

DIVERSION AUTHORITY
PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE
FARGO CITY COMMISSION ROOM, FARGO CITY HALL
FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2017

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met on April 26, 2017, at 1:30 p.m. at the Fargo City Commission Room, Fargo City Hall, Fargo, North Dakota.

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

Also present were: Grant Weyland, Clay County Commissioner; Robert Wilson, Cass County Administrator; Eric Dodds, Rocky Schneider and Tammy Jo Taft, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc.; 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 March 22, 2017, meeting.

Business Leaders Flood Taskforce update

Elly Peterson stated the North Dakota Legislature and Governor Doug Burgum have approved House Bill 1020, which includes \$66.5 Million in funding for the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Ms. Peterson stated she is coordinating with the Business Leaders Flood Taskforce to keep business leaders updated on the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Chairman Olson thanked Ms. Peterson and the Business Leaders Flood Taskforce for their advocacy and support.

Outreach Working Group

Rocky Schneider updated the Committee on the Outreach Working Group and stated the group consists of city officials, engineers and consultants. Mr. Schneider stated the group met every other week to discuss social media content to inform the public on the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Governor Doug Burgum met with representatives of the Diversion Authority and suggested consultants create an effective social media outreach action plan.

Discussion was held on the purpose and format of the Outreach Working Group. Kevin Campbell stated the planning efforts by the Public Outreach Committee to provide education and updates to civic clubs, organizations and town hall meetings has been very effective, and he would like to see those education and updates continue to those groups. Mr. Campbell expressed concern the public will become confused because the titles of the Public Outreach Committee and the Outreach Working Group are so similar. The Committee suggested Mr. Schneider clarify the goal of the group with the intent to be an advisory group to the Public Outreach Committee.

It was moved by Jake Gust and seconded by Mary Scherling to approve the *Social Media Addendum* to the *Communications Plan*, as presented by Rocky Schneider, and recommend approval of the same to the Diversion Authority.

Discussion was held on utilizing City of Fargo, City of Moorhead, Cass County and Clay County websites to create social media platforms to provide updates to the public regarding the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Kevin Campbell supports social media updates on specific aspects of the Metro Flood Diversion Project, but cautioned the Metro Flood Diversion Project cannot be explained in a soundbite.

Outreach Plan to Impacted Property Owners

Rocky Schneider presented and reviewed the *Plan for Outreach to Impacted Properties*. As soon as FEMA issues the *Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR)*, the Diversion Authority plans to provide additional outreach to impacted properties located in the upstream mitigation area, Phase III of the diversion channel, under the footprint of the southern embankment and associated infrastructure, and property needed for the Comstock ring levee. Eric Dodds stated a comprehensive impact and hydrologic model will be analyzed to determine impacts to property and infrastructure. Property owners will receive communication and an invitation to a one-on-one meeting to discuss the impact to their property and the options available.

Discussion was held on the Corps of Engineers regulations, maintenance and annual inspections on certified ring dike levees, the Winnipeg Diversion, options offered to property owners for acquisition and mitigation, the process for property owners to obtain a CLOMR, property acquisition and lots available for property owners in the City of Oxbow, impacts to property on the west side of the diversion channel, and the draft Mitigation Plan.

Corps of Engineers – groundbreaking ceremony

Rocky Schneider presented a summary video of the Groundbreaking and Remembering the Flood of 1997 Event sponsored by the Corps of Engineers at the site of the Metro Flood Diversion Inlet Structure near the intersection of Cass County Highways 16 and 17, south of Horace, North Dakota.

North Dakota legislative update

Rocky Schneider thanked the Committee for its support and efforts to help educate the public and speak to legislators on House Bill 1020, approved by the Legislature and

signed by Governor Doug Burgum on March 3, 2017. The State of North Dakota has pledged a total of \$570 Million to help support permanent flood protection for Fargo and surrounding communities in Cass County. Chairman Olson stated Sean Fredricks made a tremendous effort to educate legislators on legislative bills affecting Water Resource Districts.

Discussion was held on quick-take eminent domain recently modified by the legislature and the process to obtain approval by the Cass County Commission. Mr. Schneider stated Mark Brodshaug and a property owner were guests on News and Views with Joel Heitkamp this morning.

Minnesota update

Rocky Schneider updated the Committee on the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Working Group. Mr. Schneider stated the DNR Working Group has been very productive and are working toward solutions.

Kevin Campbell stated legislative leaders from the across Minnesota, as well as officials from the City of Moorhead and Clay County, met at the Minnesota Capitol in St. Paul to discuss the need for permanent flood protection in the City of Moorhead and areas of Clay County. Mr. Campbell stated many legislative leaders do not have information on the Metro Flood Diversion Project and were unaware of the issues involving the Minnesota DNR. Grant Weyland stated the meeting provided valuable information to Minnesota legislators and was very positive.

Discussion was held on the denial of the *Dam Safety and Work in Public Waters Permit* for the Metro Flood Diversion Project, the negative impact of the permit denial to residents in Minnesota, the impact of flood events on property in Richland and Wilkin Counties without the project and whether the resolution passed in Wilkin County violates Minnesota state law.

Website and Social Media Analytics

Rocky Schneider presented a video featuring West Fargo resident Karen Kraft's memories from the Flood of 1997 and the impact of the flood upon her life. Corps of Engineers Project Manager Terry Williams was also featured in a video. The videos can be viewed on the FMDiversion.com website.

Tammy Jo Taft stated the E-newsletter has driven traffic to the YouTube account and videos on the website. Project developments were the most viewed articles in the E-newsletter. A Twitter campaign resulted in 64 new followers, many of them unrelated to the project.

Agricultural Policy Subcommittee meeting update

Chairman Olson gave an update to the Committee on the Agricultural Policy Subcommittee meeting held on April 4, 2017.

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