

## ***DEVILS LAKE BASIN JOINT WATER RESOURCE BOARD***

Minutes of the regular monthly meeting held Wednesday, June 14th, 2023, Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse, Devils Lake, ND, and Online via GoToMeeting.

Chairman Dave Sateren called the meeting to order at 8:01 AM. Roll call of the counties was taken.

Cavalier County	Van Howatt
Eddy County	Mike Tweed
Nelson County	Dave Sateren
Pierce County	Floyd Slaubaugh
Ramsey County	Duaine Ash
Towner County	Randy Benson
Walsh County	Albin Jallo

### **APPROVE AGENDA:**

Sateren asked if anyone had any additional items for today's agenda. Frith added the Pekin Rod and Gun Club Project Cost Share Request. **Ash made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of the new business discussion of the cost share request, seconded by Tweed, motion passed unanimously.**

### **APPROVAL of MINUTES:**

Sateren asked if everyone had an opportunity to read the minutes from April 12<sup>th</sup> & May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and if there were any corrections or additions. **Howatt made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 12th, meeting, seconded by Benson, motion passed unanimously. Tweed made a motion to approve the minutes of May 17<sup>th</sup>, seconded by Jallo, motion passed unanimously.**

**The financial report for the month was presented, along with the previous month (April 2023):**

30-Apr-23

<b>ASSETS</b>	
Checking/Savings	
Administration	-\$1,628.27
Projects	\$17,043.20
Bremer-Checking Account - Other	-\$633.45
Total Bremer-Checking Account	\$14,781.48
Bremer Investment Account	
Administration	\$77,075.16
Pilot Project Fund	\$8,279.58
Projects	\$135,897.57
Bremer Investment Account - Other	-\$8,875.23
Total Bremer Investment Account	\$212,377.08
Total Checking/Savings	\$227,158.56
Total Current Assets	\$227,158.56
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$227,158.56</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
Opening Bal Equity	\$40,201.71
Retained Earnings	\$150,989.84
Net Income	\$35,965.19
Total Equity	\$227,156.74
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>\$227,158.56</b>

**Ash made a motion to approve the April 2023 financial report, seconded by Slaubaugh, motion carried unanimously.**

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Administration	-\$1,626.42
Projects	\$17,043.20
Bremer-Checking Account - Other	-\$633.45
Total Bremer-Checking Account	\$14,783.33
Bremer Investment Account	
Administration	\$67,068.46
Pilot Project Fund	\$8,279.58
Projects	\$131,803.07
Bremer Investment Account - Other	-\$8,875.23
Total Bremer Investment Account	\$198,275.88
Total Checking/Savings	\$213,059.21
Total Current Assets	\$213,059.21
TOTAL ASSETS	\$213,059.21
Opening Bal Equity	\$40,201.71
Retained Earnings	\$150,989.84
Net Income	\$21,865.84
Total Equity	\$213,057.39
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$213,059.21

**Howatt made a motion to approve the May 2023 financial report, seconded by Tweed, motion carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL of MONTHLY BILLS for May 2023 & June 2023:**

May 2023 Bills		Amount	Ck #
NDTC - Website Hosting & Email Maintenance		\$21.83	4907
Leevers North - April Meeting		\$16.88	4908
Jeff Frith - Cell Phone Expense		\$101.25	4909
Ramsey County Auditor: Rent		\$190.00	4910
Ramsey County Auditor - Postage		\$21.80	4910
Ramsey County Auditor: Telephone		\$55.49	4910
Ramsey County Water Resource District (Copier Rent)		\$125.00	4911
Ramsey County Water Resource District (Office Assistant Services)		\$300.00	4911
Ramsey County Auditor - Wages & Withholding Taxes		\$5,301.61	4912
Ramsey County Auditor - Health Insurance		\$1,794.14	4913
ND Water Education Foundation - Summer Water Tour Sponsorship		\$3,000.00	4914
U.S. Geological Survey - Quarterly Stream Gauge Cost Share		\$4,810.00	4915
Total Admin		\$10,928.00	
Total General Project		\$4,810.00	
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$15,738.00</b>	

