RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ORIGINATING AT THE CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
HERITAGE CONFERENCE ROOM
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
JULY 8, 2026
9:30 A.M.

A meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Executive Committee was held on July 8, 2026. The meeting was called to order at 9:31 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; Michael Wyum, Sargent County Water Resource District; Bill Hejl, Rush River 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.; Yaping Chi, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Dani Quissell, North Dakota Water Users Association; Kurt Lysne and Nathan Trosen, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Zach Herrmann and Mike Opat, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Duane Breitling, Cass County Commissioner; Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering Co.; and Lori Christanson, Grand Forks County Water Resource District Secretary-Treasurer.

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

Minutes
It was moved by Manager Weston, seconded by Manager Perdue to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2026, meeting, as presented. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

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. Brief discussion was held on current Certificate of Deposit rates.

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

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

2025 Audit

Manager Perdue moved, and Manager Kemp seconded to approve the 2025 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 Weston and seconded by Manager Perdue to approve the following Pledges of Assets:

- Alerus Financial, as per agreement executed October 11, 2022
- Bell Bank – FHLB Letters of Credit dated April 24, 2026, May 19, 2026, May 27, 2026, and June 12, 2026
- The Goose River Bank $5,410,000
- Choice Bank – Grafton, as per agreement dated September 12, 2023
- BankNorth – Letter of Credit dated July 24, 2025

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Legislative update

Dani Quissell updated the Board on interim legislative activities that impact water resource districts. The North Dakota Water Resource District Association is developing comments on the State Water Commission's proposed changes to their cost-share policy. The comments will be developed into talking points for Water Resource Districts to bring to the upcoming State Water Commissioner hosted basin meetings. Ms. Quissell encouraged Water Resource Districts to attend the basin meetings to provide comments on cost-share policy as well as highlight water needs in your specific area. The Board discussed the State Water Commission proposed changes including the projected reduced revenues that directly influence their cost-share policy changes. The Board indicated their preference of State Water Commission cost-share percentages remaining as is even if less projects will be funded. Sean Fredricks encouraged member districts to continue utilizing available cost-share funding for conveyance projects. Mr. Fredricks briefly discussed proposed updates to the North Dakota Century Code for the next legislative session.

Cost-share request – Rush River Water Resource District – Erie Dam Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Update

Nathan Trosen stated Rush River Water Resource District is requesting cost-share for the update of the Erie Dam EAP. Mr. Trosen briefly noted North Dakota Game and Fish is the primary owner of the Dam but Rush River Water Resource District handles flood control aspects of the facility including the EAP. Mr. Trosen indicated the Erie Dam EAP will need updated modeling and mapping, clerical updates, and a tabletop exercise will be conducted. The total cost of the Erie Dam EAP Update is $25,000, with a request to the RRJWRD of 65% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share of the project, not to exceed $3,250.

A motion was made by Manager Weston and seconded by Manager Perdue to approve of the Rush River Water Resource District cost-share request regarding the update of the Erie Dam Emergency Action Plan for up to 65% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share of the project, not to exceed $3,250. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Meeting with Grand Forks County Commission - update

The Secretary noted she and the Treasurer met with the Grand Forks County Commission at their June 30, 2026, budget meeting to discuss the 2026 budget request for the RRJWRD and review the associated activities and benefits of the RRJWRD. Discussion was held on the Commission meeting. The Board directed RRJWRD staff to create a document outlining information on RRJWRD funded projects that have benefited Grand Forks County as well as dam prioritization activities in progress and ability to assist with funding federal maintenance districts for dams in Grand Forks County.

Dam ownership

Mr. Fredricks reviewed North Dakota Century Code 16-16.1-40, if a federal agency constructs a dam but no longer maintains it the local Water Resource District assumes responsibility and ownership of the dam. A federal assessment district can be created to generate maintenance funding for these facilities. Mr. Fredricks noted he has drafted a deed to convey ownership of dams to private landowners that are interested in owning the dams, such as small stock dams. The draft document is currently in review by real estate professionals. Discussion on this matter will continue at a future meeting.

