

**DIVERSION AUTHORITY
PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE
FARGO CITY HALL – RIVER ROOM
FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2018**

The Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee met at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 23, 2018. The following Committee members were present:

The following Committee members were present: Rodger Olson, Cass County Joint Water Resource District; Kevin Campbell, Clay County Commissioner; Rick Steen, Cass County Commission; Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commissioner; and Jacob Gust (via phone), Cass County Joint Water Resource District.

The following Committee members were absent: Grant Weyland, Clay County Commissioner; Joel Paulsen, Moorhead City Council; Jason Benson, Cass County Engineer; John Strand, Fargo City Commissioner; Gerald Van Amburg, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District.

Others present were: Matt Stamness, Cass County Engineers Office; Tammy Jo Taft, Rocky Schneider (via phone), Joseph Herbst, Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc.

The meeting was called to order at 1:31 p.m. by Rodger Olson. Rick Steen motioned to approve the minutes from the December meeting. Kevin Campbell seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

MINNESOTA DNR ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND TIMELINES

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources issued a permit for the Project in December. Tammy Jo Taft noted there was a post on the website with the Diversion Board's official response and the newsletter with that response had a very high open rate. Mike Thorstad asked about possible contested case filings. Rocky Schneider noted the DNR must grant the contested case and if it is granted, the process to resolve the case could be lengthy. He also noted the federal judge is meeting with all parties in the lawsuit this afternoon.

ND LEGISLATURE

Rocky Schneider provided the following update on North Dakota legislative engagement.

- Jan 10: Representatives from the Diversion Authority presented to the Senate Appropriations Committee as well as the Governor on behalf of the project.
- Another hearing on specific financial aspects of the project is scheduled for Jan. 24. This second hearing will include presentations by multiple project representatives.
- Rocky Schneider noted there are other bills including two (1207 and 1184) regarding quick take in the Legislature. Discussion about those bills ensued.

Rocky Schneider said he would create a document outlining bills and points of interest for the committee. Rodger Olson asked how many times eminent domain had been used for the Project. Rocky Schneider said there were roughly 200 acquisitions to date with only five going to eminent domain and four of the five were resolved before the court ruled on them.

RED RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

Tammy Jo Taft noted the Diversion Authority had a booth at the Red River Basin Commission Conference in Grand Forks last week. Rodger Olson noted that Jason Benson did a great job presenting during the conference and provided key information pieces.

FMWF CHAMBER EGGS

The group discussed the outreach done by Mayor Mahoney, Mayor Judd and Jason Benson at the FMWF Chamber's Eggs and Issues event last week.

METRO COG

Rocky Schneider noted Metro COG would like to be more involved in the Project and there is an item for the finance committee about studies and including community partners. He noted there may be some ways to work with Metro COG as a vehicle to obtain funding.

Rodger Olson asked if the Diversion Authority is responsible for costs of a recreation component of the Project. Rocky Schneider confirmed that is the case. Rick Steen asked how much of the P3 budget was for the recreation plan. Rocky Schneider said he would get that number. There was discussion about funding and budget in regards to recreation planning.

90 DAY

The committee reviewed a draft of a three month calendar with important dates for the Project. Mike Thorstad asked about upcoming forums hosted by local legislators. The committee discussed the importance of being present at those forums.

Kevin Campbell noted a letter to the Minnesota Legislature to show local entities intent to support the project and request for funding. He suggested the group consider presenting to the Ottertail and Becker County Commissions during their regular meetings. Jake Gust asked about reaching out and continuing to extend the invitation to the Buffalo Red Watershed District. Kevin Campbell agreed this was important and the Buffalo Red would be invited to be a part of the Minnesota JPA entity that would oversee land acquisition.

LANDS OUTREACH

Joe Herbt noted there is some uncertainty with lands in terms of where design and impacts will dictate property rights acquisition. The committee reviewed an outreach plan to landowners that included sending letters to those who may be impacted by the project. The committee discussed how sending letters will potentially lead to more

dialogue with landowners who are seeking information about the Project and possible property rights acquisition. Mike Thorstad noted information about this topic must be easy to find on the website. Tammy Jo Taft mentioned the new site layout will hopefully make that easier. The committee discussed the timing of the outreach plan. Joe Herbst said the initial letter will probably happen in the next two weeks.

PROJECT FUNDING OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Rodger Olson noted that former Minnesota Representative Morrie Lanning suggested the committee reach out to current representation and include them when requesting funds or support from the Minnesota Legislature.

FM DIVERSION LAUNCH

Tammy Jo Taft noted the new website layout would be launched soon.

FINALIZED CALENDAR

Tammy Jo Taft said a PDF version of the 2019 committee meeting calendar was available if the committee members would like to have it.

THREE QUESTIONS – DEL RAE

The committee watched a three questions video featuring former Moorhead Mayor Del Rae Williams. Kevin Campbell noted that Oakport Township in Minnesota has had flood protection projects completed that need the Diversion Project to continue to be certified.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was discussion about additional outreach efforts to the city of Wolverton.

Rick Steen moved to adjourn the meeting. Kevin Campbell seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval and the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m..