

**MEETING MINUTES
RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
ORIGINATING AT THE OFFICE OF THE TRAILL COUNTY WRD
HILLSBORO, NORTH DAKOTA
MAY 8, 2019 ~ 9:30AM**

The Executive Committee meeting was called to order by Chairman Thompson on May 8, 2019 at 9:30am in Hillsboro, ND. Those present were: Chairman Gary Thompson; Managers: Ben Varnson (by phone), Lance Yohe, Robert Rostad, and Josh Ihry. Also present were: Sean Fredricks, Attorney for the Board; Nettie Johnson, Secretary; Carol Harbeke Lewis, Treasurer; Randy Gjestvang, SWC; Josh Hassell, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Zach Herrmann, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Keith Weston, RRRRA; Ted Preister, RRBC; Chuck Fritz, IWI; and Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering, Inc.

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

Lance Yohe moved to approve the March 13, 2019 Executive Committee meeting minutes as presented. Robert Rostad seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

COST SHARE REQUESTS

The Pembina County WRD presented a cost-share request for the rehabilitation of Tongue River Dam No. M-3, also known as the Senator Young Dam located in Cavalier County. Recent review of the structure indicated Dam Safety deficiencies related to hydrologic capacity, structural issues with the principal spillway, and potential geotechnical concerns with the earthen embankment. The structure is listed as a high hazard dam due to its height and potential loss of life if the structure were to breach. Engineer Randy Gjestvang provided a recommendation to the RRJWRD for approval and is as follows: Senator Young Dam is one of the series of dams on the Tongue River that provide flood damage reduction by temporarily holding flood waters. Benefits would be obtained on the Tongue River as well as downstream areas extending in various districts that are members of the RRJWRD. The total estimated cost for the study is \$861,400.00. They are anticipating 70% federal cost for \$602,980.00 and 75% of the non-federal share from the SWC for \$193,815.00. After further discussion, Lance Yohe moved to recommend to the full Board to approve cost-share at 65% of the non-federal; non-state share not to exceed \$41,994.00. Josh Ihry seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (see revision to cost-share in 6-12-19 full Board minutes).

The Walsh County WRD presented a cost-share request for the rehabilitation of the North Branch Forest River Dam No. 1, also known as Bylin Dam located in Walsh County. Recent review of the structure indicated Dam Safety deficiencies related to hydrologic capacity, structural issues with the principal spillway, and potential geotechnical concerns with the

earthen embankment. This structure is listed as a high hazard dam. Engineer Randy Gjestvang provided a recommendation to the RRJWRD for approval and is as follows: Bylin Dam is one of the series of dams on the Forest River that provide flood damage reduction by temporarily holding flood waters. Benefits would be obtained on the Forest River as well as downstream areas extending in various districts that are members of the RRJWRD. The total estimated cost of the study is \$875,800.00. They are anticipating 70% federal cost for ~~\$613,000.00~~ \$613,060.00 and 75% on the non-federal share from the SWC for \$197,055.00. After further discussion, Lance Yohe moved to recommend to the full Board to approve cost-share at 65% of the non-federal; non-state share not to exceed \$42,696.00. Josh Ihry seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (see revision to cost-share in 6-12-19 full Board minutes).

The Walsh County WRD presented a cost-share request for the rehabilitation of Middle South Branch Forest River Dam No. 4 as known as the Fordville Dam located in Grand Forks County. Recent review of the structure indicated Dam Safety deficiencies related to hydrologic capacity, structural issues with the principal spillway, and potential geotechnical concerns with the earthen embankment. This structure is listed as a high hazard dam. Engineer Randy Gjestvang provided a recommendation to the RRJWRD for approval and is as follows: Fordville Dam is one of the series of dams on the Forest River that provide flood damage reduction by temporarily holding flood waters. Benefits would be obtained on the Forest River as well as downstream areas extending in various districts that are members of the RRJWRD. The total estimated cost of the study is ~~\$871,300.00~~ \$817,300.00. They are anticipating 70% federal cost for \$572,110.00 and 75% of the non-federal share from the SWC for \$183,893.00. After further discussion, Lance Yohe moved to recommend to the full Board to approve cost-share at 65% of the non-federal; non-state share not to exceed \$39,843.00. Josh Ihry seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (see revision to cost-share in 6-12-19 full Board minutes).

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Carol Harbeke Lewis presented the RRJWRD financial report for the Committee to review. Robert Rostad moved to approve the report as presented. Ben Varnson seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Lance Yohe moved to approve payment of check numbers 3684 - 3700 along with the electronic funds transfers. Josh Ihry seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Josh Ihry moved to direct Treasurer Harbeke Lewis to forward the Letter of Engagement to the Office of the State Auditor for 2018. Robert Rostad seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

LEGISLATION

Sean Fredricks, and Jack Dwyer, Lance Gaebe, and Keely Torgerson (by phone), brought the Committee up to date on the status of several Senate and House bills, WRD funding, etc. that have been presented through the North Dakota Legislation session this year.

Water interests had a very successful session in securing funding and on key policy issues. Regional, municipal, and rural water supply, flood control, and general water management including irrigation, water resource district projects, and cloud modification all have substantially more funds appropriated that was originally expected. There were some minor policy disappointments related to subsurface drainage permits and the Southwest Water Authority mill levy there is an unprecedented legislative and public awareness of the importance of working to complete North Dakota's water infrastructure for economic growth and quality of life.