Strategic planning for restoration and reconstruction of flood retention dams in the Red River Basin

Yaping Chi and Manager Weston updated the Board on the draft strategic plan for restoration and reconstruction of flood retention dams in the Red River Basin. Discussion was held on available dam inspection reports from the NDDWR and utilizing the information in the reports to populate the dam rankings. NDDWR inspection reports are not available for all dams included in the strategic plan. Inspections would be needed for those dams that do not have a recent NDDWR inspection report. The Elm River Dams Nos. 1, 2, and 3 were recently reconstructed and thus will only need a brief inspection of the principal spillways. Manager Weston indicated the goal is to complete the ranking prior to the September RRJWRD Full Board meeting.

A motion was made by Manager Kemp and seconded by Manager Weston to recommend the Full Board approve funding of the research and site inspections for the dam inventory needed to form the initial prioritization list included in the strategic plan, not to exceed $143,000. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The Board discussed scheduling a special meeting of the RRJWRD Full Board on July 17, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. to discuss this item.

Member WRDs project reports

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

Manager Kemp indicated that Pembina County Water Resource District has had significant rainfall and their legal assessment drains are operating at full capacity. Manager Kemp updated the Board on the border dike issues and noted he is enjoying serving as the RRJWRD representative on the Red River Basin Commission. Pembina County Water Resource District is pursuing a reconstruction project on a drain and appreciates RRJWRD's strategic planning effort.

Manager Burvee indicated that Richland County Water Resource District is conducting regular drain maintenance for the summer, replacing culverts as needed, and noted Subsurface Water Management System Applications are slowing down.

Manager Perdue reported that Grand Forks County Water Resource District is conducting regular operation and maintenance activities and work on a drain on the south end of Grand Forks. Manager Perdue also noted Subsurface Water Management System Applications are slowing down.

Manager Weston reported that Southeast Cass Water Resource District has been working on reconstructing segments of two urban drains, working on the Wild Rice River Low Head Dam hazard mitigation project, and started working on a future reconstruction project on the Sheyenne-Maple Flood Control Project No. 1 outlet to the Sheyenne River. Manager Weston also noted work continues on a transition from a legal assessment drain into the Metro Flood Diversion channel.

Manager Wyum reported that Sargent County Water Resource District is working on establishing a maintenance assessment district for the Wild Rice River from the confluence of a legal assessment drain to Silver Lake. Manager Wyum also discussed planned repairs on Silver Lake Dam and noted Subsurface Water Management System Applications are slowing down.

Manager Neset reported that Traill County Water Resource District is conducting standard operation and maintenance of their facilities, installing new box culverts, removing trees as needed, and is reconstructing a legal assessment drain soon.

Chairman Ihry indicated that Steele County Water Resource District is working on a drain reassessment of Drain #4 and improvements to Drain #1. Steele County Water Resource District continues to provide education on Subsurface Water Management System Applications and recently met with Maple River Water Resource District to tour and commemorate the 10-year anniversary of the construction of the Upper Maple River Dam.

Manager Hejl reported Rush River Water Resource District is working on the transition of the Rush River into the Metro Flood Diversion channel and noted an upcoming project to lower the side slopes on the Rush River upstream of the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Education

Mr. Fredricks discussed conflicts of interest and how to handle conflicts properly at Water Resource District meetings. Mr. Fredricks also noted roll call votes are necessary per

North Dakota Century Code on all votes that are not procedural.

Michigan Dam Spillway
Ms. Chi updated the Board on discussions between Nelson and Walsh Counties on the Michigan Dam spillway.

State Water Commissioner Hosted Meetings
Ms. Chi noted she is attending the upcoming State Water Commissioner hosted meetings and encouraged Managers to attend.

Next meeting
The next RRJWRD Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on August 12, 2026, at the Cass County Highway Department.

Adjournment
There being no further business to be considered by the Board, the meeting adjourned without objection at 11:24 a.m.

APPROVED:

_____
Josh Ihry
Chairman

ATTEST:

_____
Melissa Hinkemeyer
Secretary