

DEVILS LAKE BASIN JOINT WATER RESOURCE BOARD

Minutes of the regular monthly meeting held Wednesday, October 9th, 2024, Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse, Devils Lake, ND, and Online via Teams.

Vice-Chairman Mike Tweed called the meeting to order at 8:20 AM. Roll call of the counties was taken.

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

APPROVE AGENDA: Tweed asked if anyone had any additional items for today’s agenda. **Benson made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Ash, motion carried unanimously.**

APPROVAL of MINUTES: Tweed asked if everyone had an opportunity to read the minutes from September 11th, 2024 and if there were any corrections or additions. **Jallo made a motion to approve the September 11th, 2024 minutes, seconded by Ash, motion carried unanimously.**

APPROVAL of FINANCIALS: The financial reports were presented. **Benson made a motion to approve the financial reports, seconded by Jallo, motion carried unanimously.**

APPROVAL of MONTHLY BILLS:

	October 2024 Bills	Amount	Ck #
Intuit QuickBooks Online Monthly		\$99.00	ACH
Ramsey County Water Resource District (Copier Rent)		\$125.00	5071
Ramsey County Water Resource District (Office Assistant Services)		\$300.00	5071
Ramsey County Auditor: Rent		\$190.00	5074
Ramsey County Auditor: Telephone		\$55.49	5074
Ramsey County Auditor - Wages & Withholding Taxes		\$5,882.09	5072
Ramsey County Auditor - Health Insurance		\$2,062.94	5073
NDTC - Website Hosting		\$21.83	5070
Leevers - July Meeting Expense		\$16.88	5069
Jeff Frith - Cell Phone Expense		\$101.25	5077
Jeff Frith - September Travel		\$445.37	5077
Towner County Record Herald - Yearly Subscription		\$40.00	5075
Devils Lake Daily Journal - Yearly Subscription		\$116.00	5078
Transcript Publishing - New Rockford Transcript Yearly Subscription		\$49.00	5079
USGS - Qtr. Realtime Stream Gauges		\$4,962.50	5076
	Total Admin	\$9,504.85	
	Total General Project	\$4,962.50	
	Total	\$14,467.35	

Ash motioned to pay the October 2024 bills listed, seconded by Benson, motion carried unanimously.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Stacy Peters, Ramsey County WRD Office Manager; Bryan Sea, ND Game & Fish; Dave Azure, US Fish & Wildlife; Suzie Kenner, Devils Lake Chamber & Tourism; and Karen Hausmann, landowner. Also online were Amanda Lee, National Weather Service; Yaping Chi & Alexis Faber, Department of Water Resources; Julie Ellingson and Dani Quissell, ND Water Users Association; Ben Holen, ND Game & Fish; and Jim Olson, Blue Water Consulting Services.

AGENCY REPORTS:

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE: Amanda Lee was in attendance online. She reviewed her report with the board members. She mentioned that the current lake level is 1449.5, which is the exact elevation it was a year ago. She noted that September 26th was the last Non-Exceedance report for the season. The next report will come out on January 23, 2025, and will be the first Spring Flood Outlook of the season.

ND GAME & FISH: Bryan Sea was in attendance. He mentioned they are wrapping up their field season. He noted they completed 39 surveys on walleyes for the standard adult population. He reported that ND Game & Fish is surveying 8-10 possible new lakes in ND. He said they look at depth and water quality to determine if an area water body can become a lake. Tweed asked if Bryan knew of a landowner marking off access to Battle Lake. Bryan said he would look into this. Bryan mentioned meeting with Dan Fischer next week on Fischer's findings for the Rock Lake Carp barrier project. Frith mentioned to Bryan that he, and Randy Benson, the Towner County representative, would both be available if our assistance was needed.

NRCS: No one in attendance or update provided.

US FISH & WILDLIFE: Dave Azure was in attendance. He said it is a slow time right now. He mentioned normally, this time of year, they would be doing their fall burning, but with the dry conditions, they are unable to do so. He mentioned that at White Horse they would be starting to use the Low-Stress Bison Handling Facility next Wednesday. He did mention that Mark Fischer & Brian Vose, long-time US F&W employees, would be retiring from the Devils Lake office.

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES: Yaping Chi was in attendance online. She reported that the West End Outlet was operating at 200cfs, and the East End Outlet was operating at 125cfs, with a total of 325cfs. She mentioned 5 ongoing projects for the East & West End Outlets. Frith asked if she had an estimate on the total discharge for this pumping season and between both of them, almost 100,000-acre feet. Frith also asked if there was a decision to keep the pumps running if the weather permits, and Yaping mentioned as long as temperatures and quality are met then they would be. She did report that DWR are having the pumps inspected now.

OLD BUSINESS:

2025 WATER STEWARDSHIP AWARD: Frith mentioned that all memos have been sent to the newspapers and other organizations. The deadline is November 1, 2024.

ND ANS COMMITTEE: Ben Holen, ANS Coordinator with the North Dakota Game & Fish, was in attendance online. He presented a PowerPoint from the Fall Aquatic Invasive Species Committee meeting that took place at the Nation Fish Hatchery in Valley City in September. He reported that they do ANS surveillance on 200+ waters.

