

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

Minutes of the regular monthly meeting held Wednesday, April 10th, 2024, Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse, Devils Lake, ND, and Online via Teams.

Chairman Van Howatt called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Roll call of the counties was taken and all members present.

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:**

Howatt asked if anyone had any additional items for today's agenda. **Ash made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Slaubaugh, motion carried unanimously.**

### **APPROVAL of MINUTES:**

Howatt asked if everyone had an opportunity to read the March 13th, 2024, minutes and if there were any corrections or additions. **Jallo made a motion to approve the March 13th, 2024 minutes, seconded by Tweed, motion carried unanimously.**

**The financial reports for the month were presented:**

**Sateren made a motion to approve the financial reports, seconded by Benson, motion carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL of MONTHLY BILLS for April 2024:**

	April 2024 Bills	Amount	Ck #
	Intuit QuickBooks Online Monthly	\$45.00	ACH
	Ramsey County Water Resource District (Copier Rent)	\$125.00	5014
	Ramsey County Water Resource District (Office Assistant Services)	\$300.00	5014
	Ramsey County Auditor: Rent	\$190.00	5019
	Ramsey County Auditor: Telephone	\$55.49	5019
	Ramsey County Auditor - Wages & Withholding Taxes	\$5,882.09	5017
	Ramsey County Auditor - Health Insurance	\$2,062.94	5018
	NDTC - Website Hosting	\$21.83	5016
	Leevers - February Meeting Expense	\$16.88	5015
	Jeff Frith - March 2024 Travel	\$52.26	5020
	Jeff Frith - Cell Phone Expense	\$101.25	5020
	Creel Bay Digital - Website Support	\$60.00	5021
	<b>Total Admin</b>	<b>\$8,912.74</b>	
	<b>Total General Project</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,912.74</b>	

**Tweed made a motion to pay the listed bills for April 2024, seconded by Ash, motion carried unanimously.**

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Stacy Peters, Ramsey County WRD Office Manager, Mark Fischer, Biologist, US Fish & Wildlife. Online: Ben Holen, ANS Coordinator, ND Game & Fish, Amanda Lee, National Weather Service, Yaping Chi & Alexis Faber, Department of Water Resources, and Julie Ellingson, ND Water Association.

**AGENCY REPORTS:**

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE:** Amanda Lee joined online and went through the report she provided. She stated that conditions remain dry, and the next Lake-Level Outlook is April 25<sup>th</sup>.

**ND GAME & FISH:** Ben Holen, online, mentioned that the fishery staff have started early this year because they were able to locate running water. He mentioned the week of May 5-11 is ANS Awareness week. He said they are looking to revisit carp in the Devils Lake Basin & to put in a barrier. He said Thursday there would be a meeting regarding all options for barrier right SE of Rock Lake.

He did mention they hired 3 seasonal staff for watercraft inspections this summer. They said they are going to be in the process of constructing a building to house these employees. He said they are working with the tribe on a cost share for a new cleaning device.

### AGENCY REPORTS CONTINUED:

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

**US FISH & WILDLIFE:** Mark Fischer was in attendance. He said there were several wetlands that were dryer than normal. He said they had begun burning grasslands, and he mentioned it was the earliest it has ever happened. He said this is the earliest bird migration. He said the snow geese are flying high & heading into Canada. He mentioned that Canadian geese's productivity level decreases when it is dry. He mentioned there are no signs of Avian Bird Flu

**DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES:** Yaping Chi was in attendance, online. She said they did receive the West End CIP final version and it will be used for a guide. She mentioned there are 2 task orders that were identified with (1) investigate the Josephine standpipe overflow & (2) backfill of the East End outlet pipe which had been leaking. She also mentioned that the Devils Lake Outlet Advisory Committee will be meeting in Devils Lake on Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 1 PM at the Hofstad Center at Lake Region State College. Yaping did mention that the Red Bridge Crossing had a 100% cost share by the state for 4 culverts in 2012/2013. She said this was known as the Gleason Crossing.

Tweed asked Yaping if she was aware if water had been drawn down, as his aquifer has dropped about 20-30 feet. She said she was not aware of this because it is handled in another department. Tweed did mention he has been in contact with Kim Fischer at the Department of Water Resources.

**ND WATER ASSOCIATION:** Julie Ellingson was in attendance, online. She mentioned she continues to work on the tour scheduled for June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, starting in Rugby. She mentioned that Jeff and herself were looking to have a meeting with the stakeholders in Rugby.

