the updates.

It was moved by Manager Perdue and seconded by Manager Burvee to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the *Letter Agreement* with the International Water Institute for map portal updates not to exceed $19,406. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Cost-share request - Traill County Water Resource District – Elm River Dam Nos. 1 and 2 Improvement Project and Elm River Dam No. 3 Improvement Project – request for amendments

Lyndon Pease updated the Board on the Elm River Dam Nos. 1 and 2 Improvement Project and Elm River Dam No. 3 Improvement Project. The Projects are complete, and final costs are now known. Brief discussion was held on financing for the Projects.

It was moved by Manager Burvee and seconded by Manager Perdue to recommend the RRJWRD Full Board approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the following with the Traill County Water Resource District:

- *Second Amendment to Cost-Share Agreement* for the Elm River Dam Nos. 1 and 2 Improvement Project for up to 90% cost-share of the nonfederal, non-state share of the project, not to exceed an additional $1,115,297.37
- *Second Amendment to Cost-Share Agreement* for the Elm River Dam No. 3 Improvement Project for up to 90% cost-share of the nonfederal, non-state share of the project, not to exceed an additional $245,011.50

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Cost-share request - Maple River Water Resource District – Updates to Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) for Absaraka, Embden, and Garsteig Dams

Mike Opat discussed the updates to EAPs for Absaraka, Embden, and Garsteig Dams. The EAPs are in need of clerical updates as well as modeling work to comply with current state standards. A tabletop exercise will also occur as part of the updates.

It was moved by Manager Perdue and seconded by Manager Kemp to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the *Cost-Share Agreement* with the Maple River Water Resource District for Updates to Emergency Action Plans for Absaraka, Embden, and Garsteig Dams for up to 65% cost-share of the nonfederal, non-state share of the project, not to exceed $9,360. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Long Term Operation and Maintenance Cost of Dams

Manager Weston proposed the RRJWRD consider ways to keep dams functioning in the Red River Basin. The Board discussed possibly funding creation of federal maintenance

districts as a way for local districts to support operation and maintenance of federally built dams in their districts. Discussion was also held on potentially budgeting for operation and maintenance of dams in member districts however the RRJWRD typically cost-shares on these types of projects currently. Discussion on this matter may continue at a later date.

Red River Retention Authority update

Mr. Fuder updated the Board on the activities of the RRRA. Mr. Fuder briefly discussed the National Watershed Coalition meeting and indicated he had the opportunity to network with various individuals and discuss topics such as pursuing updated language to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) PL566 program.

Mr. Fuder updated the Board on the congressional directed spending the RRRA is pursuing for three projects in the Minnesota portion of the Red River Basin that are construction ready. All three projects have moved onto the next step in the process however, it is unknown how many steps are in the process. Mr. Fuder indicated the RRRA is also working on opportunities to secure funding for the dam rehabilitation projects progressing through the NRCS planning phase in the Red River Basin.

The RRRA continues to update the priority projects list and Mr. Fuder will be attending several upcoming conferences in the Basin.

Member WRDs project reports

Manager Kemp reported that Pembina County Water Resource District is working to repair the Renwick Dam spillway, it should be completed next week. Pembina County Water Resource District is also working on their trash rack repairs, this project was delayed due to the supplier of the trash racks being occupied during harvest season. Manager Kemp also noted the rising costs of dam operation and maintenance.

Manager Burvee reported that Richland County Water Resource District is processing applications for subsurface water management systems, wrapping up a few projects that are under construction, and they are looking forward to the Annual Joint Water Resource District Convention.

Manager Perdue reported that Grand Forks County Water Resource District is processing applications for subsurface water management systems, working towards reconstructing one of their drains, and is finishing up various projects before winter.

Manager Weston reported Southeast Cass Water Resource District is reconstructing portions of Drain #10 and Drain #27 which will likely need time extensions due to weather conditions. Southeast Cass Water Resource District is also working on their low head dam mitigation project on the Wild Rice River. The district continues to work with the Metro Flood Diversion Authority on legal drain transitions into the Metro Flood Diversion channel.

Manager Neset reported Traill County Water Resource District is finishing up construction on a drop structure and coordinating with Riverview Dairy on their new facility regarding drainage.

Legislative updates
Dani Quissell discussed upcoming interim legislative meetings regarding matters that impact Water Resource Districts.

Ms. Quissell also reported on a legislatively directed study on the economics of irrigation and drainage in North Dakota. The study contractor is interested in maps of legal drains in each county to assist with the study. Discussion was held on the use of the maps by the contractor.

Ms. Quissell reminded the Board the registration deadline for the Annual Joint North Dakota Water Convention is nearing. Sean Fredricks noted there is a presentation on a benefit assessment study for Water Resource Districts during the convention.

Education
Mr. Fredricks discussed open meeting exemptions including conventions and training seminars. Mr. Fredricks noted this will apply to the Annual Joint North Dakota Water Convention.

Annual Joint North Dakota Water Convention
The Board discussed the upcoming Annual Joint North Dakota Water Convention in December 2025.

Manager Perdue left the meeting at this time.

2026 meeting schedule
It was moved by Manager Burvee, seconded by Manager Kemp and unanimously carried to set the following as the regular meeting dates, times and places for the Red River Joint Water Resource District in 2026:

Red River Joint Water Resource District – Executive Committee
2026 Regular Meetings

All meetings start at 9:30 a.m. at the Cass County Highway Department, 1201 West Main Avenue, West Fargo, North Dakota, unless otherwise noted.

Wednesday, January 7 at 11:00 a.m. (Full Board at 9:30 a.m.)
Wednesday, March 11
Wednesday, May 13
Wednesday, July 8
Wednesday, August 12
Wednesday, November 18

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Next meeting
The RRJWRD Full Board will hold a special meeting at 9:30 a.m. on November 25, 2025, at the Cass County Highway Department.

The next RRJWRD Full Board regular meeting is scheduled for 12:00 p.m. on December 11, 2025, in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Website Updates

Manager Weston noted the RRJWRD website is in need of content updates. Yaping Chi and the Secretary will coordinate updates. The Board also discussed the need for an updated Water Management Strategy document for consideration next year. The Board directed Ms. Chi to meet with the member districts and gather information necessary to update the document.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be considered by the Board, Manager Burvee moved, and Manager Neset seconded to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned without objection at 11:05 a.m.

APPROVED:

_____
Josh Ihry
Chairman

ATTEST:

_____
Melissa Hinkemeyer
Secretary