

Proceedings of the Forest River Joint Water Resource District Board Meeting
Tuesday, April 2, 2024
Walsh County Courthouse, Grafton, ND

April 2, 2024 – 9:30 a.m.

Those in attendance were: Larry Tanke, Daryl Campbell & Albin Jallo– WCWRD; Tom Perdue, Tom Durkin, Jim Heider (Zoom), GFWRD; and Ben Varnson & Josh Forde– NCWRD. Other attendees included Sarah Johnston, WCWRD; Zach Herrmann, Houston Engineering; Randy Gjestvang, NDDWR/RRJWRD; John Bauer, NRCS; Brian Fuder, RRRRA. Chairman Larry Tanke called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Agenda: *Tom Purdue moved to approve the agenda, 2nd Albin Jallo. Motion carried.*

Minutes: *Ben Vanson moved to approve the minutes from the July 27th, 2021 meeting, 2nd by Tom Durkin. Motion carried.*

Bills: A bill from 1st United Bank insurance for a board insurance policy thru NDIRF was presented. After some discussion as to whether the insurance was necessary and a consensus that the board should remain an organized board, ***Tom Purdue moved to pay the premium to 1st United Bank on the NDIRF policy, 2nd by Albin Jallo.***

Treasurers Report: Sarah Johnston presented the financial report. Grand Forks County has a small portion of funds in the checking account alongside Nelson and Walsh counties' shares. ***Motion to approve Treasurer's report by Tom Purdue, 2nd by Ben Varnson. Motion carried.*** After discussion initiated by Tanke regarding the remaining funds in the checking account and the possibility of opening a CD, ***Ben Varnson moved to leave \$10,000 in the checking account and place excess funds in a CD for 7 months. 2nd by Albin Jallo. Motion carried.***

Dam Rehab Study Updates:

Zach Herrmann presented the current statuses of the ongoing dam rehabilitation planning efforts taking place on Bylin, Matejcek and Fordville Dams. More steps are needed in Matejcek and Fordville Dams. Bylin Dam will be closer to a construction phase after the Environmental Assessment, which is currently under review, is accepted -- making the watershed planning efforts on that dam complete. Final design funding could be sought from NRCS.

Alternative proposed construction design options were discussed for each dam. Decisions will eventually need to be made on which design would move ahead. Funding from NRCS is available for construction of the proposed rehabilitations. Herrmann presented the differences in local and state shares needed to construct projects depending on whether NRCS funding is available or sought by the board. A funding package comprised of non-federal funds will need to be developed before seeking NRCS funds. Construction could begin as early as 2026.

The idea of assessing the watershed landowners for a portion of the local share for dam projects was discussed, using Matejcek Dam as an example. Dam rehab construction decisions will need to be made by the Walsh County Board. Consultation will continue with the members of the FRJWRD. Zach Herrmann will be in touch with Christi Fischer of NRCS to line up a meeting with the group to discuss prioritization and next steps.

Miscellaneous Correspondence:

Ben Varnson introduced Josh Forde of the NCWRD to the group. Ben will be retiring in January 2025. Nelson County is working on culvert issues at Sarney Dam, as well as Highway 35. In regards to the Michigan spillway, they are revisiting the assessment area, which could include Walsh Co. landowners who are benefiting. The cleanout of Hove Slough is being discussed in Nelson County, and was proposed many years ago. Albin Jallo said he supports the idea of cleaning it out.

Tom Purdue mentioned the design work completed on the Dry Dam in Grand Forks County. He also mentioned Larimore Dam needed the primary tower and pipe replaced.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Larry Tanke, Chairman

Attest: _____
Sarah B. Johnston, Sec/Treas.