

MINUTES OF MEETING
DIVERSION AUTHORITY PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE
CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
JUNE 10, 2015

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met on June 10, 2015, at 2:00 p.m. at the Cass County Highway Department, West Fargo, North Dakota.

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

Also present were Terry Williams, Corps of Engineers (by phone); Rocky Schneider and Daron Selvig, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc. (AE2S); Lyndon Pease, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Kevin Fisher, Fargo-Moorhead Area Association of Realtors; Michael Pfau, Home Builders Association of Fargo-Moorhead; Sue Nelson, Moorhead resident; Don Nelson, Clay County resident; Carol Harbeke Lewis and Michelle Anderson, Cass County Joint Water Resource District staff.

Kevin Campbell called the meeting to order.

Minutes

It was moved by Mike Thorstad, seconded by Gerald Van Amburg and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2015, meeting.

Right of Entry Committee report

Lyndon Pease gave an update on Right of Entry. Phase I cultural resource surveys and geotechnical soil borings will resume in the fall along the diversion channel alignment and in the staging area. The Corps of Engineers will continue to take water surface and river discharge measurements throughout the summer at the Maple River Dam aqueduct site, depending on the water level.

Business Leaders Flood Taskforce update

Discussion was held on the MNDNR Environmental Impact Study (EIS) draft report timeline, the impact of higher flood insurance costs for homeowners, and FEMA.

Cemetery Mitigation Plan

Terry Williams stated she provided the Diversion Authority with a detailed update on the timeline for the cemetery mitigation study including site visits, cultural surveys, right of entry, and mitigation alternatives. A draft *Cemetery Mitigation Plan* was mailed to all 11 cemeteries and the SHPO offices in Minnesota and North Dakota with a request to send comments by July. The draft *Cemetery Mitigation Plan* is also available on the FM Diversion website. Brief discussion was held on forming a subcommittee to plan mitigation for the cemeteries and discuss public outreach. Mitigation cannot begin until the MNDNR releases a draft of the EIS.

Upstream Mitigation Update – Oxbow-Hickson-Bakke

Discussion was held on the interpretation and impact of the temporary injunction ordered by a Minnesota U.S. District Judge to halt the construction on the Oxbow-Hickson-Bakke Ring Levee Project. The Diversion Authority intends to file an appeal and a request for further clarification of the Order.

Rocky Schneider gave an update on the public meeting held at the Hickson Community Center on May 19, 2015. Topics discussed at the meeting were the interpretation of the injunction and the impact the injunction will have on the residents in the City of Oxbow.

Mr. Schneider reviewed and discussed the current status of homes in the City of Oxbow. Homeowners, builders, and their employees are concerned about losing income. The Finance Committee will discuss the potential for placing money in escrow accounts at a future meeting to help alleviate builder concerns.

Several city officials, including Mayor Mahoney, City of Fargo, and Mayor Williams, City of Moorhead, took a tour of the City of Oxbow to see the site of the Oxbow-Hickson-Bakke Ring Levee Project.

E-Newsletter topics

Daron Selvig reported the next Diversion Dialogue E-Newsletter Topics will include the draft *Cemetery Mitigation Plan*. Mr. Selvig stated people remain interested in articles on the benefits of the diversion and why the diversion is being built.

FMDiversion.com analytics

Based on the analytics from last month, the most viewed article was *FM Diversion Will Protect Thousands of Jobs*. People were also interested in viewing information on diversion financing and the information presented at the public meetings. No questions were submitted through the website for the month of May.

Brenda Elmer said she would like to see information on the website relating to comments from FEMA about re-mapping the area in 5 years if flood protection is not in place and what that would mean to area property owners.

Diversion Authority update on economic development

Mr. Schneider reported that Chad Peterson, Chairman of the Cass County Commission, provided a presentation to the Diversion Authority on the regional economic impacts to the area in the event of a catastrophic flood event using data compiled in reports prepared by the Greater Fargo Moorhead Economic Development Corporation.

Agricultural Policy Subcommittee update

Brief discussion was held on the North Dakota State University (NDSU) Agricultural Risk Study. The meeting to go over the preliminary results of the study was cancelled. Additional funds were requested to re-run the model to include information from several area producers that were part of a focus group meeting. The legislature asked NDSU to expand the study to include areas outside of the staging area. Annualized damages will be part of the study.

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