

DIVERSION AUTHORITY
PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE
FARGO CITY COMMISSION ROOM, FARGO CITY HALL
FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2017

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met on November 15, 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 Jacob Gust, Cass County Joint Water Resource District; Kevin Campbell, Clay County Commissioner; Rick Steen, Cass County Commissioner; Brenda Elmer, Moorhead City Council; Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commissioner; and Jason Benson, Cass County Engineer. Absent were: John Strand, Fargo City Commissioner; Elly Peterson, Fargo Moorhead Business Leaders Flood Task Force; and Gerald Van Amburg, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District.

Also present were: Grant Weyland, Clay County Commissioner; Robert Wilson, Cass County Administrator; Rocky Schneider, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc.; and Michelle Anderson, Cass County Joint Water Resource District staff.

Kevin Campbell conducted the meeting.

Minutes

It was moved by Jason Benson, seconded by Mike Thorstad and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2017, meeting.

Metro Flood Diversion Project – project updates

Rocky Schneider presented and reviewed a press release on the temporary bypass road to reconnect traffic on Cass County Highway 17 south of Horace. Mr. Schneider also reported on Minnesota U.S. District Judge John Tunheim's *Order* explaining the partial lifting of the May 13, 2015, *Preliminary Injunction*, which allows construction to continue on a portion of the Oxbow-Hickson-Bakke Ring Levee Project. Brief discussion was held on the information contained in news articles and the appeal filed by the Diversion Authority with an immediate stay regarding the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

Jason Benson stated Cass County Highway 81 is now open on the north side of the City of Oxbow.

Metro Flood Diversion Project - Fargo-Moorhead Area Flood Diversion Task Force (Task Force)

Governors Burgum and Dayton are the only authorized representatives to speak on behalf of the Task Force. Updates and observations communicated at meetings or groups outside of the Task Force are only personal opinions and do not represent the Task Force.

Kevin Campbell stated it is very helpful to watch the videos located on FMDiversion.com. Mr. Campbell stated he wishes the entire Fargo-Moorhead and surrounding communities would take the time to watch the videos. The public would gain a better understanding of all data that was investigated to find optimal alignment and design for the Metro Flood Diversion Project. Mr. Campbell stated the misconception by the opposition that the Diversion Authority and the Corps of Engineers did not investigate to find the best design and route for the Metro Flood Diversion Project is disappointing. Mr. Schneider reviewed an information sheet and the history of the maximum daily flow rate at the Fargo gage on the Red River.

Mr. Schneider stated a Technical Advisory Group has been identified to review a list of alternatives identified by the Corps of Engineers for the purpose of eliminating further evaluation. The Technical Advisory Group will be responsible to evaluate criteria using scientific data for alternative solutions identified by the Task Force. Jason Benson stated the Technical Advisory Group has been reviewing potential project modifications and identifying key criteria. Mr. Benson reviewed potential project modifications discussed at the meeting on November 14, 2017. The Technical Advisory Group will have recommendations and obtain input from the Task Force by November 29, 2017. Discussion was held on the process, permitting, legal considerations, land acquisition and the Public-Private Partnership (P3).

Chairman Olson stated he is impressed with the progress of the Task Force and is hopeful for a timely solution.

Community outreach update

Rocky Schneider updated the Committee on presentations and updates given to local officials regarding the Metro Flood Diversion Project.

FMDiversion.com website and social media analytics

The Task Force meeting videos and Charter are available on FMDiversion.com. Brenda Elmer stated a constituent approached her asking for information on the Task Force meetings. Ms. Elmer searched on FMDiversion.com, North Dakota Office of the State Governor and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources websites and could not find the meeting location. Mr. Schneider stated the Task Force meeting information is often given to him at the last minute. Mr. Campbell stated he also had trouble finding the Task Force meeting information and contacted a Task Force member to learn the location of the meeting. Mr. Campbell stated the Public Outreach Committee is not getting information out to the public and suggested the Committee coordinate with the Task Force to let them know the need for better community outreach.

North Dakota Water Convention and Irrigation Expo update

Rocky Schneider stated Fargo Mayor Tim Mahoney may be presenting at the 54th Joint Annual North Dakota Water Convention and Irrigation Workshop in Bismarck, North Dakota on December 7, 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