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These are DRAFT minutes, subject to amendment before final approval by the Red River Retention Authority.

MINUTES OF RED RIVER RETENTION AUTHORITY SPECIAL MEETING
ORIGINATING AT THE CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
HERITAGE CONFERENCE ROOM
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2025
1:00 P.M.

A special meeting of the Red River Retention Authority (RRRA) was held on March 13, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

Present were John Finney, Josh Ihry, Bill Petersen, Greg Holmvik, Don Kemp and Tom Perdue, Board members; Andrew Graham and Patrick Fridgen, non-voting members; Brian Fuder, Executive Director; Melissa Hinkemeyer, Secretary; Amy Hepper, Accountant; Elizabeth Smith, Administrative Assistant; Rita Nelson, Accounting Assistant; Randy Gjestvang and Yaping Chi, North Dakota Department of Water Resources (NDDWR); Robert Sip, Red River Watershed Management Board; Alexa Ducioame, Moore Engineering, Inc.; Christi Fisher, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); Jennifer Klostreich, Richland County Soil Conservation District; and Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering Co.

Josh Ihry called the meeting to order, and introductions were made.

Approval of agenda

It was moved by Bill Peterson, seconded by Don Kemp and unanimously carried to approve the order of the agenda, as presented.

Minutes

It was moved by Bill Peterson and seconded by John Finney to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2024, meeting, as presented. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Financial Report

The Treasurer presented the Financial Report of the RRRA.

It was moved by Tom Perdue and seconded by Bill Peterson to approve the following, as presented:

- Financial Report
- Wire transfers

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

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Executive Director Report

Brian Fuder discussed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the NRCS and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The agreement expired in 2017 and Mr. Fuder inquired if the Board is interested in pursuing a new MOU between the parties. The Board directed Mr. Fuder to work with the NRCS and USACE to draft a new agreement.

Mr. Fuder briefly discussed a project in Minnesota that has received grant money from FEMA to develop flood inundation mapping and modeling in the Red River Basin in Minnesota. Mr. Fuder indicated he sent a letter of support on behalf of the RRRRA to the North Dakota and Minnesota Congressional delegates to ask that the grant be honored as written and accepted to ensure the project can move forward to completion.

Mr. Fuder discussed submitting Congressionally Directed Spending requests for three projects in Minnesota that are in or are ready for construction. The Board discussed the status of funding in Minnesota for watershed projects and indicated this may be a good tool to complete needed projects in the Red River Basin. The application deadline is March 31, 2025. Mr. Fuder noted the Midwest Council on Agriculture is willing to assist the RRRRA with the application.

A motion was made by Tom Perdue and seconded by Bill Peterson to authorize the Executive Director to apply for Congressionally Directed Spending for three watershed projects in the Red River Basin and provide a letter of support regarding the application. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Discussion was held on the Park Street Public Proposal for Federal Funding. After the proposal was received it was determined the RRRRA cannot move forward with the proposal as the RRRRA is unable to enter into a lobbying agreement as a North Dakota entity.

2025 Priority Projects final approval

Mr. Fuder presented the final draft of the 2025 RRRRA Priority Projects List.

A motion was made by Don Kemp and seconded by Bill Peterson to approve the 2025 RRRRA Priority Projects List. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Outreach – WDAY Weather and Ag in Focus “Here We Grow” campaign

Mr. Fuder discussed continuing an advertising partnership with WDAY Weather and Ag in Focus. Mr. Fuder described the WDAY Weather and Ag in Focus ‘Here We Grow’ campaign, what they have done in the past, and what they plan to do in 2025. This includes planting 100 acres of wheat in Garner Township. As a sponsor of the program, the RRRRA would be featured in various ways such as videos, social media posts, interviews, commercial airtime, and more throughout the project which runs April through September. The cost of the sponsorship is about \$6,000. The Board discussed continuing this partnership with WDAY Weather and Ag in Focus.

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A motion was made by John Finney and seconded by Bill Peterson to approve and authorize the Chairmen to sign an Agreement with WDAY regarding sponsorship of the WDAY Weather and Ag in Focus 'Here we Grow' program, not to exceed \$6,000.

Agency and partner reports

Andrew Graham from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources reported that they are in the process of hiring a new regional director in NW Minnesota. Mr. Graham reported he is retiring soon, and his position will be filled. Brief discussion was held on legislative updates in Minnesota regarding flood hazard mitigation projects.

Patrick Fridgen from the North Dakota Department of Water Resources reported the NDDWR has a new director and the department is currently focused on legislative items in North Dakota.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at the Cass County Highway Department, West Fargo, ND.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be considered by the Board, the meeting adjourned without objection.

APPROVED:

Josh Ihry
Co-Chair

John Finney
Co-Chair

ATTEST:

Melissa Hinkemeyer
Secretary