### OLD BUSINESS:

**WATER TOUR FOR 2024:** Frith mentioned that they did receive a request for the ND Water Education Tour Sponsorship. Frith mentioned last year the board had participated. **Jallo made a motion to participate with a \$3000 sponsorship, seconded by Benson, motion carried unanimously.** Howatt mentioned he would contact the Frost Fire manager about the Cavalier Tour on Tuesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>. He will contact Julie with the information. Yaping asked when registration was available, and Julie said registration would be at the beginning of May.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:** Frith mentioned he will be attending the State Water Commission Meeting on April 11<sup>th</sup> in Bismarck. He informed the board of the Devils Lake Outlets Advisory Meeting on Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM at the Hofstad Ag Center at Lake Region State College. He mentioned last year they did send a resolution to the Outlets Advisory Committee supporting the operations of the East & West Outlets. **Ash motioned to have a resolution be sent on behalf of the Joint Board supporting the operation of the East & West Outlets for the 2024 pumping season, with adding the Chairman's signature, seconded by Slaubaugh, motion carried unanimously.**

**OTHER OLD BUSINESS:** No other old business.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

**ANS AWARENESS WEEK:** ANS (Aquatic Nuisance Awareness) Week is being held May 5<sup>th</sup> through the 11<sup>th</sup> this year. Frith stated that in the past, the Joint Board has passed resolutions in support of the ANS Awareness Week and believes that we should do so again. **Ash motioned to release a resolution of support to the State & ND Game & Fish for ANS Awareness with the addition of the Chairman's signature, seconded by Jallo, motion carried unanimously.**

**2025 BUDGET 1<sup>ST</sup> READING:** Frith provided the 2024 Budget information to review to determine the 2025 Budget. He mentioned he would have the numbers at the May meeting, as the 2025 budget has to be approved at the June meeting to be submitted to the Auditor's office by July 1. Ash mentioned how some individuals are trying to collect 31,000 signatures to get on the November ballot to eliminate property taxes in North Dakota which could be detrimental for political sub-divisions as they would have to rely on what was levied in 2024 going forward.

**CORRESPONDENCE & MISCELLANEOUS:** Frith mentioned the correspondence is the drought map, stream flows & lake levels that he emails out.

**OTHER NEW BUSINESS:** No other new business.

## **BASIN BOARD REPORTS:**

**Ramsey County:** Ash mentioned that the water board had its meeting yesterday. He said they met with Brian Johnson, a contractor who will be repairing Channel A culvert. He said they agreed to a contract with an individual who will be doing the haying at Channel A. He said the water board had its second review of the 2025 Budget. He said they had a special meeting to send a letter in support of running the East & West Outlets during the 2024 pumping season.

**Walsh County:** Jallo mentioned they met yesterday. He said they received a petition on a drain that was already there, but landowners requested an assessment be put on it. He said they continue to get water complaints.

**Eddy County:** Tweed mentioned they met last Tuesday. He said the discussion continues on the Red Bridge Crossing. He said it got tabled. He said the Bureau is looking to give the New Rockford Canal over to the Garrison Board. He said there are engineers working on the New Rockford Canal. He said there were 7 miles to the inlet that was not finished on the New Rockford Canal. He said they approved a drain tile permit for 520 acres, with Ellingson doing the work.

**Pierce County:** Slaubaugh mentioned they met on Monday. He said their meeting they paid monthly bills. He said their area is pretty dry.

**Towner County:** Benson mentioned they had a meeting last Tuesday. He said they discussed a couple of bad concrete bridges, and the commission came to them for a cost share to take care of them. He asked about Snag & Clear, and the board said if it is not a legal drain, then it has to go back to the county and township.

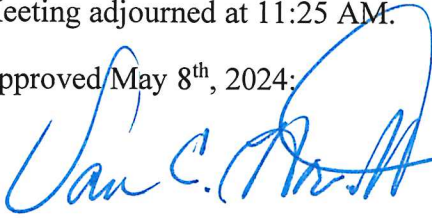
**Nelson County:** Sateren mentioned they met a couple weeks ago. He said they are working on legalizing drain with vote on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, so meeting coming up for that.

**Cavalier County:** Howatt mentioned their meeting is tomorrow. He said that Ramsey County Drain #10 continues to move forward and a public hearing was done last week. He said with Driessen #3 the Corr of Engineers came to them last week wanting to look at this project. He said the Game & Fish were installing a cement dock at Mt Carmel Dam.


**MANAGER'S REPORT:** Frith mentioned he attended a Strategic Planning meeting last week with the ND User's Water Association. He said they will continue these meetings a couple different times yet in Bismarck. He said one of the discussions was Plan of Succession. What would your organization do if someone had to be absent from their job for a period of time? He reviewed the Mission Statement of the ND User's Water Association. Currently, there are 269 members of the ND User's Water Association. He informed the board that he will be in Bismarck tomorrow for the State Water Commission meeting. Tweed mentioned that the quarterly Garrison meeting is on the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>. It was mentioned that the Upper Sheyenne River Bed is doing a pilot project by Pekin for bank stabilization. Frith mentioned that the next meeting is May 8<sup>th</sup> with a start time of 8 AM.

Meeting adjourned at 11:25 AM.

Approved May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024:



Van Howatt, Chairman



Jeff W. Frith, Manager