

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL / CONFERENCE CALL MEETING
RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ORIGINATING AT THE WEST FARGO PUBLIC WORKS BUILDING
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
JULY 12, 2023

A virtual / conference call meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Executive Committee was held on July 12, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.

Present were Gary Thompson, Traill County Water Resource District; Keith Weston, Southeast Cass Water Resource District; Don Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District; Arv Burvee, Richland County Water Resource District (alternate); Tom Perdue, Grand Forks County Water Resource District (alternate); Carol Harbeke Lewis, Secretary-Treasurer; Nina Stone, Accountant; Melissa Hinkemeyer, Administrative Assistant; Sean M. Fredricks, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.; Randy Gjestvang and Yaping Chi, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Brian Fuder, Red River Retention Authority Executive Director; Mike Opat, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering, Co.; Duane Breitling, Cass County Commissioner. Josh Ihry, Steele County Water Resource District, and Ben Varnson, Nelson County Water Resource District; were absent.

Agenda

It was moved by Manager Thompson, seconded by Manager Perdue and unanimously carried to approve the order of the agenda, as presented.

Minutes

It was moved by Manager Kemp, seconded by Manager Burvee and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the May 10 and June 26, 2023, meetings.

Treasurer's Report

A motion was made by Manager Thompson and seconded by Manager Kemp to approve the Financial Report and the 2022 Audit of the Red River Joint Water Resource District. Upon roll call vote, the following Managers voted in favor: Thompson, Weston, Kemp and Perdue. Manager Burvee was absent. The motion passed.

Pledges of Assets

It was moved by Manager Thompson and seconded by Manager Perdue to approve the following RRJWRD *Pledges of Assets*:

- Alerus Financial, as per agreement executed April 20, 2012
- Bell Bank – FHLB Letters of Credit dated November 10, 2022, May 16, 2023, and May 22, 2023
- Bremer Bank – FHLB Letter of Credit dated May 31, 2023
- Dakota Heritage Bank - \$1,100,000
- The Goose River Bank - \$6,465,000
- Stock Growers Bank – Forman - \$115,000
- Choice Bank – Grafton, as per agreement executed July 8, 2021

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Bills

Manager Perdue moved to approve the payment of the wire transfers, as presented. Manager Kemp seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Sheyenne River Bank Stability Study update

Mike Opat updated the Board on the Sheyenne River Bank Stability Study. Mr. Opat said on-site investigations of reported sites along the Sheyenne River downstream of Baldhill Dam to the confluence of the Red River occurred this week. Approximately 900 areas of interest were identified as part of the study and were assigned a priority level. The data from the on-site investigations will be used to categorize the sites more accurately into the priority levels. Mr. Opat stated the inventory of sites is intended to be a shareable source of information for various entities such as road authorities, utilities and park boards. Barnes County Water Resource District will discuss the inventory this summer and determine if there is interest from stakeholders in pursuing a project. Mr. Opat will continue to provide updates on the study at future meetings.

Missouri River Joint WRD – Educate, Advocate, and Engage Program

Manager Weston reported the Missouri River Joint Water Resource District has asked the RRJWRD to be involved in facilitating a meeting this fall regarding the Educate, Advocate, and Engage Program related to the Missouri River. The meeting aims to engage the public, various stakeholders, legislators, and others on matters related to the Missouri River.

It was moved by Manager Thompson and seconded by Manager Burvee to authorize the RRJWRD to coordinate and participate in a public meeting with the Missouri River Joint Water Resource District for the Educate, Advocate, and Engage Program regarding the Missouri River. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Legislative updates

Sean Fredricks discussed HB 1391 and SB 2372 approved during the 2023 legislative session. Mr. Fredricks noted a staff-level working group is being coordinated with the NDDWR to discuss legislative issues regarding water resource districts during the interim.

Member WRDs project reports

Member Water Resource Districts reported on current activities in their districts.

Manager Kemp said Pembina County Water Resource District is gathering data on damages from the spring flood and is also working on various legal assessment drain and dam projects within their district. Brief discussion was held on potential funding for repair of damages from the spring flood through the Natural Resources Conservation Service Emergency Watershed Protection Program.

Manager Perdue discussed upcoming Turtle River Dam No. 2 improvements and various Grand Forks County Water Resource District drain maintenance projects and activities.

Manager Thompson stated Traill County Water Resource District is continuing various legal assessment drain maintenance and reconstruction projects.

Manager Burvee discussed upcoming Richland County Water Resource District drain maintenance, improvement projects and weed control efforts.

Manager Weston reported Southeast Cass Water Resource District is currently working on a snagging and clearing project in conjunction with the North Dakota Department of Transportation on State Highway 46 as well as drain maintenance projects.

Education

Mr. Fredricks indicated he will discuss updates related to the Waters of the United States at a future RRJWRD meeting.

NDDWR report

Randy Gjestvang provided a report on recent meetings, activities he has participated in and provided project updates.

Mr. Gjestvang noted the NDDWR is accepting comments on its draft Dam Safety Standards Policy. The comment period for the draft policy ends August 14th.

A motion was made by Manager Thompson and seconded by Manager Perdue to direct Randy Gjestvang to gather input from member water resource districts and draft a letter outlining comments to submit to the NDDWR regarding the draft Dam Safety Standards Policy for consideration at the next meeting. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gjestvang updated the Board on the NDAWN all-season weather gages. NDAWN has ordered the materials for the fifteen gages funded by the RRJWRD and they hope to install most of them this fall. Mr. Gjestvang briefly discussed the planned locations of the gages.

The USGS is progressing on the Red River Drought Risk Analysis / low flow study investigations and is willing to present an update on the study to the RRJWRD at a future meeting. The Board directed Mr. Gjestvang to invite the USGS to the September RRJWRD Full Board meeting to provide an update on the Red River Drought Risk Analysis / low flow study investigations.

The Board discussed potential cost-share for upcoming projects in member water resource districts.

Introductions

Mr. Gjestvang introduced Yaping Chi, a new staff member of the NDDWR that will be based out of the Red River NDDWR office in Fargo.

Brian Fuder introduced himself as the new Executive Director of the Red River Retention Authority.

The Board welcomed Ms. Chi and Mr. Fuder.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the RRJWRD Executive Committee will be held at 9:30 a.m. on August 9, 2023, originating at the West Fargo Public Works building in West Fargo, North Dakota.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be considered by the Board, it was moved by Manager Burvee, seconded by Manager Perdue and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting.

APPROVED:

Josh Ihry
Chairman

ATTEST:

Carol Harbeke Lewis
Secretary-Treasurer