

**MEETING MINUTES  
RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT  
FULL BOARD MEETING  
ORIGINATING AT THE OFFICE OF THE CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPT.  
WEST FARGO, ND  
JUNE 14, 2017 ~ 9:30AM**

Chairman Thompson called the meeting to order at 9:30am.

**Roll Call**

Water Resource Districts present were: Richland, Ransom, Grand Forks, Traill, Barnes, Maple River, North Cass, Southeast Cass, Rush River, Nelson, Walsh, and Steele. Member counties absent were: Sargent, and Pembina. Also present were: Attorney Sean Fredricks; Treasurer Carol Harbeke Lewis; Secretary Nettie Johnson; Randy Gjestvang, State Water Commission; and those whose name appears on the attached roster.

**Approve Order of Agenda**

Larry Tanke moved to approve the order of the agenda as amended. Bruce Anderson seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**Meeting Minutes**

Rodger Olson moved to approve the Full Board's April 12, 2017 minutes as presented. Dave Middleton seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**Legislative Updates**

Attorney Sean Fredricks provided information on the new tile bill and the obligations the WRDs are to follow. A new Subsurface Water Management Application form and supporting materials can be found on the ND SWC website.

Mr. Fredricks reminded the Board that he will be conducting a seminar at the ND WRD Association summer meeting in Minot on Friday, July 14<sup>th</sup> and encouraged everyone to attend.

**F-M Diversion**

Rodger Olson reported on the status of the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Project.

The contractor has started piling dirt south of Horace for the inlet control structure. The contract for this portion of the project includes construction of a concrete control structure with three gates that will regulate flows into the diversion channel.

The Diversion Authority continues to take offers on opportunistic structures such as homes, etc.

An injunction stopped construction on the Oxbow-Hickson ring levee over a year ago, but construction has commenced again.

An assessment hearing was held two weeks ago. Comments were heard and noted. The Joint Board will address these comments and make any changes necessary.

Mitigation efforts on farm land ag impacts and flowage easement values are being looked at with appraisal firms.

**Randy Gjestvang Reports & Updates**

Mr. Randy Gjestvang provided a report on meetings and inspections that he has been involved with from April 12, 2017 through June 14, 2017.

Chad Engels and Randy Gjestvang relayed information on the requirements of economic analysis for flood control and water conveyance projects including estimates of economic benefits and direct costs.

Mr. Gjestvang provided updates on the remaining items of the Red River Basin-wide Feasibility Study to include Corps Project Management, Permitting Coordination efforts, Comprehensive Watershed Management planning, and the HEC-HAS model between Grand Forks and Roseau.

All detention studies have now been completed and all the final payments have been made. Final cost will be submitted to the SWC. Costs have been provided to the Corps to include as in-kind to match federal costs for the Red River Watershed Feasibility Study.

Conversation was held on potential projects requesting cost-share in the future. Many of the potential projects currently have a RCPP study ongoing within that watershed. If the results of the RCPP identifies projects with federal interest, there may be a possibility of obtaining federal funds for design and construction.

Updates to the Border Dike near the lower portion of the Pembina River were talked about along with the Border Dike lawsuit.

A cost-share agreement between the State Water Commission and the RRJWRD to fund a Commission office (Randy Gjestvang's office) in the Red River Valley was reviewed by the full Board. The office is staffed by a Commission engineer/hydrologist who works under the direction and supervision of the State Engineer who works with the District and other local entities involved in water resources. The total cost for the term of this agreement is estimated to be \$280,000.00 with the District reimbursing the Commission one-half of the actual cost, not to exceed \$140,000.00 from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2019. Upon a recommendation by the Executive Committee, Rodger Olson moved to approve the agreement to staff the Red River Valley office. Ben Varnson seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**Red River Retention Authority**

Mr. Keith Weston provided a report of the activities and meetings he has been involved with since May 10, 2017. Several of those activities and meetings are listed below:

Mr. Weston assisted Co-Chair Finney to develop Congressional testimony for the Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry, for the purposes of providing testimony and responding to questions from Members of the Committee regarding small watershed infrastructure.

