

**DIVERSION AUTHORITY
PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE
FARGO CITY HALL – RIVER ROOM
FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 2019**

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met on Wednesday, April 24, 2019, at Fargo City Hall. The following Committee members were present: Rodger Olson (via phone), Cass County Joint Water Resource District; Kevin Campbell, Clay County Commissioner; Rick Steen, Cass County Commission; John Strand, Fargo City Commissioner; Jacob Gust, Cass County Joint Water Resource District; Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commissioner, and Vern Bennet, Cass County Commission.

The following Committee members were absent: Grant Weyland, Clay County Commissioner; Joel Paulsen, Moorhead City Council, and Gerald Van Amburg, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District.

Others present were: Mary Scherling, Cass County Commissioner and Chair of the Diversion Board; Matt Samness, Cass County Engineer; Rocky Schneider and Tammy Jo A. Taft, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Kevin Campbell at 1:37 p.m. Mr. Jake Gust motioned to approve the meeting minutes from March. Mr. Vern Bennet seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

LEGISLATIVE TRACKING

Mr. Rocky Schneider said there were a handful of days remaining in the ND Legislative session and both chambers voted on funding \$750 million for the project. That is an increase in funding from the state of \$180 million. Although short of the original ask of \$870 million, Schneider expressed appreciation for the legislative body and their continued support of the project. He noted technical and financial advisors will be figuring out a path forward.

LAND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Mr. Schneider said the lands team is busy and there has been a lot of outreach with impacted property owners. He also noted meetings with various townships and dialogue with the city of Christine.

BUFFALO RED PERMIT PUBLIC MEETING

Mr. Campbell noted the meeting hosted by the Buffalo Red Watershed District the evening prior and said the individuals presenting on behalf of the Diversion Project were very professional and well done. There was discussion about the preparation process and who spoke at the meeting. Mr. Olson said he learns something new every time he attends a presentation or public meeting like the one at Buffalo Red. He also noted work must continue on the mitigation plan. Ms. Scherling addressed the committee and said she has a greater appreciation about the challenges facing Moorhead. There was

discussion about projects in Wolverton and Georgetown. Mr. Campbell noted the elevation of highway 75 is an issue for Georgetown and working with technical staff and the Minnesota DOT would be important. There was discussion about costs of mitigation projects including Wolverton and Georgetown.

USACE VISIT

Mr. Schneider noted Lt. Gen. Todd Semonite visited the area and toured flood protection projects. Mr. Jason Benson noted Sen. John Hoeven joined the tour along with Army Corps staff. Mr. Campbell noted that project leaders had an opportunity to discuss Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) and the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) with Lt. Gen. Semonite during his visit.

ANALYTICS AND THREE QUESTIONS VIDEO

The Committee watched a 3 Questions video with Lt. Gen. Semonite. They also reviewed the website and social media analytics report for the month of March.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was discussion about the upcoming educational trip to see the Red River Floodway south of Winnipeg in operation. Mr. Schneider encouraged committee members to share project information on social media. There was discussion about chairs and table setup for committee meetings.

Mr. Thorstad asked how much contingency was built into the cost estimate. Mr. Schneider noted it was \$252 Million and there was intense effort to produce that calculation. There was discussion about paths forward given the funding commitment from the North Dakota Legislature. There was discussion about the open seat for Richland/Wilkin JPA on the Diversion Authority Board. Mr. Thorstad noted having the door open for participation is good.

There was discussion about the flood impacts from this spring and how things may look in a year like this with the Project built.

Mr. Gust noted questions he has received about special assessments. Mr. Campbell said he is interested to hear what the finance committee discusses regarding the funding plan. Mr. Bennet said the water districts discuss things with the county, city and DA board before making any decisions.

Mr. Olson noted his recent meeting with a manager of a cooperative elevator in the impacted area. He said ongoing outreach and discussions about mitigation are very important.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.