

DIVERSION AUTHORITY
PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE
FARGO CITY COMMISSION ROOM, FARGO CITY HALL
FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 2017

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met on May 24, 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 (by phone) and Jake Gust, Cass County Joint Water Resource District; Kevin Campbell, Clay County Commissioner; Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commissioner; John Strand, Fargo City Commissioner; Elly Peterson, Fargo-Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce; and Jason Benson, Cass County Engineer. Absent were: Brenda Elmer, Moorhead City Council; and Gerald Van Amburg, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District.

Also present were: Darrell Vanyo, Diversion Authority; Robert Wilson, Cass County Administrator; Eric Dodds, Rocky Schneider and Tammy Jo Taft, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc.; Michelle Anderson, Cass County Joint Water Resource District staff; and those whose names appear on the attached roster.

Minutes

It was moved by Jake Gust, seconded by Mike Thorstad and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2017, meeting.

Metro Flood Diversion Project – federal funding update

Rocky Schneider updated the Committee on federal funding for the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Mr. Schneider stated the Metro Flood Diversion Project was not included in the President's fiscal year 2018 budget proposal; however, the project will receive funding through the Corps of Engineers' *2017 Work Plan*. Mr. Schneider has not received confirmation on the amount of federal funding projected, but the amount will be an increase from the Corps of Engineers *2016 Work Plan*. The 2017 funds will be used to construct the diversion inlet structure, design the southern embankment and other environmental mitigation projects.

Discussion was held on the President's 2018 budget proposal, progress on the diversion inlet structure and the decision by Congress to appropriate funding for the Metro Flood Diversion Project as one of six new projects nationwide to start construction. John Strand expressed concern for the funding timeline due to the response by the State of Minnesota to the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Mr. Schneider stated the P3 process has not been fully incorporated into the federal budget. Kevin Campbell stated compensation from the local, state and federal funding is a positive cost ratio analysis not included in the criteria

and the federal return on investment utilizing federal funding has not been communicated. Mr. Schneider stated the North Dakota congressional delegation has sent correspondence to the Office of Management and Budget in Washington, D.C., but educating administration on the P3 funding model will take time.

Corps of Engineers – Fargo visit

A special Diversion Authority meeting will be held on May 30, 2017, with special guests Major General Donald (Ed) Jackson Jr., Deputy Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations, and Mr. Let Mon Lee, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Legislation, to address the Metro Flood Diversion Project and the state of federal funding.

FEMA Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) and Plan for Outreach to Impacted Properties

Rocky Schneider stated the FEMA Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) is estimated to be complete by early June. 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. Mr. Schneider presented the *Plan for Outreach to Impacted Properties* with an updated timeline. City and township officials received correspondence informing them of the CLOMR process.

Discussion was held on the FEMA floodplain remapping and CLOMR process, the 800 homes that may be added to the floodplain in the City of Moorhead, and surveys needed on property in Minnesota for the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Kevin Campbell stated access was approved for biotic and geomorphological surveys needed by the Corps of Engineers on property owned by the City of Moorhead and Clay County. Eric Dodds stated access on property in the State of Minnesota will be discussed at the Land Management Committee meeting.

Metro Flood Diversion Project - assessment district outreach

Rocky Schneider updated the Committee on the FM Flood Risk Management District No. 1 assessment process and stated he participated in a radio interview and answered questions regarding FM Flood Risk Management District No. 1. The Diversion Project Assessment Committee established a methodology to assess property throughout a benefiting area for the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Ballots were mailed in early 2015 and the vote passed. An *Order Establishing FM Flood Risk Management District No. 1* was approved on May 14, 2015. Current sales tax proceeds are expected to provide adequate revenue to repay the debt and annual payments for construction of the Metro Flood Diversion Project. The assessment district was needed to provide a more effective financing tool and provide better financing terms (lower interest rates and lower coverage requirements) for the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

The FM Flood Risk Management District No. 1 assessment hearing will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 6, 2017, at the FargoDome, Fargo, North Dakota. Property owners within the FM Flood Risk Management District No. 1 assessment district will have

the opportunity to present comments / objections to their proposed individual property assessments. Following the assessment hearing, Cass County Joint Water Resource District will review and consider all comments submitted to determine if any modifications, revisions or corrections are needed to the assessment list. The Cass County Joint Water Resource District is responsible for approval of the final assessment list.

Website and Social Media Analytics

Mr. Schneider encouraged the Committee to direct people interested in the Metro Flood Diversion Project to sign up for the E-newsletter and stated the assessment district information has significantly increased traffic to the website.

Tammy Jo Taft gave an update to the Committee on the *Diversion Dialogue eNewsletter Analytics* for March 2017. The most viewed video for the month of March 2017 explains the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Ms. Taft stated the videos are gaining popularity and more people are sharing the videos through social media. The twitter statistics show an increase in followers and impressions.

Video Series - "Three Questions"

Mr. Schneider and Ms. Taft presented "3 Questions," a video featuring City of Fargo Engineer Mark Bittner regarding the Metro Flood Diversion Project. The video is can be viewed on the FMDiversion.com website. The Committee offered suggestions and comments on the video.

Crisis Communications Planning

Discussion was held on developing a policy to communicate crisis information, such as an accident or a death. Further discussion and a draft of the policy will be presented at a future meeting.

Construction Outreach Update

Rocky Schneider presented a flyover video of construction at the diversion inlet structure south of Horace, North Dakota. Jason Benson gave an overview of the construction activities. The Committee suggested the video be released via social media.

Mr. Benson gave an update on the diversion inlet structure and the road closing and detour at Cass County Highway 17 beginning on May 30, 2017. Mr. Benson stated the detour will be in place until early October when a bypass route is expected to be complete. More information is located on the Cass County website. Discussion was held on the property necessary for the diversion inlet structure, realignment of Cass County Highways 16 and 17, the detour route, and a construction timeline.

Business Leaders Flood Taskforce update

Elly Peterson stated notification will be given to the Business Leaders Flood Taskforce of the special Diversion Authority meeting on May 30, 2017. Ms. Peterson stated she will continue to coordinate with the Business Leaders Flood Taskforce to keep business leaders updated on the Metro Flood Diversion Project. The Committee thanked Ms. Peterson and the Business Leaders Flood Taskforce for their advocacy and support.

Minnesota update

Rocky Schneider updated the Committee on the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Working Group, which consists of representatives from the City of Fargo, City of Moorhead and the Minnesota DNR. The DNR Working Group has held 4 meetings and continues to work toward resolution of the denial of the *Dam Safety and Work in Waters Permit* for the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Mr. Schneider stated the discussions have been very productive. The next DNR Working Group meeting will be held on June 9, 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