June 2023 Bills	Amount	Ck #
NDTC - Website Hosting	\$21.83	4916
Leevers - May Meeting Expenses	\$22.50	4917
Insure Forward - Annual Liability Policy Renewal	\$705.00	4918
ND Water Resource Districts Association - Joint Summer Conference Registration	\$300.00	4919
Jeff Frith - Cell Phone Expense	\$101.25	4920
Jeff Frith - May 2023 Travel Expenses	\$252.18	4920
Ramsey County Auditor: Rent	\$190.00	4921
Ramsey County Auditor - Postage	\$22.40	4921
Ramsey County Auditor: Telephone	\$55.49	4921
Ramsey County Water Resource District (Copier Rent)	\$125.00	4922
Ramsey County Water Resource District (Administrative Assistance)	\$300.00	4922
Ramsey County Auditor - Wages & Withholding Taxes	\$5,301.61	4923
Ramsey County Auditor - Health Insurance	\$2,062.94	4924
<b>Total Admin</b>	<b>\$9,460.20</b>	
<b>Total General Project</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,460.20</b>	

Frith did mention that the health insurance did have an increase of \$268.80 per month. **Howatt made a motion to pay the May 2023 bills, seconded by Benson, motion passed unanimously. Howatt motioned to pay the June 2023 bills as listed, seconded by Tweed, motion carried unanimously.**

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Stacy Peters-Ramsey County WRD Office Manager & Matt Van Theyne-US Fish & Wildlife. Online: Chris Korkowski and Jeff Trane-Department of Water Resources, Amanda Lee-National Weather Service, Dani Quissell-ND Water Users Association, & Lottie Caldwell-Benson County Press. Visitors: Ben Varnson-Nelson County Water Board.

**AGENCY REPORTS:**

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE:** Amanda Lee attended online and reviewed her monthly report. She reported that mid-May preliminary (unofficial/unreleased) numbers indicated a 50/50 chance of the lake dropping to 1449.3-1450.1. She reported the lake leveling off around 1450.6 feet, which was similar to 2022. Amanda reported that the Drought Monitor will show an expanding area & add some areas of moderate drought conditions. She mentioned a new lake-level forecast will be out next Thursday, June 22nd, 2023. She mentioned that temperatures will remain above normal until the end of June.

**ND GAME & FISH:** No one in attendance or updates provided.

**NRCS:** No one in attendance or updates provided.

**US FISH & WILDLIFE:** Matt VanTheyne was present and stated it is a busy time of year for the US Fish & Wildlife. He mentioned they did not get many requests for temporary draining. Ben Varson, Nelson County Water Board, indicated to VanTheyne that they may want to check Lamb's Lake Refugee for overgrowth of cattails.

## **AGENCY REPORTS CONTINUED:**

**DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES:** Chris Korkowski was in attendance, online. He mentioned there will be a release shortly that the east end had to be reduced from 200cfs to 150cfs due to water quality. He said that the water quality is around 950ppm on the east end, and on the west end 590ppm. Korkowski mentioned contractor was onsite Monday to look at the repair of the west end switch gear. He said that after the repairs, they will increase output from 175cfs to 250cfs. He mentioned realistic releases for this summer are 325-400cfs, which should get water off the lake. Frith asked if there is a place to see the quality samples, and Korkowski said they can be requested. Korkowski stated that the west end has lower water quality, so we need more blending at the east end. Frith did ask if someone would be available on the east end structure on Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> around 1 PM for the water tour. Korkowski stated he will check and get back to Frith. The question was asked by Jallo what is the penalty for exceeded sulfate levels in the sampling? Korkowski stated that it happened once, and they were told to shut down the capacity of the outlets. Korkowski mentioned questioned why we didn't request an emergency exemption when it comes to the sulfate levels in the sampling, and he mentioned that this could cause us to have a reduction in the allowed sulfate levels.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

**2023 WATER TOUR DISCUSSION:** Frith reviewed the water tour route with the board. He mentioned getting registered as soon as possible. Frith mentioned he needed to provide a listing of attendees to Camp Grafton. Howatt, Sateren, Tweed, Slaubaugh, & Benson asked to be added to the tour. Dani Quissell, ND Water Association, was online and said she would give those names to Julie Ellingson, ND Water Association. Ben Varnson mentioned that the Upper Sheyenne meeting was held on Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, at the Pizza Ranch. Frith asked board members to think about ideas to promote the tour to get more people to sign up.

**2023 SUMMER WATER CONFERENCE:** Frith mentioned that the registration form is out. Quissell mentioned that the block of rooms ends on June 26<sup>th</sup>. Frith mentioned that in the block of rooms, there were no wheelchair assessable rooms, and Quissell mentioned they will do some checking on this.

