

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL / CONFERENCE CALL MEETING
RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT FULL BOARD
ORIGINATING AT THE CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
JANUARY 19, 2022

A virtual / conference call meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Full Board was held on January 19, 2022, at 9:30 a.m.

Present were Gary Thompson, Traill County Water Resource District; Bruce Anderson, Barnes County Water Resource District; Rodger Olson, Maple River Water Resource District; Ben Varnson, Nelson County Water Resource District; Wes Ecker, North Cass Water Resource District; Don Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District; Arv Burvee, Richland County Water Resource District; William A. Hejl, Rush River Water Resource District; Michael Wyum, Sargent County Water Resource District; Dan Jacobson, Southeast Cass Water Resource District; Josh Ihry, Steele County Water Resource District; 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; Jack Dwyer and Dani Quissell, North Dakota Water Users Association; Daniel Thomas, United States Geological Survey (USGS); Ted Preister, Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) Executive Director; Chuck Fritz, International Water Institute (IWI); Zach Herrmann, Mike Opat and Gabe Bladow, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Kurt Lysne and Nathan Trosen, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering Co. and Kelly Sharpe, GK Technology, Inc. Grand Forks, Ransom and Walsh County Water Resource Districts were absent.

Minutes

It was moved by Arv Burvee seconded by Dan Jacobson and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2021, meeting.

Treasurer's report

It was moved by Michael Wyum and seconded by Rodger Olson to approve the Financial Report, as presented. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

2022 Executive Committee Elections

Sean Fredricks stated the RRJWRD Executive Committee positions currently held by Gary Thompson and Dan Jacobson are up for election this year. The alternate position on the RRJWRD Executive Committee currently held by Arv Burvee is also up for election.

Josh Ihry nominated Gary Thompson to serve on the RRJWRD Executive Committee for calendar year 2022. It was moved by Arv Burvee and seconded by Michael Wyum that nominations cease and a unanimous ballot be cast for Gary Thompson to serve on the RRJWRD Executive Committee for calendar year 2022. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Michael Wyum nominated Dan Jacobson to serve on the RRJWRD Executive Committee for calendar year 2022. It was moved by Arv Burvee and seconded by Rodger Olson that nominations cease and a unanimous ballot be cast for Dan Jacobson to serve on the RRJWRD Executive Committee for calendar year 2022. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Josh Ihry nominated Arv Burvee to serve as an alternate member on the RRJWRD Executive Committee for calendar year 2022. It was moved by Bruce Anderson and seconded by Dan Jacobson that nominations cease and a unanimous ballot be cast for Arv Burvee to serve as an alternate member on the RRJWRD Executive Committee for calendar year 2022. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Sean Fredricks noted Tom Perdue will act as senior alternate on the RRJWRD Executive Committee for calendar year 2022 and Arv Burvee will act as senior alternate for calendar year 2023.

North Dakota Water Resource Districts Association / North Dakota Water Users Association – Legislative Advocacy Proposal

Dani Quissell presented a proposal from the North Dakota Water Resource Districts Association and North Dakota Water Users Association for continued legislative support to water resource districts for 2022-2023. Discussion was held on the possibility of a multi-year agreement in the future regarding legislative efforts. The Board indicated they wish to retain a long-term relationship with the North Dakota Water Resource Districts Association and North Dakota Water Users Association for legislative support.

William Hejl moved to approve the *Legislative Advocacy Proposal* with the North Dakota Water Resource Districts Association and North Dakota Water Users Association regarding legislative efforts related to water resource districts in 2022 and 2023 in the amount of \$40,000. Dan Jacobson seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Quissell and Sean Fredricks reported on legislative updates regarding water resource districts. Discussion was held on the SB 2208 interim study.

Basin Wide Funding Plan

Zach Herrmann updated the Board on a potential pilot project for funding water conveyance projects in the Red River Basin through the RRJWRD. Mr. Herrmann outlined the proposed steps to continue development of the Basin Wide Funding Plan. Discussion was held on the concept and investment required to develop the Plan.

