

DIVERSION AUTHORITY
PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE
CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2016
1:00 P.M.

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met on August 10, 2016, at 1:00 p.m. at the Cass County Highway Department, West Fargo, North Dakota.

The following Committee members were present: Rodger Olson and Jacob Gust, Cass County Joint Water Resource District; Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commissioner; John Strand, Fargo City Commissioner; Heidi Durand, Moorhead City Council; Gerald Van Amburg, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District; and Elly Peterson, Fargo-Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce. Absent were: Kevin Campbell, Clay County Commissioner; Ken Pawluk, Cass County Commissioner; and Jason Benson, Cass County Engineer.

Also present were: Rocky Schneider and Tammy Jo Taft, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc. (AE2S); Diane Ista, MNDak Upstream Coalition; Karen O'Connor and Jer Pleimling, OSSI; Jeremy Hackley, Fargo resident; and Michelle Anderson, Cass County Joint Water Resource District staff.

Minutes

It was moved by Jake Gust, seconded by Mike Thorstad and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2016, meeting.

Communications Plan update

Rocky Schneider reviewed the draft *Communications Plan*. He asked the Committee to review, offer suggestions and approve the plan at the next meeting.

Property Acquisition update

Mr. Schneider reviewed the *Phase 1 Property Acquisition Communications Work Plan* and the *Occupied Residential Property Acquisition Communications Work Plan*. The communication plans were presented and reviewed by the Diversion Authority Land Management Committee and the Cass County Joint Water Resource District.

Mr. Schneider gave an update to the Committee on *Right of Entry* and pre-acquisition activities. *Right of Entry Agreements* were sent to request surveys on property for the outlet structures on the north end of the diversion channel. Mr. Schneider stated he will coordinate with Jason Benson to schedule township meetings in that area. An informational meeting will be held to update the public on the project in the Fargo-Moorhead area at a later date.

Brief discussion was held on agreements to address drainage and transportation issues in the Cass County Water Resource Districts regarding the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Mr. Schneider stated many property owners in the staging area have requested information on how the project will impact their property. Communication and updates on the project will be sent to property owners in the staging area in the next two months.

Request for Qualifications (RFQ) are due September 7, 2016, and *Request for Proposals* (RFP) will be issued later this year regarding the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Discussion was held on various matters, including the land acquisition timeline and 2017 budget, property owners interested in voluntary land acquisition, the sales tax extension to help fund the Metro Flood Diversion Project, mitigation and flowage easements in the staging area.

Rocky Schneider updated the Committee on the information sheet to share with elected officials that will offer suggestions and provide contact information regarding inquiries about the *Right of Entry* and the land acquisition process. The draft was presented to the Diversion Authority Finance Committee, Land Management Committee and discussed at the Cass County Joint Water Resource District meeting. Chairman Olson and John Strand stated they appreciate the information and feel it will be a helpful guide

Business Leaders Flood Taskforce update

The Business Leaders Flood Taskforce have a meeting scheduled for the end of August. The Business Leaders Flood Taskforce will advocate for the extension of the current sales tax to help fund the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

John Strand stated the City of Fargo and Cass County Commission will vote next week on the language to use on the ballot in November for the extension of the flood control sales tax to help fund the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Discussion was held on the Public Outreach Committee's role to educate the public. It was suggested the Committee schedule a special meeting to develop an education plan for the extension of the flood control sales tax. Erik Johnson provided information to the City of Fargo and Mr. Schneider will inquire to see if Mr. Johnson is available to speak to the Committee.

ND Water Topics Overview Committee update

The Diversion Authority gave an update on the Metro Flood Diversion Project to the State Water Commission (SWC) on July 26, 2016, in West Fargo. The Water Resource District and township officials were encouraged to anticipate future drainage and transportation issues for the Public-Private Partnership (P3) Developer.

Brief discussion was held on the appeal filed by the Richland County Water Resource District against the Office of the State Engineer. Dorsey and Whitney, LLP will represent the Diversion Authority.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources update

Rocky Schneider updated the Committee on discussions regarding the permitting process with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and stated the Diversion Authority is drafting a comprehensive mitigation plan to address mitigation concerns and impacts regarding the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Mr. Schneider stated permits will be requested for each phase of the project in Minnesota and North Dakota.

Gerald Van Amburg stated the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources sent communication to the Buffalo-Red River Water Resource District requesting they consider potential future drainage and transportation issues in the watershed regarding the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Community Outreach update

Lieutenant General Todd T. Semonite, Chief of Engineers and Commanding General of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be visiting the area on August 23, 2016, to tour the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

The North Dakota Water Education Foundation's *Fargo-Moorhead Flood Facilities* tour is Wednesday, September 21, 2016. Chairman Olson stated the tour will include either the Maple River Dam or the Upper Maple River Dam, and he was asked to help. A brief history was given to the Committee on the North Dakota Water Education Foundation. Mr. Schneider stated many Metro Flood Diversion Project articles have been submitted to the *North Dakota Water* magazine to update and educate the public.

E-Newsletter topics

Mr. Schneider gave an update to the Committee on the release of two articles in July regarding the *Project Partnership Agreement* Signing Ceremony and the *Request for Qualifications* (RFQ) to potential Public Private Partnership (P3) Developers. The July newsletter was the first sent using the new logo and layout for the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

FMDiversion.com

Mr. Schneider briefly reviewed the FMDiversion.com website statistics and questions submitted to the website in July. Brief discussion was held on website disclaimers.

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