

DIVERSION AUTHORITY
PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE
FARGO CITY COMMISSION ROOM
FARGO CITY HALL, FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 2017

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met on March 22, 2017, at 1:30 p.m. at the Fargo City Commission Room, Fargo City Hall, Fargo, North Dakota.

The following Committee members were present: Rodger Olson and Jake Gust, Cass County Joint Water Resource District; Kevin Campbell, Clay County Commissioner; Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commissioner; John Strand, Fargo City Commissioner; Brenda Elmer, Moorhead City Council; Elly Peterson, Fargo-Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce; and Ken Pawluk, ad hoc Committee Member. Absent were: Gerald Van Amburg, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District; and Jason Benson, Cass County Engineer.

Also present were: Robert Wilson, Cass County Administrator; Rocky Schneider and Tammy Jo Taft, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc.; Lisa Gibbens, Representative Kevin Cramer's Office; and Michelle Anderson, Cass County Joint Water Resource District staff.

Introductions were made and the Committee welcomed Cass County Administrator Robert Wilson.

Minutes

It was moved by Mike Thorstad, seconded by Jake Gust and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of January 11 and February 22, 2017, meetings.

Corps of Engineers – groundbreaking ceremony

Rocky Schneider gave an update on preparations for the Groundbreaking and Remembering the Flood of 1997 Event sponsored by the Corps of Engineers at the diversion inlet structure south of Horace on April 17, 2017. Mr. Schneider stated invitations will be sent today. A Stakeholder meeting will be held before the Groundbreaking Event at Fargo City Hall.

North Dakota legislative update

Rocky Schneider reviewed legislative action on House Bill 1374. Discussion was held on Senate Bill 2047, which outlines new procedures to acquire property by quick-take eminent domain. Rodger Olson stated Sean Fredricks and Mike Dwyer have been working hard to negotiate appropriate language for the bill.

Rocky Schneider presented a booklet of information given to the North Dakota Senate Appropriations Committee on March 16, 2017.

Minnesota update

Representatives from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources met with City of Fargo Mayor Tim Mahoney and City of Moorhead Mayor Del Rae Williams to continue discussions, address areas of common concern and work toward mitigation for the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Rocky Schneider stated legislative leaders from across Minnesota, City of Moorhead and Clay County held a series of meetings in St. Paul at the Minnesota Capitol to discuss the need for permanent flood protection in the City of Moorhead and areas of Clay County. Kevin Campbell stated discussions were positive and Mayor Del Rae Williams agreed to ask the State of Minnesota to submit funding for the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Business Leaders Flood Taskforce update

Elly Peterson stated Business Leaders Flood Taskforce members met with legislators in support of the Metro Flood Diversion Project on Chamber Day at the Capitol on February 9, 2017. A Business Leaders Flood Taskforce meeting will be held in the next month to provide members with an update on bills from the current legislative session and establish a plan of action to support the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Communication Plan Addendum: social media

Rocky Schneider stated Diversion Authority consultants are planning to create a social media outreach working group. Mr. Schneider is coordinating with elected leaders and staff to originate and share news through social media. John Strand suggested Mr. Schneider obtain stories on the 1997 flood or other flood event from people willing to share their memories through social media. The Committee discussed the events and memories from the 1997 flood in Fargo and Grand Forks, North Dakota.

Mr. Schneider stated the *Communication Plan Addendum* was presented to the Diversion Authority Executive Directors. The Committee will consider the *Communication Plan Addendum* for approval at a future meeting.

Richland/Wilkin County Impact Summaries

Rocky Schneider presented an information sheet on the benefits, mitigation and impacts to Richland and Wilkin Counties regarding the Metro Flood Diversion Project. The Committee stated the information sheet is a great visual and will help to answer questions. Discussion was held on property values and easements. Rodger Olson stated any impact is devastating and we must continue to be fair, friendly and flexible.

Community Outreach update

Diversion Authority members traveled to Washington D.C. to meet the new Trump administration and discuss the project with federal representatives and elected officials.

Mr. Schneider provided an update to the Committee on preparations for the assessment district hearing. Brief discussion was held on the assessment of rural property owners.

Mr. Schneider stated the parties involved in the federal lawsuit met in Duluth, Minnesota to discuss lifting the preliminary injunction on the Oxbow-Hickson-Bakke Ring Levee Project on April 4, 2017. The parties agreed to allow construction along the eastern side of the City of Oxbow, to install a large stormwater pump station and construct internal drainage features.

e-Newsletter Analytics

In February, *Frequently Asked Questions* sent with the e-Newsletter was the most popular read.

FMDiversion.com

Mr. Schneider and Tammy Jo Taft stated traffic to the website and subscription numbers continue to increase.

Adjournment

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

APPROVED:

Rodger Olson
Chairman

ATTEST:

Carol Harbeke Lewis
Cass County Joint Water Resource District
Secretary-Treasurer