Ben Varnson joined the meeting at this time.

It was moved by Josh Ihry and seconded by Rodger Olson to proceed with completion of the Basin Wide Funding Plan as presented, prior to the next North Dakota legislative session, at a cost not to exceed \$100,000. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

LiDAR products update

Chuck Fritz presented on the development, uses and costs of LiDAR derived tools using the 2018/2019 NDDWR LiDAR data. Mr. Fritz also discussed implications of not updating the LiDAR derived tools in the Red River Basin in North Dakota as the LiDAR derived tools in the Red River Basin in Minnesota are currently being updated with the LiDAR data recently collected by the Red River Watershed Management Board. Randy Gjestvang stated the NDDWR LiDAR data will be available by the end of May 2022 for the Red River Basin to use in the development of the LiDAR derived tools. Josh Ihry stated the LiDAR derived tools are tangible products that everyone can use and benefit from.

It was moved by Josh Ihry and seconded by Arv Burvee to approve and authorize the Chair to sign the *Letter Agreement* with IWI to develop LiDAR-derived tools using the 2018/2019 NDDWR LiDAR data for the Red River Watershed in North Dakota, to include the entire area of RRJWRD member counties, at a cost not to exceed \$51,604. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

RRBC report

Ted Preister reported on recent RRBC activities and projects. The RRBC is currently collecting funds to complete bathymetry of the Red River mainstem from the South Dakota border to the Canadian border. The data is being collected by the Corps of Engineers at a greatly reduced rate and is very valuable information that is used to help learn about the aquatic ecosystem as well as documentation of erosion. Mr. Preister noted the federal cost-share for the project also requires a local cost-share. The NDDWR is willing to provide the local cost-share for the project if there is support from local entities such as the RRJWRD. The RRJWRD may be asked in the future to consider assisting in funding to complete bathymetry of Red River tributaries.

A motion was made by Dan Jacobson and seconded by Ben Varnson to send a letter of support to the NDDWR regarding the RRBC project to collect bathymetry of the Red River mainstem from the South Dakota border to the Canadian Border. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

RRJWRD request for increased federal funding for USGS stream gage network located in the Red River Basin in North Dakota

The Secretary-Treasurer reported letters were sent to the North Dakota congressional delegation requesting additional funding for the USGS stream gage network in the Red River Basin in North Dakota. Senator Hoeven's and Congressman Armstrong's offices indicated they would look into the request.

RRRA report

Keith Weston discussed the RRRA 2022 Retention Project Priorities List and noted the list was sent to legislators in the Red River Basin for their information. Mr. Weston also discussed available outreach opportunities for water resource districts through radio this year. Copies of the Red River Basin Mapping Project that highlight projects in the Red River Basin are also available to water resource districts for use in outreach efforts.

IWI report

Chuck Fritz reported the annual IWI River Watch Forum is scheduled for March 30, 2022. Mr. Fritz is hopeful the Forum can be held in person this year.

Metro Flood Diversion Project report

Rodger Olson stated there will be a significant amount of construction activity in 2022 for the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Mr. Olson reminded everyone to be mindful of safety and potential delays as they travel near Metro Flood Diversion Project construction areas.

NDDWR / State Water Commission report

Mr. Gjestvang reported on recent meetings and activities he has participated in. The NDDWR will be soliciting projects to include in the 2023-2025 Water Development Plan. Mr. Gjestvang briefly discussed a new process for requesting cost-share from the NDDWR. A virtual tutorial on the new process is available on the NDDWR website. Mr. Gjestvang also noted the NDDWR is interested in upgrading from the 1929 datum to the 1988 datum for stream gages. The upgrade would not change the way the information is presented to the public online. Kurt Lysne indicated many of the stream gages in the Red River Basin are already using the 1988 datum. The Board supported the upgrade.

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