

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 9, 2022

A virtual / conference call meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Executive Committee was held on November 9, 2022, 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 for Larry Tanke); Arv Burvee, Richland County Water Resource District (alternate); Carol Harbeke Lewis, Secretary-Treasurer; Nina Stone, Accountant; Melissa Hinkemeyer, Administrative Assistant; William A. Hejl, Rush River Water Resource District; 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; Chuck Fritz, International Water Institute (IWI); Zach Herrmann and Mike Opat, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Josh Hassell, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering, Co.; and Steve Fuller, U.S. Geological Survey. Larry Tanke, Walsh County Water Resource District, was absent.

Minutes

It was moved by Manager Perdue, seconded by Manager Jacobson and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2022, meeting.

Treasurer's report

Manager Varnson moved to approve the Financial Report, as presented. Manager Ihry seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The Secretary-Treasurer discussed the investment of RRJWRD funds into Certificates of Deposit. Manager Jacobson moved to authorize the Secretary-Treasurer to invest RRJWRD funds in Certificates of Deposit with Alerus Financial and Bell Bank, as presented. Manager Varnson seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Manager Ihry moved to approve the payment of Check #3773 and the wire transfers, as presented, contingent upon concurrence by the Secretary-Treasurer. Manager Perdue seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Manager Jacobson and seconded by Manager Perdue to:

- Authorize the Secretary-Treasurer to make any minor year-end transfers to balance the RRJWRD 2022 budget;
- Authorize the Secretary-Treasurer to make transfers to and from obligated funds, if necessary; and
- Authorize the Secretary-Treasurer to amend the RRJWRD 2022 budget.

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

USGS Joint Funding Agreement for streamflow monitoring for the period of October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023 (FY 2023)

Discussion was held on the USGS *Joint Funding Agreement* for cost-share on 17 stream gages in the Red River Basin for the period of October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023 (FY 2023). Randy Gjestvang stated the RRJWRD 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. Mr. Gjestvang recommended approval of the \$143,400 cost-share requested.

It was moved by Manager Varnson and seconded by Manager Perdue to recommend the RRJWRD Full Board approve the *Joint Funding Agreement* with the USGS for streamflow monitoring for the period of October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023 (FY 2023) in the amount of \$143,400. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Upper Maple River Watershed – NRCS-RCPP Watershed Planning – revision and extension

Josh Hassell updated the Board on the RCPP Upper Maple River Watershed Planning effort. Additional funds are needed to update and re-submit the Plan to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the National Watershed Management Center, per the NRCS' request. Cost-share requests have also been submitted to the NDDWR and the Cass County Flood Sales Tax Committee to update the Plan.

It was moved by Manager Ihry and seconded by Manager Jacobson to recommend the RRJWRD Full Board approve the *Second Amendment to Cost-Share Agreement* with Maple River Water Resource District regarding the RCPP – Upper Maple River Watershed Plan for 65% cost-share of the non-federal, non-state share, not to exceed \$258,294.96, representing an increase of \$51,269.96. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Sheyenne River Bank Stability Study – update

Mike Opat provided a brief update on the Sheyenne River Bank Stabilization Study downstream of Baldhill Dam to the confluence of the Red River. Barnes County Water Resource District is currently seeking input from public and private property owners with infrastructure along the Sheyenne River to identify erosion and bank failure issues, with

an emphasis on threats to public and private structures, utilities and other facilities. Information is being collected through an online form and will be compiled with data collected from LiDAR and aerial photography, and then categorized. Mr. Opat stated if anyone is aware of any erosion and bank failure issues, please submit information on the issues through the online form.

Legislative updates

Discussion was held on legislative updates regarding water resource districts. Dani Quissell updated the Board on the SB 2208 interim study. Brief discussion was held on 2022 elections regarding the North Dakota legislature. Jack Dwyer discussed proposed NDDWR dike permitting revisions. Brief discussion was held on processing subsurface water management (drain tile) permits.

