

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL / CONFERENCE CALL MEETING
RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ORIGINATING AT THE CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
NOVEMBER 10, 2021

A virtual / conference call meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Executive Committee was held on November 10, 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); Carol Harbeke Lewis, Secretary-Treasurer; Nina Stone, Accountant; Melissa Maertens, Administrative Assistant; Sean M. Fredricks, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.; Randy Gjestvang, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Keith Weston, Red River Retention Authority (RRRA) Executive Director; Mike Opat, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Kurt Lysne, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering Co.; Dani Hanson, North Dakota Water Users Association; Ted Preister, Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) Executive Director; Chuck Fritz and Danni Halvorson, International Water Institute (IWI); and Rob Sip, Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) Executive Director.

Agenda

It was moved by Manager Ihry, 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 Ihry and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2021, meeting.

Treasurer's report

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

A motion was made by Manager Ihry and seconded by Manager Varnson to:

- Authorize the Secretary-Treasurer to make any minor year-end transfers to balance the RRJWRD 2021 budget;

- Authorize the Secretary-Treasurer to make transfers to and from obligated funds, if necessary; and
- Authorize the Secretary-Treasurer to amend the RRJWRD 2021 budget.

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Cost-Share Policies and Procedures

Discussion was held on removing the wording in Section IX. No. 3 of the RRJWRD *Cost-Share Policies and Procedures* relating to the requirement that applications must be submitted 15 days prior to consideration by the Executive Committee. The Board indicated the wording is no longer applicable as cost-share applications are currently being reviewed within 15 days if time allows.

A motion was made by Manager Jacobson and seconded by Manager Ihry to amend the RRJWRD *Cost-Share Policies and Procedures* to remove the wording in Section IX. No. 3. that states the Executive Committee “will consider a cost-share application no sooner than 15 days following submission of the application by the member district applicant.” Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Legislative updates

Dani Hanson reported on legislative updates regarding water resource districts. Discussion was held on distribution of ARPA funds allocated to North Dakota, creation of a stabilization fund for water projects and the SB 2208 interim study. The 58th Annual Joint North Dakota Water Convention is scheduled for December 7-10, 2021.

Pilot Project for Red River Basin Funding

Discussion was held on a pilot project where the NDDWR would appropriate funding to the RRJWRD to administrate cost-share for water conveyance projects in the Red River Basin. The RRJWRD has been asked to present a proposed pilot project on the concept at the North Dakota Water Topics Overview Committee meeting on December 7, 2021. Kurt Lysne presented a draft pilot project. Further discussion was held on the pilot project concept.

A motion was made by Manager Ihry and seconded by Manager Jacobson to approve the Red River Basin Wide Funding Plan and authorize Zach Herrmann and Mr. Lysne to present the information on behalf of the RRJWRD at the North Dakota Water Topics Overview Committee meeting on December 7, 2021. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Red River Watershed Management Board report

Rob Sip reported the LiDAR data collect in Minnesota is complete and indicated the IWI is creating updated LiDAR derived products for the RRWMB. The RRWMB is also working on funding and bonding priorities for 2022. Mr. Sip briefly discussed the status of Regional Conservation Partnership Program projects in the Red River Basin in Minnesota.

International Water Institute report

Danni Halvorsen provided a report on recent activities of the IWI. The IWI submitted a grant proposal to the NPS Task Force for funding of the River of Dreams and River Watch programs for fiscal years 2023 and 2024. The RRJWRD is the current local sponsor for the programs.

Red River Basin Commission report

Ted Preister reported on recent activities and projects of the RRBC. Current RRBC projects include building vegetation shelves in a marsh in Manitoba to study impacts to water quality in Lake Winnipeg and flood control in the area, as well as collecting bathymetry data of the Red River mainstem from the South Dakota border to the Canadian border. A grant was received from FEMA to collect the bathymetry data. The RRBC International Summit is scheduled for January 11–13, 2022, in Grand Forks, North Dakota.

Red River Retention Authority report

Keith Weston reported on recent meetings and activities of the RRRRA. The RRRRA continues to work on progressing watershed plans through the Natural Resources Conservation Service PL-566 program and is creating a 2022 priority list of the projects. Mr. Weston briefly discussed meetings with the Minnesota Flood Damage Reduction Work Group Planning Committee regarding floodplain mapping and funding options for future water projects. The next RRRRA meeting is December 15, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. at the Cass County Highway Department.

North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR) report

Randy Gjestvang reported on recent meetings and activities he has participated in as well as 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.

Mr. Gjestvang indicated the NDDWR 2018/2019 LiDAR raw data collection for the Red River Basin will be available in 2022. LiDAR derived products will not be created from the data at this time. Discussion was held on potentially funding a LiDAR derived product for the Red River Watershed in North Dakota that would work with the IWI LiDAR viewer as the Red River Watershed Management Board is funding updated LiDAR derived products for the Red River Watershed in Minnesota.

A motion was made by Manager Ihry and seconded by Manager Burvee to recommend using the 2018/2019 LiDAR data collection from the NDDWR to derive a product to work in the IWI LiDAR viewer for the Red River Watershed. Discussion: Manager Burvee suggested conducting research regarding available FEMA and NRCS LiDAR products and requested IWI bring back a cost estimate for the project. Following discussion, Manager Ihry and Manager Burvee withdrew the motion and second, respectively. The Board tabled the matter until the December 2021 Full Board meeting to review a proposal and cost estimate from IWI for the project.

By-Laws

Sean Fredricks reviewed changes to the RRJWRD By-Laws proposed by the Full Board which will allow the Board to designate an official office location for the RRJWRD on an annual basis. The proposed changes will be discussed at the December 2021 Full Board meeting.

Next meeting

A special meeting of the RRJWRD Executive Committee will be held on December 1, 2021, at 9:30 a.m. at the Cass County Highway Department.

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
Secretary-Treasurer