

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL / CONFERENCE CALL MEETING
RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ORIGINATING AT THE OFFICE OF THE
TRAILL COUNTY WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT
HILLSBORO, NORTH DAKOTA
AUGUST 11, 2021

A virtual / conference call meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District Executive Committee was held on August 11, 2021, at 9:30 a.m.

Present were Gary Thompson, Traill County Water Resource District; Ben Varnson, Nelson County Water Resource District; Dan Jacobson, Southeast Cass Water Resource District; Josh Ihry, Steele County Water Resource District; Tom Perdue, Grand Forks County Water Resource District (alternate); Arv Burvee, Richland County Water Resource District (alternate); Nettie Johnson, Secretary; Carol Harbeke Lewis, Treasurer; Keith Weston, Red River Retention Authority Executive Director; Zach Herrmann and Mike Opat, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Kurt Lysne and Chris Gross, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Jack Dwyer and Dani Hanson, North Dakota Water Users Association; Joel Galloway and Daniel Thomas, United States Geological Survey (USGS).

Agenda

It was moved by Manager Varnson, seconded by Manager Jacobson and unanimously carried to approve the order of the agenda, as amended.

Minutes

It was moved by Manager Burvee, seconded by Manager Jacobson and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the May 12 and June 9, 2021, meetings.

USGS – Joint Funding Agreement

Discussion was held on the USGS *Joint Funding Agreement* for cost-share on 17 stream gages in the Red River Basin. Joel Galloway stated the Red River Joint Water Resource District has partnered with the USGS in the cost-share of stream gages in the Red River Basin for several years. The data gathered by the stream gages is valuable to determine real-time river levels during events and is useful in other applications as well. Randy Gjestvang recommended approval of the \$141,970 cost-share requested.

It was moved by Manager Varnson and seconded by Manager Ihry to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the *Joint Funding Agreement* with the USGS for FY 2022 cost-share regarding 17 stream gages in the Red River Basin in the amount of \$141,970. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Elm River Watershed Study – additional cost-share request

Discussion was next held on an additional cost-share request from Elm River Joint Water Resource District, which is comprised of North Cass, Steele County and Traill County

Water Resource Districts. Chris Gross indicated additional funds are needed to finish the preliminary engineering for the Study, as two additional project alternatives were proposed during the public meeting. The addition of the two alternatives increases the total project cost from \$120,000 to \$180,000. Randy Gjestvang recommended the Red River Joint Water Resource District amend the current *Cost-Share Agreement* to increase the cost-share for the Elm River Watershed Study from \$31,200 to \$46,800, based on 65% cost-share of non-federal, non-state portion of the Study.

It was moved by Manager Burvee and seconded by Manager Varnson to recommend to the Red River Joint Water Resource District Full Board to amend the original *Cost-Share Agreement* for the Elm River Watershed Study for 65% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share, not to exceed \$46,800, with expenses incurred after August 11, 2021, being eligible for cost-share under this amendment. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's report

It was moved by Manager Jacobson and seconded by Manager Burvee to approve the Financial Report, as presented. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Manager Ihry and seconded by Manager Varnson to approve the payment of wire transfers, as presented. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Manager Jacobson and seconded by Manager Burvee to approve the 2020 Audit of the Red River Joint Water Resource District. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Manager Ihry and seconded by Manager Varnson to approve the following Pledges of Assets:

- Alerus Financial - as per agreement dated April 20, 2012
- Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines (Bremer) - Letter of Credit dated June 22, 2021
- Dakota Heritage Bank \$1,100,000
- Goose River Bank (Bank of North Dakota) \$5,490,000
- Stock Growers Bank - Forman \$ 115,000
- Choice Bank - Grafton - as per agreement dated July 8, 2021

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Legislative updates

Jack Dwyer and Dani Hanson reported on legislative updates regarding water resource districts. Discussion was held on the SB 2208 interim study.

Pilot projects

Brief discussion was held on legislation regarding appropriation of funds for water resource districts. The legislation includes \$1,000,000 in available funds. More information on the legislation will be brought to a future meeting.

International Water Institute report

Chuck Fritz provided a report on recent activities of the International Water Institute. The IWI plans to submit a grant proposal to the NPS Task Force in October 2021 for funding of the River of Dreams and River Watch programs for fiscal years 2023 and 2024. Red River Joint Water Resource District is the current local sponsor for the programs.

Red River Basin Commission report

Randy Gjestvang briefly reported on recent activities and projects of the Red River Basin Commission. The September Ex Officio and Board meeting and tour is scheduled for September 1-2, 2021, in Moorhead, Minnesota.

Red River Retention Authority report

Keith Weston reported on recent meetings and activities of the Red River Retention Authority (RRRA). The RRRA continues to work on progressing watershed plans through the Natural Resources Conservation Service PL-566 program. Mr. Weston briefly discussed meetings with the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group Planning Committee regarding floodplain mapping and funding options for future water projects. The next RRRA meeting is September 15, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. at the Cass County Highway Department.

North Dakota State Water Commission report

Mr. Gjestvang reported on recent meetings and activities he has participated in. Mr. Gjestvang reported the North Dakota State Water Commission is now the North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR) and Governor Burgum has made appointments to the State Water Commissioner for the NDDWR. Andrea Travnicek has been named Director of the NDDWR. Mr. Gjestvang reported on various ongoing studies in the Red River Basin including the Lower Red River Regional Detention Analysis, the Long Term Flood Study and seven high hazard dam rehabilitation studies.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be considered by the Board, the meeting adjourned without objection.

APPROVED:

Gary Thompson
Chairman

ATTEST:

Carol Harbeke Lewis
Acting Secretary-Treasurer