

MINUTES OF MEETING  
RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT FULL BOARD  
BISMARCK HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER  
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA  
DECEMBER 8, 2022

A meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Full Board was held on December 8, 2022, at 11:45 a.m.

Present were Gary Thompson, Jason Siegert and Joel Halvorson, Traill County Water Resource District; Bruce Anderson, Barnes County Water Resource District; Tom Perdue Rich Axvig, Robert Drees and Tim Farrell, Grand Forks County Water Resource District; Ben Varnson and Josh Forde, Nelson County Water Resource District; Robert Thompson, 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; Dan Jacobson, Southeast Cass Water Resource District; Josh Ihry, Steele County Water Resource District; Nina Stone, Accountant; Melissa Hinkemeyer, Administrative Assistant; Sean M. Fredricks, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.; April Walker, North Dakota State Water Commissioner; Pat Fridgen, Randy Gjestvang, Cory Drevecky, Kelsey Huber and Matt Lindsay, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); John Suter, North Dakota Water Users; Steve Fuller, Daniel Thomas and Spencer Wheeling, United States Geological Survey (USGS); Keith Weston, Red River Retention Authority (RRRA) Executive Director; Ted Preister, Red River Basin Commission (RRBC) Executive Director; Zach Herrmann, Mike Opat, Gabe Bladow, Paul LeClaire and Cody Oltz, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Kurt Lysne, Lyndon Pease, Alexa Ducioame, Josh Hassell and Nathan Trosen, Moore Engineering, Inc.; and those whose names appear on the attached roster. Maple River, Ransom County, Sargent County and Walsh County Water Resource Districts were absent.

**Agenda**

It was moved by Manager Burvee, seconded by Manager Jacobson and unanimously carried to approve the agenda, as presented.

**Minutes**

It was moved by Manager Varnson, seconded by Manager Perdue and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the September 21, 2022, meeting.

**Treasurer's report**

It was moved by Manager Jacobson and seconded by Manager Siegert to approve the Financial Report, as presented. 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)**

Steve Fuller discussed 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 and stated the RRJWRD Executive Committee also recommended approval of the cost-share request.

It was moved by Manager Ihry and seconded by Manager Perdue to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign 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.

**Maple River Water Resource District – Upper Maple River Watershed – NRCS-RCPP Watershed Planning – revision and extension to cost-share request**

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 been approved by the NDDWR and the Cass County Flood Sales Tax Committee to update the Plan.

It was moved by Manager Varnson and seconded by Manager Jacobson to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign 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.

**Agreement with North Dakota Water Education Foundation for articles in the North Dakota Water magazine**

Brief discussion was held on the sponsorship of magazine articles written by Dr. Jay Leitch in 5 issues of the 2023 North Dakota Water Magazine, at a total cost of \$5,000. The articles will be 2 pages in length and the RRJWRD can select topics for the articles.

A motion was made by Manager Perdue and seconded by Manager Burvee to approve and authorize the Chairman to sign the *Agreement for Articles in North Dakota Water* with the North Dakota Water Education Foundation regarding the sponsorship of magazine articles written by Dr. Jay Leitch in 5 issues of the 2023 North Dakota Water magazine, at a cost not to exceed \$5,000. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**Sheyenne River Bank Stability Study**

Mike Opat provided an update on the Sheyenne River Bank Stabilization Study downstream of Baldhill Dam to the confluence of the Red River. Barnes County Water

Resource District gathered 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 was collected through an online form and is currently being compiled with data collected from LiDAR and aerial photography. The data will then be categorized and stakeholders reengaged to determine if there is interest in moving forward with a project.

### **Red River Basinwide Plan / Pilot Project**

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.

### **Legislative updates**

Sean Fredricks reported on legislative updates regarding water resource districts. Discussion was held on the SB 2208 interim study and a proposed bill that would establish a new, required, economic analysis process for establishing costs and benefits of any assessment project.