A discussion was held about Public Service Announcements or other efforts that the Joint Board could be more involved in to educate people about the importance of Aquatic Nuisance Species. Frith asked Suzie Kenner, DL Chamber & Tourism, to weigh in as she has vast experience with various marketing platforms. She mentioned there is a new digital billboard on Hwy 2. She mentioned they are preparing their 2025 Visitor Guides, printing about 25,000 hard copies, and could add information. There was a discussion on radio ads. Ben mentioned a 6x8 foot sign at the area boat ramps. It was determined that there would be further discussion on this.

ANNUAL WATER CONFERENCE: Julie Ellingson & Dani Quissell were present online. Julie mentioned that everyone should receive their conference information in the mail this week. She did inform the board that it is currently available online. The conference is being held December 10th-December 13th in Bismarck, and a block of rooms is available. Frith asked the board members their thoughts on the joint board paying for the conference registration for the board members. **Jallo made a motion that the Joint Board would pay the registration of the board members for the annual water conference, up to \$310, seconded by Ash, motion carried unanimously.** It was agreed upon that each water district would pay the registration initially and then submit an invoice to the joint board for reimbursement. Jallo asked what options were available for his wife, and it was mentioned to look at the options on the registration & to contact Dani or Julie if there is something that does not work.

Frith asked the board their thoughts on sponsorship for the water conference. He informed the board that they participated in the sponsorship at \$1250 last year. **Ash motioned to do a sponsorship of \$1250 (Water Partner) from the Joint Board with a check going out in the mail today, with the signatures of Frith and Peters, seconded by Benson, motion carried unanimously.**

Frith informed the board that Kyle Blanchfield, Woodland Hospitalities, agreed once again to donate two nights of lodging and two days of ice fishing two for the silent auction for the ND Water Education Foundation for the Dushinske-Jamison Scholarship fund.

MANAGER REVIEW COMMITTEE: Frith mentioned that the committee still needs to meet. It was decided to table this item for next month.

MORRISON OUTLET-WEBSTER CHANNEL: Frith mentioned a potential cleanout, especially on Leet Rd. This could be a partnership with Ramsey County Water Resource District. He did say that the permit for this drain is through RCWRD. It was decided to table this item for next month.

OTHER OLD BUSINESS: No other old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

COST SHARE REQUESTS: Suzie Kenner, DL Chamber, presented the information on Wheelchair & Walleyes. She said she is working with Jeff Gooss to get this project running. They determined that the best location would be next to the Lakewood Bible Camp. She mentioned the estimated cost is around \$100,000, with the system itself costing \$50,000. After discussion, the board decided to table this item for further discussion in November.

Frith mentioned he received another cost share request from RCWRD for a Stream Crossing Standard in Bartlett Township. After discussion, the board decided to table this item.

ENGINEERING CONSULTANT SERVICES: Frith mentioned he had Jim Olson online to present information on the consulting services he has begun. Jim Olson discussed what he could assist the joint board with. Jim mentioned that he did not have a PE stamp, but with his experience, he could provide the Joint Board with services. Frith stated that the services that Jim offers could be very valuable to the Joint Board and the member counties, and after the State Water Commission no longer provides engineering services that they once did, the Joint Board has saved the ten thousand dollars they once provided to the SWC annually for that service. After discussion, the board decided to table this item.

CORRESPONDENCE & MISCELLANEOUS: Nothing to report.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS: Karen Hausmann, a local landowner from the Chain Lakes area in Northwestern Ramsey County, was in attendance. She mentioned she was there to inform the Joint Board that she continues to be flooded. In fact, she and her husband were able to plant 165 acres out of the 1710 acres of their family's farm. She stated that there is not enough agriculture on the board's agenda.

BASIN BOARD REPORTS:

Ramsey County: Ash mentioned they had their meeting on October 1st. He said 2 culverts were repaired on Channel A. He said there are no updates on Ramsey County Drain #10. He said the water board closed a couple of water complaints. He reported that the water board continues to work with some area landowners on a possible Snag & Clear project on the Lawton Coulee.

Walsh County: Jallo mentioned they had their meeting yesterday. He said their lawyer was in regarding assessed drains with water going into one drain and a new drain starting, and how to figure out why landowners are not paying into both drains.

Eddy County: Tweed reported that their board talked about the Snag & Clear project at Johnson Lake. He mentioned that a landowner wants to plug a drain, which they had problems with a few years ago, and their board advised landowners to resolve it. He mentioned that letters were sent to the landowners. He said a landowner wants to plug a culvert on a township road along a blue line, and the water will cross through a culvert to his land but will not go off his land.

Pierce County: Slaubaugh was not in attendance, and no updates were provided.

Towner County: Benson reported that they did not have a meeting. He did mention that in Northern Towner County, they continue to have beaver problems.

Nelson County: Sateren was not in attendance, and no updates were provided.

Cavalier County: Howatt is not in attendance, and no updates were provided.

MANAGER’S REPORT: Frith informed the board he did attend the Water Topics meeting held in Fargo on September 10th. He encouraged the board members to listen to this. He said there was discussion on Drain 11 (Sargent County). He mentioned that the Upper Sheyenne has their meeting on October 23rd at 9 AM. Tweed mentioned that Garrison has their quarterly meeting tomorrow in Carrington. Frith mentioned he would be in Bismarck tomorrow for the State Water Commission meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:12 AM.

Approved November 13th, 2024:

Van Howatt, Chairman

Jeff W. Frith, Manager

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