

MINUTES OF MEETING
DIVERSION AUTHORITY PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE
CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
OCTOBER 7, 2015

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met on October 7, 2015, 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; Grant Weyland, Clay County Commissioner; Ken Pawluk, Cass County Commissioner; Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commissioner; Brenda Elmer, Moorhead City Council; 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 was Melissa Sobolik, Fargo City Commissioner.

Also present were Kevin Campbell, Clay County Commissioner; Rocky Schneider, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc. (AE2S); Lyndon Pease, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Jason Benson, Cass County Engineer; Allison Myhre, Congressman Peterson's Office; Kevin Fischer, Fargo-Moorhead Area Association of Realtors; Chelsea Smith, Home Builders Association of Fargo-Moorhead; Trana Rogne, MNDak Upstream Coalition; and Michelle Anderson, Cass County Joint Water Resource District staff.

Minutes

It was moved by Mike Thorstad, seconded by Ken Pawluk and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the September 9, 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 continue this fall and winter along the diversion channel alignment and in the staging area overflow embankment. Brief discussion was held on the frequency and duration of geotechnical soil boring surveys needed for the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Business Leaders Flood Taskforce update

Elly Peterson gave an update on the Business Leaders Flood Taskforce committee. The Fargo-Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce put together a TV spot emphasizing the need for permanent flood protection that will air throughout the fall. Rocky Schneider will present the TV spot to the Committee at the end of the meeting.

Brief discussion was held on businesses submitting comments to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources on the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)*.

State Water Commission and Water Topics Overview Committee update

The State Water Commission was recently updated on the results of the *Initial Assessment of the Agricultural Risk of Temporary Water Storage for FM Diversion* study (*Initial*

Assessment of Agricultural Risk) by North Dakota State University (NDSU) Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics. The study will also be shown to the Finance and Land Management Committees.

Meetings of the State Water Commission and the Interim Legislative Water Topics Overview Committee are scheduled for November 4, 2015, in Bismarck, North Dakota. Rocky Schneider stated updates will be given on the DEIS, the *Initial Assessment of Agricultural Risk* study, the budget, and the future construction plans for the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

North Dakota Legislative Reporting update

Representatives from the Diversion Authority and Fargo City leaders met with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Senator Heidi Heitkamp, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, and the White House National Economic Council in Washington D.C. to discuss the need for long-term flood mitigation and potential Public Private Partnership (PPP) funding regarding the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Brenda Elmer joined the meeting.

Agricultural Policy Subcommittee update

Discussion was held on the results of the *Initial Assessment of Agricultural Risk* study and flowage easements. NDSU was asked to research and explore a potential computerized method of crop damage estimation.

Brenda Elmer suggested the Agricultural Policy Subcommittee include a member with an agricultural finance background. Chairman Olson asked the Committee to bring a list of contacts to consider at the next meeting.

Community outreach update

Rocky Schneider and Mark Brodshaug will give a project update to the Horace Lions Club on October 8, 2015. Chairman Olson suggested Mr. Schneider coordinate with Committee members and the Diversion Authority to provide project updates to the City of Horace and other area city leaders in Cass and Clay Counties.

Mr. Schneider reported timelines are currently in review and preparations are being made for future land acquisition, construction, and the PPP plan being considered. The Corps of Engineers is obtaining information on the diversion inlet structure and surveys will be conducted over the next couple of months.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources - DEIS

Mr. Schneider presented the *Fargo-Moorhead Flood Risk Management Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement* (DEIS) information sheet. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will be giving an informational presentation on the DEIS on October 14, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. at the Courtyard Marriott in Moorhead, Minnesota. The public comment period closes on October 28, 2015.

Mr. Schneider complied and reviewed an *Alternatives Comparison* of the proposed project against the northern alignment alternative. Discussion was held on the socioeconomic, financial, structural, and mitigation impacts of the northern alignment alternative. By

comparing the proposed project to the northern alignment alternative, the information suggested the northern alignment alternative will cost more and impact more property owners and structures.

City of Fargo interim flood work project update

Ken Pawluk updated the Committee on the City of Fargo interim flood work project. Houston Engineering, Inc. recently conducted a study to provide storm water master planning, including comprehensive flood mitigation for the City of Fargo. Part of the study attempted to find a way to remove 1,800 homes from the FEMA 100-year floodplain, which would only provide a temporary solution. Homes would potentially go back into the floodplain in five years or less.

Discussion was held on the interim flood work project and the impacts to the City of Fargo. Concern was expressed the public was given a mixed message the interim flood work project was an alternative to the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Fargo City leaders and the Diversion Authority made it clear the Metro Flood Diversion Project is the only project designed to provide permanent flood protection for all of Cass County.

E-Newsletter topics

The next Diversion Dialogue E-Newsletter topics may include the *Initial Assessment of Agricultural Risk* study and an update on the trip to Washington D.C. by Diversion Authority members and officials from the City of Fargo.

FMDiversion.com

Mr. Schneider reported the FM Diversion website updates will be complete by the end of the week.

Mr. Schneider presented the TV spot to the Committee.

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