For more information on the 2019 legislation session, go to: www.legis.nd.gov/assembly/66-2019.

RANDY GJESTVANG REPORTS AND UPDATES

Randy Gjestvang provided a report on meetings and inspections that he has been involved with from April 10, 2019 through May 7, 2019.

Mr. Gjestvang described the items for discussion that will be held at the State Water Commission meetings in 2019 including SWC sub-committee meetings. Some of the items up for discussion tomorrow include:

- A meeting on June 13th, 2019 to discuss a policy for the economic analysis study. A SWC staff member will present a recommendation on this policy.

Other topics of discussion included:

- LiDAR collect in the Red River Watershed
 - a. QL2 LiDAR being collected for the RR watershed in ND; also includes a 4 mile buffer strip in MN; FEMA & NRCS grants paying for all of it; Collection began in October 2018;
 - b. Does not include development of 1 foot contours;
 - c. Raw data will be available on the SWC website;
 - d. County could cost-share to get collect of entire county, if all is not in the RR watershed.
- Hydrological questions for PTMapp
 - a. Discussion on sites in the Upper Sheyenne River portion of the watershed;
 - b. Just received questions about drainage boundaries near Page.
- Red River Basin Feasibility Study
 - a. Continuing work on the remaining steps to include:
 - 1) Fine tune "Thaw Progression" events to match balanced hydrographs
 - 2) Compile Phase 1 HEC-HMS models for adopted storage scenario.
- Border dike near Lower Pembina River
 - a. Advisory Committee has been named;

- b. Governor Burgum requested SWC staff obtain drone flights of affected area. Flights were obtained on April 23rd. There was some Red River water backing up into the lower Pembina River.

A cost-share agreement between the State Water Commission and the RRJWRD to fund the Commission office (Randy Gjestvang's office) in the Red River Valley was reviewed by the Executive Committee. 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 \$290,000.00 with the District reimbursing the Commission one-half of the actual cost, not to exceed \$145,000.00 from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021. After further discussion, Lance Yohe moved to approve the agreement to staff the Red River Valley office. Josh Ihry seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

RED RIVER RETENTION AUTHORITY

Keith Weston, Executive Director for the RRRA, reported on several meetings and activities he has been involved with since April 10th to include the following:

- A joint meeting between MN and ND NRCS State Conversationalists and Co-chairman Finney and Thompson was held on April 10th in Fargo. MOU extension and amendments were discussed regarding allowing an area wide plan or PL566 Small Watershed plan; to re-evaluate 19 RCPP watershed agreements and considered prioritizing funds to insure completion of watershed plans; Explored options to extend RCPP watershed agreements to coincide with MOU end date. (This will likely not happen as the agreements only allow for a 1-year extension).
- The Red River Basin/Cold Climate Agricultural Nutrients BMP Workshop was held April 16th and 17th in Crookston. Approximately 90 individuals participated in the workshop.
- Developed and outreach strategy and recorded two watershed minute scripts on April 15th with the Senior Marketing Executive at Midwest Radio.
- Met with the Cass County Joint WRD to discuss RCPP planning on the Upper Maple River Watershed. Discussed the economic portion of the RCPP watershed plans. Informed the Board about NRCS recently adopting a new method of calculating economics for projects that do not require a National Economic Development Plan.
- On April 30th, as required under General Terms and Conditions for NRCS contribution agreement, the RRRA submitted a 6 month progress report for the period starting October 2018 through March 31, 2019.
- Have begun drafting a tour itinerary for a summer tour of the Lower Red River Basin. The tour is planning to provide participants with an opportunity to observe flood control projects and flood water management practices and hear from local water resource managers about their efforts to reduce flood damages.
- Met with Rob Sip, Executive Director of the Red River Watershed Management Board regarding cooperating on outreach activities in the Basin.

RED RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

Ted Preister, Executive Director, was here to provide updates on the Natural Resources Framework Plan (NRFP), watershed management activities, long term flood solutions and several other issues pertaining to the Red River Basin Watershed.

Mr. Preister is currently working with the Cass County JWRD on a Drainage Integration Project and researching water quality issues with the Corps and NDSU.

At work with models to investigate new and ongoing projects that include drainage throughout the sub-watersheds within the basin that will help benefit many different parties including contractors and landowners.

INTERNATIONAL WATER INSTITUTE

Executive Director Charles Fritz was in attendance to update the Committee on FDR, Condition, Watershed, and SWAG Projects, the River Watch Program, RRWMB Main stem Flood Damage, and PTMapp issues.

The ND RRJWRD proposal to continue River of Dreams and to expand River Watch to include 12 schools in 2020-2021 was approved on April 10, 2019 pending cost-share from the ND State Water Commission and the ND NRCS. The staff completed and submitted the ND SWC cost-share request and has been in contact with the NRCS. The NRCS has not committed funding for 2020-21.

IWI Staff have been busy visiting elementary classrooms and presenting customized River of Dream materials for every watershed.

IWI Staff continue to work with Rob Sip of the Red River Watershed Management Board and Legislative Advisor Lisa Frenette to secure support for continued funding of the Red River Basin River Watch project. IWI staff along with teachers and students from River Watch and River of Dreams attended committee hearings in St. Paul in February to testify about the program and its local impacts.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business to be considered by the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 12:15p.m.without objection.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Gary Thompson, Chairman

Nettie Johnson, Secretary