

MINUTES OF MEETING
DIVERSION AUTHORITY PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE
CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
NOVEMBER 9, 2011

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met on November 9, 2011, at 2:00 p.m. at the Cass County Highway Department, West Fargo, North Dakota.

The following Committee members were present: Rodger Olson, Cass County Joint Water Resource District, Chairman; Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commissioner; Brenda Elmer, Moorhead City Council Member; and Gerald VanAmburg, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District. Members absent were: Brad Wimmer, Fargo City Commissioner, and Kevin Campbell, Clay County Commissioner.

Also present were Katie Young, Corps of Engineers (by telephone); Daron Selvig, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc., Public Relations Team; Pat Zavoral, Fargo City Administrator; Mark Bittner, Fargo City Engineer; Jeff Volk, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Jim Nyhof, Arden Breimeier and Greg Anderson, City of Oxbow; Carol Harbeke Lewis, Cass County Joint Water Resource District Secretary-Treasurer; and members of the local media.

Minutes

It was moved by Brenda Elmer, seconded by Mike Thorstad and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the October 26, 2011, meeting.

Website

Daron Selvig gave a demonstration on the FMDiversion.com website. Mr. Selvig hopes it will go live by early December. He will demonstrate the site at the Diversion Authority meeting tomorrow. The website will be continuously updated with new information. Mr. Thorstad said he would like to see something on the site that would show people how the project would affect them in their area. Chairman Olson said he may request authorization from the Diversion Authority to proceed with taking the website live when it is completed.

Public Outreach

The committee discussed the need for a process regarding responses to letters to the editor. Mr. Selvig said if answers cannot be found in the documents on file he would work with the Corps of Engineers. A blog on the website could also be used to put new information out.

A "Request a meeting" tab could be placed on the website for those that would like to meet with the committee / Diversion Authority representatives. Upcoming meetings include:

- MnDak Upstream Coalition on November 14th in Christine;
- Cass County Township Officers Association on November 29th in Casselton; and
- Chamber of Commerce "Holiday Business After Hours" event on December 1st at the Ramada Plaza Suites and Conference Center in Fargo; and
- The committee hopes to schedule a meeting with the Richland County Commission and Richland County Water Resource District within the next 45 days.

Right of Entry Committee report

Katie Young said the Corps of Engineers is thinking about holding upstream landowner meetings in Cass County, Richland County and a third meeting for Minnesota properties. They hope to provide a list of those to be invited soon. The venues will be selected based on the number of property owners in each of those areas. A letter will be sent to each property owner where Right of Entry is needed, along with a map showing where their property is in relation to the project and an invitation to the meeting in their area.

Geotechnical crews are out there starting work now. Most of the other field work is wrapping up for the year. Geotechnical work will include some boring. The Corps of Engineers will notify us if they need assistance with anything.

The court process is generally complete for Right of Entry on the North Dakota side. Property owners are being served this week on the Minnesota side. The Cass County Joint Water Resource District is the lead in North Dakota and the City of Moorhead is the lead for Minnesota. The Corps of Engineers is currently in the process of discerning where Hazardous Toxic Radioactive Waste (HTRW) testing is needed in the staging area.

The format of the upcoming landowner meetings was discussed. Mr. Selvig suggested the group consider splitting the room into sections to address various types of questions and comments. A general session could be held at the end of the meeting for more general type information. An open house format could be used before and after the main meeting.

Jim Nyhof said the City of Oxbow is looking for what the Public Outreach Committee can do for them. They would like to get an understanding of what is going to happen in their area, as well as what the process and time frame will be. They have taken the position that the project will not go around them and need to start focusing on what mitigation will be for them.

Pat Zavoral outlined the project schedule and pointed out that the project has to get authorization from Congress before any land can be purchased or any dirt is moved. Jeff Volk said it will be important to set out a communication plan after the project is authorized to inform property owners how things will be handled. Mr. Zavoral said CH2M Hill can help with public outreach. They have talked to Mr. Selvig and they will be meeting soon.

Mark Bittner said property owners in the protected area also have questions as to when they will have protection and whether they can sell their house. More meetings are needed with property owners in and out of the protected areas.

The Corps of Engineers has some funding for design and can start on that prior to the Chief's Report being completed. The outlet channel location is pretty well defined and they continue working on alignment issues.

Ms. Young said the Chief's Report is still on schedule as far as she knows. The Corps of Engineers is now going through the comments received from the Final Feasibility and Environmental Impact Statement and will respond to anything new or substantive.


Meeting schedule

The next Public Outreach Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 23, 2011, at 8:30 a.m. at the Cass County Highway Department.

Adjournment

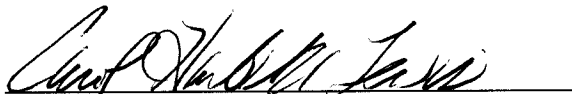
There being no further business to be considered, it was moved by Mike Thorstad, seconded by Brenda Elmer and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting

APPROVED:



Rodger Olson
Chairman

ATTEST:



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