### **RRRA report**

Keith Weston discussed the RRRA meeting on December 14, 2022. The RRRA 2023 Red River Basin Priority Watershed Projects list is currently being finalized. Other activities of the RRRA include finalizing a retention policy and beginning to search for a new Executive Director as Mr. Weston is retiring from the position in mid-2023. Chairman Thompson thanked Mr. Weston for his work and dedication to the RRRA.

### **RRBC report**

Ted Preister reported on recent RRBC activities and projects. The RRBC is moving forward with bathymetry data collection of the entire mainstem of the Red River from the South Dakota border to the Canadian border. The RRBC is also working to potentially collect bathymetry data on the Red River from the Canadian border to Lake Winnipeg. Mr. Preister noted the 40th Annual Red River Basin Land and Water International Summit Conference will be held January 17-19, 2023, at The Fort Garry Hotel in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Registration for the conference is available on the Red River Basin Commission website. The RRBC continues to move forward on all their projects and are hoping to secure funding for a future water quality study in Minnesota.

### **Metro Flood Diversion Project report**

Dan Jacobson stated Joel Paulsen, Executive Director of the Metro Flood Diversion Authority, will be presenting on recent activities regarding the Metro Flood Diversion Project this afternoon. Mr. Jacobson encouraged everyone to attend the presentation and noted construction has begun on the project. More information on the project, including videos of the construction progress, can be found online at [www.fmdiversion.gov](http://www.fmdiversion.gov).

**International Water Institute (IWI) report**

Mr. Gjestvang briefly update the Board on the recent activities of the IWI.

**NDDWR / State Water Commission report**

Mr. Gjestvang reported on recent meetings and activities he has participated in. Mr. Gjestvang updated the Board on the status of the Lower Red River Regional Detention Analysis Study, high hazard dam rehabilitation studies and IWI LiDAR tools development update. The NDDWR is currently discussing feedback regarding potential updates to the State Water Commission cost-share policy at State Water Commission meetings. Mr. Gjestvang reviewed information on NDDWR PRESENS sensors and stated water resource districts interested in PRESENS sensors should contact Mr. Gjestvang or Chris Bader with the NDDWR for more information. Discussion was held on the USGS stream gage updates to the 1988 datum and Mr. Gjestvang reviewed updates to the RRJWRD Water Management Strategy report.

**Member Water Resource Districts updated mill levy percentages**

Mr. Gjestvang discussed the updated mill levy percentages for various member counties that was approved by the RRJWRD Executive Committee at the November 9, 2022, meeting. The updated mill levy percentages are based on current information and will be used for budgeting purposes beginning with the 2024 budget.

**2023 meeting schedule**

It was moved by Ben Varnson, seconded by Bill Hejl and unanimously carried to set the following as the regular meeting dates, times and places for the Red River Joint Water Resource District in 2023:

**Red River Joint Water Resource District – Full Board**  
**2023 Regular Meetings**

All meetings start at 9:30 a.m. at the Cass County Highway Department, 1201 West Main Avenue, West Fargo, North Dakota, unless otherwise noted. Virtual / in person meetings may be held.

Wednesday, January 25 (Executive Committee at 11:00 a.m.)

Wednesday, April 12

Wednesday, June 14

Wednesday, September 13

Thursday, December 7 at 12:00 p.m. at the Bismarck Hotel and Conference Center, 800 South Third Street, Bismarck, North Dakota

**Red River Joint Water Resource District – Executive Committee**  
**2023 Regular Meetings**

All meetings start at 9:30 a.m. at the Cass County Highway Department, 1201 West Main Avenue, West Fargo, North Dakota, unless otherwise noted. Virtual / in person meetings may be held.

Wednesday, January 25 at 11:00 a.m. (Full Board at 9:30 a.m.)  
Wednesday, March 8  
Wednesday, May 10  
Wednesday, July 12  
Wednesday, August 9  
Wednesday, November 8

**Adjournment**

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

APPROVED:

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Gary Thompson  
Chairman

ATTEST:

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Carol Harbeke Lewis  
Secretary-Treasurer