

**MEETING MINUTES
RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT
FULL BOARD MEETING
GRAND FORKS COUNTY WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT
EAGLE'S CREST GRILL – KING'S WALK GOLF COURSE
GRAND FORKS, ND
SEPTEMBER 25, 2019 ~ 9:30AM**

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

ROLL CALL

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

MEETING MINUTES

June 12th, 2019 were not approved today as there was not a quorum but will be placed on the December 5th full Board agenda for approval.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Carol Harbeke Lewis presented the RRJWRD financial report for the full Board to review. No action was taken as there was not a quorum to approve the report.

GRAND FORKS COUNTY WRD PROJECTS

Rich Axvig gave an overview of the projects that are in progress in Grand Forks County. Mr. Axvig described the projects that are underway and those that have been completed recently. A joint venture between Grand Forks WRD and Traill County WRD is in preliminary stages at this time and is projected to move forward into 2020. He talked about their involvement with the NRCS on rehab studies for the dams within the county and also their management of the Larimore and Fordville Dams. Subsurface and surface drainage issues were also discussed.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Jack Dwyer was present today to talk about the status of Economic Analysis issues, State cost share availability for water conveyance projects, and a Joint Board Pilot Project.

The Economic Analysis is defined as an estimate of economic benefits and direct costs that result from the development of a project. There is \$1 million for flood control and water conveyance projects and none for water supply projects to conduct Life Cycle Analysis. The SWC could adopt a policy to require economic analysis for all flood control and water conveyance projects. He stated that there is concern about a trend developing that would reduce a project size under \$1 million and funding projects with low benefit and/or cost ratio.

Discussion on SB 2020, the appropriation for defraying the expenses of the State Water Commission. SB 2020 created 3 legislative "buckets" for state funding for flood control projects

in F/M. Another flood control bucket was allocated for \$48 million. There has been concern that these sub-numbers represent a cap on funding. It is anticipated that there may be more funds available as the biennium progresses.

A Joint Board Pilot Project has not been selected at this time. A number of projects that cross county boundaries are in progress, which are sponsored by joint boards. The goal is water management from a watershed basis. A joint board would possibly be the project sponsor for all flood control and water conveyance projects in a watershed. They would inventory, plan, and communicate with the SWC on behalf of districts within the joint board watershed boundaries.

RED RIVER RETENTION AUTHORITY

Keith Weston, Executive Director for the RRA, reported on several meetings and activities he has been involved with since June 12, 2019 to include the following:

Mr. Weston said that 7 RCPP watersheds will be deemed complete by this Sunday. NRCS has suggested further refinement of benefit cost analysis to make sure existing and environmental benefits are accounted for. Another suggestion was to do an “environmental quality” account alternative. Under this alternative a thorough description of environmental and social benefits would be described. If this is done and approved by the NRCS, then the NRCS Chief would consider an exemption for approving the plan for design and construction.

The formation of a “Basin and Science” technical society is being considered for the creation of restoration values to find out if all benefits to restoration issues are being found.

RED RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

Ted Preister, Executive Director, provided handouts containing RRBC’s activities.

Mr. Preister said that integrated tile projects has 50% landowner’s participation. Water sampling continues and quality appears to be good. They are looking for funding for Phase II.

The Corps provided a draft report in May for the Lower Red River Basin Retention Study. This was the last study item for the overall Feasibility Study. All items are complete except Task 3 and 4, the storage analysis for areas downstream of Halstad. There has been discussion to include Task 3 and 4 to the contract between the RRBC and the Corps for Planning Assistance to the States. The current contract with RRBC is mainly to develop 200-year and 500-year flood events. A draft scope of work has been prepared.

RANDY GJESTVANG REPORTS & UPDATES

Mr. Randy Gjestvang provided a report on meetings and inspections that he has been involved with from June 12 through September 24, 2019.

Mr. Gjestvang gave an update on the proposed Life Cycle Cost Analysis that is required for all water supply projects.

Randy reminded the Board that a cost-share request will not move forward if all requirements are not attached to the application. Staff will provide a checklist for the application and there is information already included in the cost-share policy.

If a project is not in the 2019-2021 Development Plan it will not move forward to the SWC meeting until July 2020.

Snagging and clearing projects may be moderate in populated areas and considered low priority in rural areas. Discussion was held on funding issues.

Randy reported on current events pertaining to the Red River Feasibility Study. The RRJWRD is the ND local sponsor for Retention Studies. A total of \$130,000.00 was estimated for non-federal costs. This was for the local consultants to provide tributary hydrology models, information on the proposed detention sites, and the resulting change in hydrology. They would coordinate with the Corps and review the model results and report. The SWC approved 35% cost share up to \$45,000.00. The RRJWRD has currently paid \$28,417.00 towards the project. Roughly \$97,000.00 would remain from ND obligation.

Randy suggests an update to the RRJWRD Water Management Strategy Report in 2020 when WRD's can provide an updated project list for the SWC Development Plan to see how projects from RCPP plans are progressing.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 12:10pm without objection.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Gary Thompson, Chair

Nettie Johnson, Secretary

Please Sign In

RRSWRD Full Board

9-25-19

Name

County/Organization

Randy Gjestvang
REPRESENTATIVE
Marianne Lammy
Kurt Lysne
Jack Dwyer
Mike Coit
Rich Axels
Wes Eckert
Dick Sundberg
Darrell Nottestad
Robert Kostad
Tom Perdue
Joshua Dwy
Lynn Tanke
Keith Weston
Camp White Lake
SEAN M. FREDRICKS
Gary Thompson
Melissa Jensen

ND SWL
RRBC
Barn Engineering
Moore Engineering
ND WPA - Dwyer & Kercher Group
Houston Engineering
GRAND FORKS WRD
N SWRP
Rush River WRD
GFWRD
Richland Co
GRAND FORKS WRD
Stutsen County WRD
Walsh County Resource District
PRRA
RRSWRD Treasurer
RRSWRD
Trail Co.
RRSWRD Sect.