

MEETING MINUTES
RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
VIRTUAL/PHONE CONFERENCE
ORIGINATING AT THE TRAILL COUNTY WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT
HILLSBORO, NORTH DAKOTA
AUGUST 12, 2020 ~ 9:30AM

The Executive Committee meeting was called to order by Chairman Thompson on August 12, 2020 at 9:30am in Hillsboro, ND. Those present were: Chairman Gary Thompson; Managers: Ben Varnson, Josh Ihry, Dan Jacobson, Larry Tanke, and Jim Haugen. Also present were Sean Fredricks, Attorney for the Board; Nettie Johnson, Secretary; Carol Harbeke Lewis, Treasurer; Bill Hejl, Rush River WRD; Randy Gjestvang, SWC; Kurt Lysne, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Zach Herrmann and Mike Opat, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Keith Weston, Red River Retention Authority; Ted Preister, Red River Basin Commission; Mike Bassingthwaite, Danni Halvorson, IWI; and Matt Lindsay, Office of the State Engineer.

ORDER OF AGENDA

Dan Jacobson moved to approve the order of the agenda. Larry Tanke seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

MEETING MINUTES

Jim Haugen moved to approve the July 15, 2020 Executive Committee meeting minutes as presented. Josh Ihry seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Carol Harbeke Lewis presented the RRJWRD financial report and bills for the Committee to review. Ben Varnson moved to approve the financial report and the wire transfers for the bills as presented. Dan Jacobson seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

COST SHARE REQUESTS

On behalf of Chris Laveau, Hydrologist with the USGS, Randy Gjestvang described the 2020-2021 Cooperative Monitoring Program. Upon review and discussion of the Joint Funding Agreement for the continued USGS cooperative streamflow monitoring programs with the RRJWRD for the period October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021, Josh Ihry moved to recommend to the RRJWRD full Board to approve payment up to and not to exceed \$140,595.00 for FY 2020-2021. Dan Jacobson seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

LEGISLATION UPDATES

Sean Fredricks reminded the Committee that the Minnesota H2Oviewers company is planning to meet with members of the State Water Commission and key legislators tomorrow to discuss the possibility of utilizing the Minnesota viewer process in North Dakota for assessment projects. In Minnesota, watershed districts must hire viewers to conduct benefit and assessment analysis for each proposed legal drain project. In North Dakota, water resource districts utilize their engineering consultants as well as the expertise of their water managers to make benefit and

assessment decisions for new assessment projects and reassessments of existing legal drains. Mr. Fredricks will keep the Committee updated on the proceedings of H2Ooverviewers and their future plans and involvement with ND WRD's.

Mr. Fredricks expressed his concern about legislators who are putting together a plan to prohibit WRD's from performing reconstruction projects in the future. He added that WRD's have to be prepared to defend their stance on reconstruction projects and other matters including drain tile issues at the next legislative session.

INTERNATIONAL WATER INSTITUTE

Danni Halvorson provided updates on River Watch and River of Dreams program activities. He said that there are 14 continuous monitoring stations that are being prepared for deployment. Staff will be seeking necessary additional programming training in order to complete station set up. They are also making school contacts for the RW and ROD programs in an effort to gauge what schools will allow for outside activities this fall.

Mr. Halvorson also provided updates on the PTMapp matters to include the continuation of the development of BMP life cycle costs, a ND training session that is planned for this fall, the processing of the remaining ND watersheds, and the PTMapp web update that will be provided at the end of September.

RED RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

Ted Preister, Executive Director, provided updates on RRBC's activities to include outreach meetings and drainage integrated projects.

Mr. Preister said work continues on the Drainage Integration project in Cass County and that they are waiting for feedback from NRCS on grant funding.

A Corps agreement is still pending for the Lower Red River Retention Analysis. Mr. Preister is working with them to obtain a signed agreement. An agreement has to be in place before consultant's costs can be counted towards in-kind cost-share.

Mr. Preister provided updates on recent meetings with the Technical Advisory Committee and also on outreach activities.

RED RIVER RETENTION AUTHORITY

Keith Weston circulated updates of the activities he has been involved with since the last RRWJRD meeting on July 15th.

Mr. Weston suggested that the RRJWRD ask the ND Water Users Association to consider putting a topic regarding the "History of NRCS Watershed Planning Benefit Cost Analysis" on the December ND WRD Association conference agenda. He believes it would be interesting for WRDs around the state to learn more about the evolution of Benefit Cost Analysis in watershed planning through the NRCS. Mr. Weston will draft a letter and ask the Secretary to forward it on to the ND Water Users for their consideration and ask that they contact Christie Fisher, NRCS, to present the NRCS history and the process of completing the BCA.

Danni Halvorson, IWI, offered to provide the link to the Flood Damage Reduction Project Gallery for the Committee to review. He will forward the link to the Secretary to distribute to the Executive Committee and others.

Discussion was held on literature search for old studies from the past which reveal how projects were built. Minnesota Red Board has been actively involved in this research and Mr. Weston suggested the North Dakota consider doing this also.

RANDY GJESTVANG REPORTS AND UPDATES

Randy Gjestvang provided a report on meetings and inspections that he has been involved with from July 15 through August 11, 2020.

Mr. Gjestvang gave a power point presentation on the revenue situation with the State including charts and tables on the resource trust fund revenue and project funds. Also included were tables of proposed retention projects that were submitted to the SWC for the 2021-2023 biennium.

Mr. Gjestvang provided updates on the RRJWRD Water Management Strategy. Sponsors had until August 10th to make any additions or changes for proposed projects that they submitted to the SWC for the 2021-2023 Water Development Plan. The draft proposed project list included: 10 detention sites and 12 dam improvements (rehab). An update to the strategy report could consist of an addendum including tables with the updated proposed projects and changes to the executive summary. The Board could also include additional updates to the report including more detail on flood damages and project benefits. The RRRA is also developing a strategy report.

Duane Pool, State Water Commission, provided a presentation on economic analysis on August 6th which is part of the WRD Association. The presentation is available on their website.

Mr. Gjestvang stated that revenue concerns and projects recommended for cost-share approval are scheduled to be discussed at the August 13th SWC meeting.

Discussion was held on an Operation Plan for the Baldhill and Homme Dams. The Corps have requested comments from the SWC. Jon Kelsch, SWC Development Division Director, provided a letter to the Corps explaining the Plan and the importance of maximizing temporary storage for flood damage reduction.

Devils Lake level is currently at 1449.8.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business to be considered by the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:45a.m. without objection.

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Gary Thompson, Chairman

Nettie Johnson, Secretary