**DEVILS LAKE OUTLETS ADVISORY MEETING:** Frith presented what was presented at last month's meeting.

**2024 BUDGET FINAL READING:** Frith reviewed the final 2024 Budget with the board. There was a discussion on revenue from each county. The discussion was on how the board should adjust the revenue for each county to bring back to each county commission board. Should it be an amount per acre or a percent increase? After discussion, **Jallo motioned to increase the revenue from each county by 10% by using the 2022 Actual Revenue collected, seconded by Howatt. Roll call was done for each county: Cavalier-Howatt "yes", Eddy-Tweed "yes", Nelson-Sateren "yes", Pierce-Slaubaugh "yes", Ramsey-Ash "yes", Towner-Benson "yes", & Walsh-Jallo "yes". Motion passed unanimously.**

## **OTHER OLD BUSINESS:**

None

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

**BENSON COUNTY DISCUSSION:** Frith informed the board that the Benson County Auditor reached out to him about what procedure it would take for Benson County to become part of the Joint Board again, as their commissioners are inquiring. In 2019, the Joint Board requested \$6600 from Benson County to rejoin the Joint Board. The board discussed and determined that \$7200 would be the amount for Benson County to join the joint board, and their recommendation is for Frith to work with Benson County. There was a discussion about SB 2372 Watershed Districts, which would require all Water Resource Districts to participate in a joint board.

**JOINT BOARD BYLAWS:** Frith mentioned that the current bylaws state that each joint board member should have an alternate for attending the meeting. He said there has been meetings where there was not a quorum. Frith said that to line up other agencies, in town or from outside the area, it is important that we have attendance. Frith will make changes to the bylaws and have an attorney review them.

**COMMENTS TO US FWS ON NEW DRAIN TILE SETBACKS:** VanTheyne stated that comments are due by June 27<sup>th</sup>. He mentioned that US FWS has had a policy in place since 2020. He said currently (1) that the US FWS allows no drainage & the USDA allows some drainage, (2) landowners won't be held accountable or penalized for calculations done by the US FWS if the drain tile is installed and problems happen, (3) will use the best current science, and (4) they have hired a region hydrologist on staff. Easement terms are draining, burning, filling, and leveling. Frith informed the board that they should decide if they want to sign off on Kale's comments. **Ash motioned to sign off on the organizational comments, seconded by Slaubaugh, motion passed unanimously.**

**CORRESPONDENCE & MISCELLANEOUS:** Frith did mention that he provides weekly and monthly lake levels.

**OTHER NEW BUSINESS:** The Joint Board received a cost share request from the Pekin Rod and Gun Club to replace the picnic shelter at the Tolna Dam. Ash stated that he would like to see updates from those receiving project cost-share dollars from the Joint Board, maybe even pictures of the completed project. Frith stated he could add that to the application form and ask those who have received past dollars for updates. **Benson motioned to contribute \$3000 towards this project, seconded by Tweed, motion passed unanimously.**

## **BASIN BOARD REPORTS:**

**Ramsey County:** Ash mentioned that the water board accepted several water complaints at their meeting last week. There was a discussion on the maintenance of the Hammer-Sullivan and Starkweather Coulee drains. Ash mentioned that the cattail spraying was determined for the contractor.

**Walsh County:** Jallo mentioned they had no new projects going on. He said they have been having problems with people knocking down the signs they posted around their assessed drains. He said they continue to work on FEMA stuff.

**Eddy County:** Tweed stated that their water board hired an engineer on what can be done to move water across the canal on Hwy 281 from the north side to the south side. He said they had purchased culverts, but there was opposition from the landowners on the south side. He said the Johnson Lake Outlet snag & clear was about finished with about a mile left.



**BASIN BOARD REPORTS CONTINUED:**

**Pierce County:** Slaubaugh had nothing new to report.

**Towner County:** Benson said it has been quiet in his area.

**Nelson County:** Sateren stated they are working on snag & clear in Central Williams. He said they are finishing up in Petersburg.

**Cavalier County:** Howatt reported not much happening in the water area. He said there is no new update on RC Drain #10. He said there was a vote on a legal drain by Wales, and it is moving forward to questions and answers.

**MANAGER'S REPORT:** Frith reported that, among other duties, he participated in a webinar entitled "How invasive mussels impact and are affected by North American ecosystems," discussing the effects that Quagga and Zebra Mussels have had on the Great Lakes Eco System.

The meeting adjourned at 10:28 AM.

Approved July 12th, 2023:



Dave Sateren, Chairman



Jeff W. Frith, Manager