

MINUTES OF MEETING
DIVERSION AUTHORITY PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE
CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
JANUARY 13, 2016

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met on January 13, 2016, at 1:00 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; Kevin Campbell, Clay County Commissioner; Ken Pawluk, Cass County Commissioner; Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commissioner; Brenda Elmer, Moorhead City Council; and Jacob Gust, ad hoc Committee Member (by phone). Absent were Melissa Sobolik, Fargo City Commissioner; Gerald Van Amburg, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District; and Elly Peterson, Fargo-Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce.

Also present were Terry Williams, Corps of Engineers (by phone); Eric Dodds and Daron Selvig, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc. (AE2S); Lyndon Pease, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Jessica Lee, Senator Hoeven's Office; Allison Myhre, Representative Peterson's Office; Mark Bittner, Fargo Director of Engineering; Kevin Fisher, Fargo-Moorhead Area Association of Realtors; Diane Ista, Red River Retention Committee; and Michelle Anderson, Cass County Joint Water Resource District staff.

Minutes

It was moved by Kevin Campbell, seconded by Mike Thorstad and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2015, meeting.

Right of Entry Committee report

Lyndon Pease gave an update on Right of Entry. The Corps of Engineers is working on the 2016 Right of Entry survey and property acquisition list for the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Discussion was held on federal funding, the construction timeline, final alignment design, city planning, and Right of Entry for property in Minnesota.

Surveys were completed in November along the southern alignment. Several Committee members expressed concern for potential impacts of moving forward with the southern alignment. Eric Dodds stated the diversion inlet structure is a common feature of both options and necessary to go around the Sheyenne Diversion. Terry Williams stated the Corps will continue to work with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and is meeting with the Minnesota DNR this week to explain the Corps' schedule to obligate federal funding for the project.

Senator Hoeven Roundtable

Eric Dodds gave a brief update on the Diversion Authority Roundtable informational meeting on December 22, 2015. Mr. Dodds stated U.S. Senator Hoeven believed the meeting was very valuable and was satisfied with the information and answers presented.

Diversion Authority Goals for 2016

Mr. Dodds stated after hearing from congressional delegates on potential federal funding, Diversion Authority Chairman Darrell Vanyo put together *Diversion Authority Goals for 2016*. Mr. Dodds summarized the goals and stated they focus on mitigation of farmland and cemeteries, connection and conversation for potential voluntary property acquisitions, and the Metro Flood Diversion Project costs. It is hopeful resolutions will be met with the release of the final *Environmental Impact Statement*, a dismissal of the preliminary injunction for construction of the Oxbow-Hickson-Bakee Ring Levee Project, and federal appropriations for construction.

Mike Thorstad complimented Chairman Vanyo on the letter and said a detailed update on the concerns with the project is appreciated.

Upstream Outreach Activity Summary

Mr. Dodds reviewed the *Upstream Outreach Activity Summary*.

In September 2014, the Diversion Authority sent a letter to Perry Miller, Chairman of the Richland Wilkin Joint Powers Authority, and Dave Morken, Chairman of the MNDAK Upstream Coalition, offering them a seat on the Diversion Authority board. The offer was refused at that time. In December 2015, following the meetings with U.S. Senators Hoeven and Heitkamp, the offer was again extended to Chairman Morken for a seat on the board. The position has not been accepted.

A joint Diversion Authority meeting with the MNDAK Upstream Coalition has been proposed for February 2016.

Mr. Dodds stated John Shockley is working with the Moorhead City Council to amend the *Limited Joint Powers Agreement*.

Brief discussion was held on voluntary property acquisition buyouts and delays.

Community outreach update

Jason Benson met with Stanley Township officials to discuss the diversion inlet structure south of Horace. Chairman Olson stated he provided the Red River Joint Water Resource District with an update on the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Mr. Dodds stated AE2S provided information and answered questions at the North Dakota Water Convention and Irrigation Expo. Brenda Elmer was recently asked to speak to local Boy Scouts and answered many questions regarding the project.

Information on the Metro Flood Diversion Project will be available at the Red River Basin Commission Conference in Grand Forks, North Dakota, on January 19-21, 2016. A meeting with the City of Horace will be held on February 1, 2016. A presentation will be given to the Moorhead Business Association on February 9, 2016. It was suggested an update also be provided to the Kindred School District.

Discussion was held to schedule quarterly 6-Entity Diversion Authority informational meetings, updates to the Business Leaders Flood Taskforce, confusion surrounding Fargo flood protection versus the Metro Flood Diversion Project, and the need to keep the public informed on the project, from its start to present day status.

E-Newsletter topics

Daron Selvig updated the Committee on the November and December articles published on the website. The most popular articles viewed for November and December provided information on the progress of the Metro Flood Diversion Project and the legislative update on authorization and funding for flood protection construction. Mr. Selvig stated a future article will be published on the website and in the North Dakota Water magazine on Chairman Vanyo's *Diversion Authority Goals for 2016*. Another article for the website will focus on retention projects that will benefit the Fargo-Moorhead area.

FMDiversion.com

Based on the analytics from November and December, almost half of the articles viewed were from a mobile device. Questions were also submitted through the website and answered accordingly.

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