Mr. Weston attended a Red River Water Management Board meeting in Fertile, Mn and met with a RRWMB outreach consultant to set-up an RRA Facebook account. As time permits, he will begin posting RRA items to the site.

At the RRWMB meeting, it was suggested that a joint RRWMB and RRJWRD meeting and tour be put together for July 19, 2017. Mr. Weston has been in contact with RRJWRD legal counsel on open meeting laws and the best way to arrange this meeting to comply with state law. Mr. Weston developed a draft meeting agenda, trip itinerary, and trip route map for the full Board to review. Costs for the tour were discussed. Josh Ihry moved to have the RRJWRD help fund the tour by sharing half of the costs with the RRWMB. Lance Yohe seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Discussion was held on the Rush River Watershed RCPP Study. The RRA received word that the Cass County Joint WRD is going to assist the City of Amenia on developing a watershed plan using RCPP funds in the Rush River Watershed. Moore Engineering will provide study information on levee options to Amenia as well as four possible impoundments located upstream of Amenia. A new project team will determine whether any of the alternatives should be pursued.

### **International Water Institute**

IWI Director, Chuck Fritz, presented an IWI Activity Report for May – June 2017.

- FDR, Condition, Watershed, and SWAG projects;
  - WPLMN sampling continues. Staff have been busy doing load calculations with flows and concentrations
  - BRRWD monitoring project began in April. IWI will sample 20 sites monthly through October 2017
  - In the process of scheduling rapid floristic quality assessment at select FDR impoundment sites
- River Watch
  - 202 elementary students participated in River of Dreams canoe launches in May
  - The River Watch funding bill was approved with a commitment for 2018-19
  - The River Watch teacher's summer workshop will be held June 21-22, 2017

Mr. Fritz gave updates on the status of Prioritize, Target and Measure Application (PTMApp) which includes the Roseau River Watershed, James River, Becker/Ottertail County BWSR, RRB & Devils Lake and the MN PTMApp Support, Training and Outreach workshop.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Carol Harbeke Lewis presented the RRJWRD financial report for the full Board to review. Rodger Olson moved to approve the financial report as presented. Josh Ihry seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**Red River Basin Commission**

Leah Tvidt, Outreach Coordinator of the RRBC described the Board tour that took place on May 31-June 1<sup>st</sup> with stops at the Upper Maple River Dam, Maple River Dam, City of Lisbon, and the Sheyenne Diversion/Horace Diversion.

The 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Red River Basin Land & Water International Summit Conference will be held January 23-25, 2018 in Winnipeg.

**Other Business**

Attorney Fredricks provided information on the status of the Helendale Private Drain, LLC statewide significant permit. Mr. Fredricks explained the issue currently before the Executive Committee to consider the potential impacts of the project downstream. From a procedural perspective, the Committee’s decision is significant because, under the Administrative Code, the RRJWRD and the Richland County WRD must identify all potential impacts. If the Boards do not properly identify the downstream impacts and parties who “have the potential to be adversely impacted,” project opponents could attack the permitting process, and the State may not accept the Boards’ findings. At previous meetings, the Executive Committee, at the request of Richland County WRD water managers, required additional analysis of downstream impacts.

Discussion was held on reducing the budget requests to the RRJWRD’s member districts and county commissions. After further discussion, Wes Ecker moved to reduce the 2018 budget from 2 mills to 1.5 mills. Rodger Olson seconded the motion. Roll call was taken with all counties present voting aye with the exception of Grand Forks County voting nay. Motion carried. Carol Harbeke Lewis and her staff will send out letters to all Boards and County Commissions regarding the revised requests with the hopes that the County Commissioners will appreciate the gesture and the effort to demonstrate fiscal responsibility.

**Adjournment**

Having no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 12:00pm without objection.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

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Gary Thompson, Chair

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Nettie Johnson, Secretary