

MINUTES OF MEETING  
DIVERSION AUTHORITY PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE  
CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT  
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA  
DECEMBER 21, 2011

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met on December 21, 2011, at 8:30 a.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; Kevin Campbell, Clay County Commissioner and Brenda Elmer, Moorhead City Commissioner. Absent were: Brad Wimmer, Fargo City Commissioner and Gerald VanAmburg, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District.

Also present were Tom Waters, CH2MHill, Project Management Firm; Eric Dodds and Daron Selvig, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc., Public Relations Team; Lee Beauvais and Brad Dahl, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Jason Benson, Cass County Engineer; Carol Harbeke Lewis, Cass County Joint Water Resource District Secretary-Treasurer; and members of the local media.

**Minutes**

It was moved by Mike Thorstad, seconded by Kevin Campbell and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the November 23, 2011, meeting.

**Website**

Daron Selvig said the website [FMDiversion.com](http://FMDiversion.com) went live last week. It will continue to be updated with current news and information, along with revisions and edits as the committee sees fit.

Under the "Featured Content" section, it will be noted that this contains information that has just been posted.

Mike Thorstad suggested adding a more prominent link to the home page and using a menu that will not require people to go through so many layers to get to what they want to see.

People will be referred to the "FAQ" section for answers to their questions. Kevin Campbell asked if there is a way to track where the questions are from. A valid email address is required to post a question.

Eric Dodds said they have had some positive reaction to website and that people are finding it useful.

### **Flood Diversion Authority logo**

The committee reviewed a copy of the recently issued Flood Diversion Authority logo. It is being used on deliverables from CH2MHill to the Diversion Authority. Letterhead is also being developed using the logo.

### **Plans for Chief's Report signing on December 22, 2011**

Eric Dodds said the Chief's Report signing ceremony will begin at 1:15 p.m. on December 22, 2011. The press, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development, local politicians and dignitaries have been invited. A formal press conference will be held after the signing ceremony. The event will conclude around 2:15 p.m. Cable access live will record and broadcast the event and it will also be available for viewing on the website.

Tom Waters said it is hoped the Assistant Secretary of the Army will sign the Record of Decision in April 2012. Congressional authorization will also be needed to fund the project.

### **Public outreach**

Mr. Campbell said he received a call from Senator Al Franken's office requesting a small meeting with Moorhead Mayor Voxland. The meeting has tentatively been scheduled for January 10th. He asked Chairman Olson and Mr. Selvig to attend the meeting. Tom Waters will also participate. Brenda Elmer suggested engaging Nancy Otto, as the designee of Moorhead on the Diversion Authority.

The committee discussed setting up meetings with Senator Klobuchar and Congressman Peterson.

Cass Rural Water Users will be invited to the next committee meeting. They have made suggestions to the Corps of Engineers regarding issues with their wells south of town.

Additional landowner meetings will be held, but none are scheduled at this time. Follow-up meetings with individuals or groups will be held, as necessary. Mr. Dodds said they are putting together a matrix of obstacles facing the project and strategies to address them. Presentations will be made to the leadership team and Diversion Authority using monthly themes.

Mr. Waters said a lands plan needs to be developed for staff to articulate the process. The Public Outreach Committee will be heavily interrelated with lands planning. The Mitigation Committee would also need to be involved.

### **Right of Entry Committee report**

Lee Beauvais reported on the Right of Entry process. There are three groups of landowners:

- Those that previously granted access, which have expired or will expire in the near future;
- Parcels identified from Phase I for Phase II cultural, which is more invasive and requires borings to see what is there. The original Rights of Entry did not include this, which is mostly on properties around the rivers; and
- New parcels along the updated alignment at the north end of the project, which are needed by spring to get the work done.

A small number of landowners that originally granted Right of Entry, but later rescinded it or changed their mind, which will go through the court process.

There were few questions on the entire project at the December 12, 2011, meeting in Harwood. Most were more specific as to how much land would be needed and how much they would get paid for the land. The process will be laid out from the Federal perspective. They will need to work with the Diversion Authority on additional options / flexibility.

Mr. Beauvais said loss of acres is the biggest concern property owners had. They also indicated they like the idea of swapping land. Chairman Olson said he would also like to see that. He does not want to compete to purchase land, but if someone has land for sale, he would like to see the Diversion Authority purchase it. Mr. Dodds said they need to have some strategy discussion if more acres are needed than they have. Chairman Olson said they would need to set priorities. Credits for Federal match were discussed. Chairman Olson also suggested they get input from farmers. Mr. Dodds said they have some farmers to provide a sounding board on land issues. Mr. Waters said their input is significant.

Mr. Campbell pointed out the need to be careful that correct answers are provided to questions and that correct information is posted on the website. Chairman Olson said the Diversion Authority asked the Public Outreach Committee to respond to a letter to the editor in *The Forum*. Colonel Price has done that, so he believes no further action is necessary. Brenda Elmer would like to see a method in place as to how to handle responses to letters to the editor. She would also like information to be supplied to public officials to keep them up-to-date on the project. Mr. Selvig will work with the committee on that.

The committee discussed how to engage Richland County and Wilkin County in the project. Chairman Olson believes a meeting should be held with the officials in those counties. Mr. Campbell said they need to be sure someone from the Corps of Engineers is present to answer some of their questions. Mr. Waters said they need to look at more interactive sessions, which could be large or small meetings. Mr. Campbell will contact Wilkin County to set up a meeting.

**Meeting schedule**

The next Public Outreach Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 11, 2012, at 8:30 a.m. at the Cass County Highway Department.

**Adjournment**

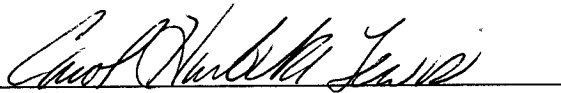
There being no further business to be considered by the committee, the meeting adjourned without objection.

APPROVED:



Rodger Olson  
Chairman

ATTEST:



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