

**MEETING MINUTES
RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT
FULL BOARD MEETING
CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
WEST FARGO, ND
JUNE 27, 2018 ~ 9:30AM**

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

ROLL CALL

Water Resource Districts present were: Maple River, Richland, Walsh, Ransom, Grand Forks, Traill, Southeast Cass, Rush River, Nelson (by phone), and Steele. Member counties absent were: North Cass, Barnes, Sargent & 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

Lance Yohe moved to approve the order of the agenda. Josh Ihry seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

MEETING MINUTES

Ben Varnson moved to approve the full Board's April 11, 2018 meeting minutes as presented. Larry Tanke seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Carol Harbeke Lewis presented the RRJWRD financial report for the full Board to review. Scott Olerud moved to approve the financial report as presented. Dave Middleton seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Mr. Sean Fredricks met with Jim Schmidt, Chairman of the Water Topics Overview Committee, a few weeks ago regarding priorities to discuss at the next legislative session. A few of the items that were discussed were on the current cost-share policy pertaining to snagging and clearing projects and the issue of removing WRD's from "bucket" funding. It was suggested that a tour of rural Fargo for legislative members be held to show the importance of legal drains and also of snagging and clearing.

FARGO-MOORHEAD DIVERSION PROJECT

Rodger Olson reported on recent developments concerning the Fargo-Moorhead Diversion Project.

The Diversion Authority submitted a permit application for a revised FM Project, known as "Plan B". The Plan B Project changes the alignments of the southern embankment alignment, the eastern tieback, and the western tieback. Plan B also allows more flows through town. These component changes result in a new inundation and staging area, and also result in modifications to, and elimination of, some project structures, such as the Comstock Ring Levee. The DNR has determined that these changes are "substantial and may affect the potential significant adverse environmental effects of the Project", and has ordered preparation of a Supplemental EIS

(Environmental Impact Statement). The review of this EIS is scheduled to be complete by November 2018.

Senators Hoeven and Heitkamp have announced the Office of Management and Budget includes \$35 million in the US Army Corps of Engineers Fiscal 2018 work plan for flood protection projects in the Red River Valley, including the FM Area Diversion Project.

RRJWRD WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REPORT

Randy Gjestvang revealed the changes from the report that have been drafted. He added that he is still working on map quality and some tables are still to be updated. He has obtained information from sponsors/engineering firms for several completed projects and Melissa Maertens has put funded projects, etc. on the RRJWRD website. Josh Ihry mentioned that he would like to see the report more visually appealing and stated that any comments should be directed to Randy and brought forth to the next Executive Committee meeting. Once finalized, it will be forwarded to the County Commissioners for their review and comments.

RANDY GJESTVANG REPORTS & UPDATES

Mr. Randy Gjestvang provided a report on meetings and inspections that he has been involved with from April 11 through June 26, 2018.

Mr. Gjestvang attended a June 21st Economic Analysis Workshop of Flood Control and Water Conveyance Projects. There they discussed State Economic Analysis guidelines, existing economic studies to quantify benefits, and placed data into spreadsheets to determine annual benefit/damages. Richard Johnson, Commissioner, State Water Commission, said the State Water Commission established the finance and planning, flood control, and water supply subcommittees in April 2018. He said the subcommittees held meetings in May and reviewed 282 commission-funded projects. He said the commissioners are working on a water development plan, have been involved in the development of the economic and lifecycle analyses, and are reviewing projects that are at least 4 years old to determine whether funds for the projects should be made available for other projects. He said the commissioners are focused on long-term planning. Mr. Johnson said the commissioners discussed the need to manage cash flow and put funds to work on projects ready to go.

The remaining steps to the Red River Basin Feasibility Study include:

- Fine tuning the “thaw progression” events to match balanced hydrographs
- Compile phase 1 HEC-HMS models for adopted storage scenario
- Calibrate HEC-RAS model for Phase 2
- Run Phase 1, with adopted storage
- Report results to local technical team who will provide storage alternative
- Corps run storage alternatives with HEC-WAT
- Finalize document

Discussion was held on the Matejcek Dam located on the south branch of the Forest River in Walsh County. This dam was constructed through the NRCS PL-566 program. USDA PL-566 funding has been approved for a Rehab project.

