MINUTES OF RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT FULL BOARD
ORIGINATING AT THE BISMARCK HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER
CANNONBALL ROOM
800 SOUTH 3RD STREET
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA
DECEMBER 11, 2025
12:00 P.M.

A meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Full Board was held on December 11, 2025. The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.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; Robert Thompson, North Cass Water Resource District; Don Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District; William Hejl, Rush River Water Resource District; Andy Neset, Traill County Water Resource District; Michael Wyum, Sargent County Water Resource District; Melissa Hinkemeyer, Director, Secretary; Amy Hepper, Treasurer; Elizabeth Smith, Administrative Assistant; Rita Nelson, Accounting Assistant; Sean M. Fredricks, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.; April Walker, State Water Commission; Yaping Chi, Kelsey Huber, Pat Fridgen, and Corey Drevecky, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Brian Fuder, Red River Retention Authority Executive Director; Ted Preister, Red River Basin Commission(RRBC); Mike Opat, Zach Herrmann, and Michael Ferrie, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Lyndon Pease, Nathan Trosen, and Alexa Ducioame, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Joel Halvorson and Jason Siegert, Traill County Water Resource District; Tasha Krueger, Steele County Water Resource District; Jen Johnson, Park Street Public; and those whose names appear on the attached roster. Walsh County, Ransom County, Richland County, and Nelson County Water Resource Districts were absent.

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

Minutes
It was moved by Manager Weston, seconded by Manager Melvin, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the September 9 and November 25, 2025, meetings, as presented.

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

Financial Report
The Treasurer gave a brief overview of the Financial Report and the obligated funding report for the RRJWRD.

It was moved by Manager Hejl and seconded by Manager Thompson to approve the Financial Report and obligated funding report as presented. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Lower Red River Regional Detention Study Status
Ted Preister briefly updated the Board on the status of the Lower Red River Regional Detention Study. The Corps of Engineers has exhausted their funding, and the local working group is finalizing an agreement with the Corps of Engineers to resume the study. The plan is to transfer the work from the Corps to local engineers to help balance the local and federal funding. Mr. Preister noted one aspect of the project may need to be forgone based on the current available funding. The Board stated the Corps of Engineers should review the final study results for their concurrence.

Red River Retention Authority (RRRA) Update
Brian Fuder updated the Board on the activities of the RRRA. Mr. Fuder then reported on the status of the requests for congressional directed spending for three projects in the Minnesota portion of the Red River Basin that are construction ready. Mr. Fuder stated the Wild Rice Corridor Habitat Restoration project received a soft committal of $50,000 in funding through a federal bill that is in process, and Mr. Fuder hopes to have an update for the Board at a future meeting. Jen Johnson provided an update on the status of the Congressionally Directed Spending requests and upcoming federal activities regarding the requests. Brief discussion was held on requirements related to receipt of federal funding for these projects.

Ms. Johnson reported on an opportunity for funding through a transportation bill. Manager Weston suggested looking into seeking funding for improvements to the Red River bridge at Oslo, Minnesota. Mr. Fuder will look into the funding opportunity.

Mr. Fuder briefly updated the Board on the upcoming RRRA meeting which will include conversations on multipurpose retention connected to future water supply needs in the Red River Basin including commercial and agricultural needs.

Legislative Update
Sean Fredricks updated the Board on interim legislative activities that impact Water Resource Districts. Mr. Fredricks discussed interim legislative studies regarding joint water resource districts and economic analyses.

North Dakota Water Resource Districts Association Benefits Methodology
Mr. Fredricks updated the Board on the status of the development of the Benefits Methodology for water resource district projects. When the methodology is finalized, new projects can be voted on and apply for available cost-share funding for conveyance projects.

Member WRDs project reports

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

Manager Perdue reported that Grand Forks County Water Resource District is working to improve Drain #4 in south Grand Forks and just completed their assessment hearing for the project.

Manager Melvin reported that Maple River Water Resource District formed a joint water resource district with Barnes County Water Resource District for a new legal assessment drain and is completing maintenance activities following weather events this last summer. The District has over 125 miles of legal drains as well as 2 major and 2 minor dams on the Maple River. Manager Melvin encouraged retention projects and drain tile systems for retention purposes.

Manager Thompson reported that the North Cass Water Resource District is a member of the Elm River Joint Water Resource District which recently completed Elm River Dam Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Improvement Projects. North Cass Water Resource District has been working on improvements to their legal assessment drains including slide and erosion repairs and are discussing combining drain maintenance funds where possible to afford larger improvement projects.

Manager Kemp indicated that Pembina County Water Resource District has completed the Renwick Dam spillway reconstruction project and reconstructed two drop structures on the Red River. Mr. Kemp briefly discussed the dams in their District and indicated they are also planning to complete an inspection of all Pembina County Water Resource District dams this summer.

Manager Hejl reported that Rush River Water Resource District has been working with the Metro Flood Diversion Authority on drain transitions into the Metro Flood Diversion Channel. Manager Hejl stated Rush River Water Resource District will be discussing membership in the Sheyenne River Joint Water Resource District as the Rush River is being connected to the Metro Flood Diversion channel and following that connection only a small portion of the Rush River will outlet into the Sheyenne River.

Manager Wyum reported that Sargent County Water Resource District has been working on drainage improvements and an erosion repair project on Silver Lake Dam.

Manager Weston indicated the Southeast Cass Water Resource District has been working on the Wild Rice River Low Head Dam hazard mitigation project, reconstructing segments of two urban drains and are making changes to their facilities as part of the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Manager Thykeson indicated that Steele County Water Resource District is working on repairing erosion on one of their legal drains, finishing FEMA funded projects, and is working through drainage complaints.

Manager Neset reported that Traill County Water Resource District is replacing crossings and considering reconstructing a legal assessment drain.

Jason Siegert thanked the Red River Joint Water Resource District for their financial support in the completion of the Elm River Dam Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Improvement Projects.

Manager Anderson reported that Barnes County Water Resource District formed a joint water resource district with LaMoure County Water Resource District for a joint project, are making improvements to assessment drains, working on a drain extension project, and are processing subsurface water management system applications. They are also completing work on one of their dams.

Thompson-Varnson Steamboat Award

Chairman Ihry noted Randy Gjestvang is the 2025 winner of the RRJWRD Thompson-Varnson Steamboat Award and the award will be presented at the 62nd Annual Joint North Dakota Water Convention banquet. The Board recognized Randy for his service and welcomed Yaping Chi to the District.

Next meeting

The next scheduled Full Board meeting is Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. 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 at 12:57 p.m.

APPROVED:

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Josh Ihry
Chairman

ATTEST:

_____
Melissa Hinkemeyer
Secretary