Red River Basinwide Plan

Zach Herrmann updated the Board on the Red River Basinwide Plan through the RRJWRD. Mr. Herrmann said discussions are ongoing regarding if and how the Red River Basinwide Plan should move forward in the future. Discussion was held on potentially seeking funding through a pilot project for North Dakota RCPP projects in the Red River Basin. More discussion on the matter will occur at a future meeting.

MFDA report

Manager Jacobson updated the Board on public meetings recently held by the Metro Flood Diversion Authority to provide information on supplemental crop insurance programs and Flowage Easements. Cass County Joint Water Resource District continues to obtain Flowage Easements regarding the project. Manager Jacobson also noted construction on the Diversion Channel and Associated Infrastructure of the Metro Flood Diversion Project has begun near Argusville.

IWI report

Chuck Fritz updated the Board on recent IWI activities, including the LiDAR derived tools update in the Red River Basin. Mr. Fritz indicated he may have IWI staff show and discuss the progress on the LiDAR derived tools update at a future meeting.

Brief discussion was held on the IWI economic analysis work for the NDDWR. Mr. Fritz said the IWI report regarding the matter has been submitted to the NDDWR.

RRRA report

Keith Weston discussed recent activities of the RRRA. Mr. Weston stated the North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network (NDAWN) is looking for funding for more monitoring sites in the Red River Basin. The information NDAWN collects, including soil moisture and soil temperature, is useful for flood forecasting efforts. NDAWN is also considering upgrading equipment at many sites. The RRJWRD and the Red River Watershed Management Board (RRWMB) would both benefit from the data collected at the sites. Mr. Weston indicated a partnership with NDAWN may be beneficial for all parties and the

operation and maintenance costs for sites are low, so expenses are largely related to upgrading equipment. The Board directed Mr. Weston to work with Mr. Gjestvang and Rob Sip of the RRWMB regarding a potential partnership with NDAWN and to invite Daryl Ritchison, Director of NDAWN, to a future meeting to further discuss a potential partnership. Mr. Gjestvang noted NDAWN is also in discussions with the NDDWR regarding presenting data from NDDWR PRESENS sensors and NDAWN online at the same location.

Mr. Weston also discussed the RRRRA 2023 Red River Basin Priority Watershed Projects list.

NDDWR / State Water Commission report

Mr. Gjestvang reported on recent meetings, activities he has participated in and provided project updates.

The Lower Red River Regional Detention Analysis Study is projected to be complete by the end of 2023 and is within budget. About half of the allotted funds for the project have been spent.

NDDWR LiDAR data is now available on the NDDWR website for the entire Red River watershed. IWI will be using the NDDWR LiDAR data to update the LiDAR tools. Mr. Gjestvang discussed a meeting with the Cavalier County Water Resource District regarding the IWI LiDAR tools project, as the project may need to include the entire Red River watershed for the tools to be fully functional.

Mr. Gjestvang briefly reviewed the NDDWR PRESENS sensors that measure the water elevation at dams. The sensors are useful tools that could be implemented on all dams. The NDDWR has a few sensors that are built and available to be installed if any water resource districts are interested in a PRESENS sensor at their facility.

Mr. Gjestvang also discussed an update to the RRJWRD Watershed Management Strategy Report that includes projects submitted to the NDDWR for the 2023 Water Development Plan.

Discussion was held on a potential study regarding water quality benefits related to water resource district retention projects.

Member Water Resource Districts mill levy percentages for budgeting

Mr. Gjestvang and the Secretary-Treasurer discussed proposed updates to the mill levy percentages for various member counties based on current information. The percentages are used for budgeting purposes.

Manager Varnson left the meeting at this time.

It was moved by Manager Ihry and seconded by Manager Jacobson to update the mill levy percentages for the following counties, as follows:

- Barnes County – 72%
- Nelson County – 34.5%
- Ransom County – 95.4%
- Sargent County – 93.1%
- Steele County – 87.3%
- Walsh County – 91%

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Metro Flood Diversion Project

The Board briefly discussed including detention aspects of the Metro Flood Diversion Project in the overall detention goal for the Red River Basin.

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