RED RIVER JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT FULL BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
ORIGINATING AT THE CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
TUNDRA CONFERENCE ROOM
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
JUNE 15, 2026
9:00 A.M.

A special meeting of the Red River Joint Water Resource District (RRJWRD) Full Board was held on June 15, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

Present were Josh Ihry, Steele County Water Resource District; Keith Weston, Southeast Cass Water Resource District; Bruce Anderson, Barnes County Water Resource District; Gerald Melvin, Maple River Water Resource District; Jay Colwell, North Cass Water Resource District; Richard Sundberg, Rush River Water Resource District; Michael Wyum, Sargent County Water Resource District; Melissa Hinkemeyer, Director, Secretary; Amy Hepper, Treasurer; Elizabeth Smith, Administrative Assistant; Sean M. Fredricks and Katie J. Schmidt, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.; Yaping Chi, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Dani Quissell, North Dakota Water Users Association; Brian Fuder, Red River Retention Authority (RRRA) Executive Director; Nathan Trosen, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Mike Opat, Houston Engineering, Inc.; Julie Ly and Frank Oakgrove, Red River Basin Commission; Luann Kemp, Pembina County Water Resource District Secretary-Treasurer; and Lori Christanson, Grand Forks County Water Resource District Secretary-Treasurer. Grand Forks County, Nelson County, Pembina County, Ransom County, Richland County, Traill County, and Walsh County Water Resource Districts were absent.

A quorum of Managers was not present at the meeting.

Strategic planning for restoration and reconstruction of flood retention dams in the Red River Basin

Yaping Chi and Manager Weston reviewed a draft strategic plan for restoration and reconstruction of flood retention dams in the Red River Basin. This strategic plan would be utilized to prioritize the structures that were constructed by a federal agency and are now local water resource districts' responsibility to own and maintain for cost-share funding opportunities from the RRJWRD. Ms. Chi noted this is a 10-year plan that will allow the RRJWRD to prioritize the structures based on location and size within their respective watershed along with immediate restoration and rehabilitation needs. Ms. Chi discussed proposed prioritization criteria including the weight system and point scale. Ms. Chi will be presenting the proposed prioritization criteria at upcoming Water Resource District meetings and is looking for feedback. Manager Weston suggested inviting engineering firms that have Water Resource District clients in the Red River Basin to attend the upcoming Executive Committee meeting to provide feedback on the

prioritization criteria. The Board agreed. Manager Weston stated the dams in the strategic plan should be evaluated to determine an initial list using the prioritization criteria. Discussion was held on a cost estimate for the dam inventory needed to form the initial list. It was estimated that $3,000-$3,500 would cover the research and site inspection for each dam. Ms. Chi suggested attending the site inspections with the engineers for consistency. The Board agreed. The Board discussed the timeline to complete and implement the strategic plan.

Red River Retention Authority (RRRA) update

Brian Fuder updated the Board on the activities of the RRRA. Mr. Fuder reported that the Red River Watershed Management Board has invited the RRJWRD and RRRA to join in hosting a conference with the Minnesota Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (MNFDRWG) annually. Mr. Fuder noted a joint conference with all four entities would allow for more all-encompassing topics and issues and create a closer working relationship between staff.

Mr. Fuder stated the next RRRA meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on June 17, 2026, at the Cass County Highway Department. Mr. Fuder gave a brief overview of the topics to be discussed at the upcoming meeting.

Mr. Fuder noted he will attend the upcoming event and tour in Detroit Lakes on August 25 and 26, 2026 hosted by several Minnesota entities.

Mr. Fuder also discussed a water supply advisory group he is leading to be proactive and consider future water supply needs of the Red River Basin and how retention may help meet those needs.

Mr. Fuder also indicated the RRRA is considering pursuing becoming a federal special district. The Red River Basin is frequently divided between federal regulatory agencies such as FEMA and the Corps of Engineers. A special district would provide consistency across the Red River Basin as well as provide opportunity to have a bigger influence federally.

Strategic planning for restoration and reconstruction of flood retention dams in the Red River Basin continued

A motion was made by Manager Weston and seconded by Manager Melvin to recommend the Executive Committee approve funding of the research and site inspections for the dam inventory needed to form the initial prioritization list included in the strategic plan. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be considered by the Board, the meeting adjourned without objection at 9:52 a.m.

APPROVED:

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Josh Ihry
Chairman

ATTEST:

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Melissa Hinkemeyer
Secretary