

MINUTES OF MEETING
DIVERSION AUTHORITY PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE
CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
JULY 8, 2015

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met on July 8, 2015, 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; Ken Pawluk, Cass County Commissioner; Kevin Campbell, Clay County Commission; Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commissioner; Brenda Elmer, Moorhead City Council; Gerald Van Amburg, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District; and Jacob Gust, ad hoc Committee Member. Absent were Melissa Sobolik, Fargo City Commissioner and Elly Peterson, Fargo-Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce.

Also present were Rocky Schneider and Daron Selvig, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc. (AE2S); Lyndon Pease, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Lisa Gibbens and Dirk Jasperse, Congressman Kevin Cramer's Office; Kevin Fisher, Fargo-Moorhead Area Association of Realtors; Michael Pfau, Home Builders Association of Fargo-Moorhead; Diane Ista, Red River Retention Committee; Don Nelson, Clay County resident; and Michelle Anderson, Cass County Joint Water Resource District staff.

Minutes

It was moved by Mike Thorstad, seconded by Gerald Van Amburg and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2015, meeting.

Right of Entry Committee report

Lyndon Pease gave an update on Right of Entry. Mr. Pease stated survey access slows during the summer months. Most surveys are completed before planting begins and resume again in the fall after harvest. Geotechnical surveys will be done along the diversion channel and the I-29 road raise. Public meetings will not be needed for access in this area.

The Corps of Engineers will continue to take river flow measurements and stage discharge measurements along the diversion channel and the Maple River aqueduct.

Discussion was held on the *Right of Entry Agreements*, the survey process, timelines, and survey reports. Surveys have not been conducted in Clay County, Minnesota.

Business Leaders Flood Taskforce update

Rocky Schneider gave an update on the Business Leaders Flood Taskforce committee meeting held on July 7, 2015. Mr. Schneider commended the members of the taskforce committee and stated they have been very supportive.

Complacency was a concern that was expressed and discussion was held on how to continue to motivate people to support permanent flood protection.

Discussion was held on the June 2015 North Dakota Water magazine article, *Economic Report Serves as Reminder of Need for Fargo-Moorhead Diversion*. The Greater Fargo-Moorhead Economic Development Corporation's "Regional Economic Impact of Cass County, ND, and Clay County, MN" report and PowerPoint presentation is posted in the "library" section on the FM Diversion website.

ND State Water Commission education / tour

Representatives from the State Water Commission will be in Fargo on July 9, 2015, to educate those enrolled in the Red River Watershed Institute on watershed management and water resource issues on the Red River. They will be touring the construction on the In Town Levees Project and the location of some home buyouts.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources *Environmental Impact Statement*

A draft of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources *Environmental Impact Statement* (MNDNR EIS) will be released in late August. A preliminary release was made to obtain technical comments.

Recent media recap

Fargo Mayor Mahoney held a press conference on June 25, 2015, to talk about the ongoing need for permanent flood protection.

Discussion was held on home acquisitions in the City of Oxbow and the farmland acquisition process. The media has been focusing on the home acquisition and relocation values.

North Dakota State University is conducting a study on the impact the Metro Flood Diversion Project will have on farmland production.

Kevin Campbell encouraged everyone to remain vigilant and to continue to educate the metro area and surrounding communities on the importance of permanent flood protection. Chairman Olson reminded everyone it took approximately 20 years before actual construction work began on the Maple River Dam. He stated the Committee needs to continue to work with property owners and to help people see the localized benefits involved with the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Cemetery report

Discussion was held on the draft of the *Cemetery Mitigation Plan* mailed to the cemeteries and the State Historic Preservation Offices in Minnesota and North Dakota. Comments

were requested by July. A subcommittee to plan mitigation for the cemeteries and provide public outreach was thought to be beneficial, but will not be formed until the final release of the MNDNR EIS.

E-Newsletter topics

Daron Selvig reported the next Diversion Dialogue E-Newsletter topics will include Senator Hoeven’s work on the “Move America Act of 2015” to expand tax-exempt private activity bonds and create a new infrastructure for private groups to provide flexible funding for flood control projects. Other articles will highlight the requirement for housing relocations to follow federal guidelines and the City of Oxbow joining the Diversion Authority lawsuit.

Rocky Schneider stated the FM Diversion website will be undergoing changes and technical updates.

FMDiversion.com analytics

Based on the analytics from last month, two articles on the website were of equal interest; protection for homeowners on higher flood insurance rates due to the Diversion Project and support for the City of Oxbow while complying with the injunction. The website received more viewers in June than in May. Questions were submitted through the website in June.

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