Randy presented a map of Planned and Potential LiDAR Collects in the Red River Watershed. He empathized that they are not looking for partners and this project will go through with the

specs they've established. The cut-off date for the proposed Phase 8 is October 30th. Funding issues for this project were discussed.

RED RIVER RETENTION AUTHORITY

Mr. Keith Weston provided a report of the activities and meetings he has been involved with since May 9, 2018. Several of those meetings and activities are listed below:

Met with Middle-Snake-Tamarac WD and Debra Walchuk, NRCS and RRB Coordinator on May 21st. NRCS gave an update on the status of RCPP watershed plans.

Provided RRRRA input on June 10th to Senator Hoeven's staff in regard to proposed amendments to the PL-566 program by Senator Bennet of Colorado.

Worked with NRCS to develop RCPP fact sheets for each of the Red River basin's RCPP watersheds.

Spent considerable time in May to specifically discuss the need for some ND WRD's to request one-year extensions to the RCPP watershed contribution agreements and empathized that the 1-year extension is a one-time extension. Five watersheds requested NRCS to extend their RCPP agreement for 1-year. ND NRCS has sent out a letter regarding the Red River RCPP Plans that are currently over budget in relation to the project schedule and original estimate for the work.

Mr. Weston attached a report regarding the 2014 Farm Bill and making changes to its language to have the size of flood control watershed planning areas to be increased from 250,000 acres to 1,000,000 acres. The RRRRA is seeking further clarification of proposed amendment language within the Farm Bill.

Discussion was held on the Short Foot Creek Watershed Project sponsored by the Sargent County WRD. The objective is to reduce economic and natural resource damages throughout the watershed and the goal is to identify feasible, cost effective solutions to address the problems within the watershed. At completion of the plan, one or more alternatives will be at the conceptual design phase, permitted and ready to implement pending acquisition of funding for final design and construction.

USDA-NRCS

Debra Walchuk, Red River Basin Coordinator, reported on events she has been involved in recently including recent meetings she has attended and accomplishments that have been met.

- NRCS/USACOR MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) for RCPP environmental assessments recently signed.
- Red River Basin initial FY-2017 progress report for EQIP and ACEP financial assistance and completed contracts, and preliminary FY-2018 report for ND, MN and SD.
- Availability of detailed progress report, completed by Christi Fisher, on ND RCPP watershed planning.
- Fact sheets developed for the 12 RCPP watershed plan projects. Fact sheets identify local sponsors, watershed facts, background details, objects and goals of the watershed plans. These will be released for everyone's use in the near future.

INTERNATIONAL WATER INSTITUTE

Chuck Fritz circulated an email on June 25th containing his May-June 2018 IWI report which included updates to:

- FDR, Condition, Watershed, and SWAG Projects
- River Watch Activities
- RRWMB Main stem Flood Damage Estimate
- PTMapp
- Stewardship/Sustainability
- Drained Basin (MN Red River Basin)
- Administration Issues

Discussion was revisited from April 11th, 2018 on the River of Dreams Program which provides integrated classroom and outdoor experiences for elementary students that build awareness of river ecosystems and watershed connections; increases student capacity to make informal decisions about their environment, and instills a sense of place about the historical, economic, and ecological uniqueness of their local watershed. The total project cost for ROD is estimated at \$46,550.00. Lance Yohe moved to have the RRJWRD provide cost-share to IWI up to a maximum of \$23,275.00. RRJWRD will provide incremental cost-share payments to IWI upon submission by IWI of a detailed statement of costs requested, including a description of IWI's activities and expenses incurred. RRJWRD will provide cost-share to IWI as reimbursement for labor, travel, and other expenses associated with the following Work Plan/Tasks. Josh Ihry seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

RED RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

On behalf of Executive Director Ted Preister, Randy Gjestvang described the Natural Resources Framework Plan Report. A copy of this report can be found on their website: www.redriverbasincommission.org.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 12:05pm without objection.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Gary Thompson, Chair

Nettie Johnson, Secretary

