

DEVILS LAKE BASIN JOINT WATER RESOURCE BOARD

Minutes of the regular monthly meeting held Thursday, December 12th, 2024, in the Sheyenne Meeting Room of the Bismarck Hotel and Conference Center, Bismarck, ND.

Chairman Van Howatt called the meeting to order at noon. A roll call of the counties was taken. The Towner County representative was absent, but all other representatives were present.

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

Chairman Howatt asked if anyone had any additional items for today's agenda. Frith stated that he would like to add the Red River Basin Commission's Annual Land and Water International Summit Conference. **Jallo made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Sateren, motion passed unanimously.**

VISITORS & INTRODUCTIONS:



Chairman Howatt instructed the board members and those in the audience to introduce themselves, where they are from, and the organization they represent. A list of attendees will accompany the official minutes.

Chairman Howatt said the November 13th board meeting minutes had been sent out. He asked if everyone had an opportunity to read the minutes and if there were any corrections or additions. **Tweed moved to approve the minutes of the November 13th, 2024 meeting, seconded by Slaubaugh, motion passed unanimously.**

The financial report for the month was presented: Sateren moved to approve the financial report as presented, seconded by Ash, and the motion passed unanimously.

December 2024 Bills

The following list of bills was presented for payment:

December 2024 Bills		Amount	Ck #
Intuit QuickBooks Online Monthly		\$99.00	ACH
Pierce County Tribune - Annual Subscription		\$48.00	5091
ND Water Users Association - Annual Membership		\$300.00	5092
ND Irrigation Association - Annual Membership		\$100.00	5093
ND Water Coalition - Annual Membership		\$1,000.00	5094
ND Water Resource District Association - Legislative Support		\$3,500.00	5095
Eddy County Water Resource District - Winter Conference		\$310.00	5096
Leevers - Meeting Expense		\$16.88	5097
NDTC - Website Hosting		\$21.83	5098
Jeff Frith - Cell Phone Expense		\$101.25	5099
Ramsey County Water Resource District (Copier Rent)		\$125.00	5100
Ramsey County Water Resource District (Office Assistant Services)		\$300.00	5100
Ramsey County Auditor - Health Insurance		\$2,062.94	5101
Ramsey County Auditor: Rent		\$190.00	5102
Ramsey County Auditor: Telephone		\$55.49	5102
Ramsey County Auditor - Wages & Withholding Taxes		\$6,176.20	5103
Pierce County Water Resource District - Winter Conference		\$310.00	5104
Decorated Wearables - Board Member Apparel		\$486.80	5106
Ramsey County WRD - Drain Cleaning Cost Share on Morrison Outlet		\$9,225.00	5105
 Total Admin		\$15,203.39	
 Total General Project		\$9,225.00	
Total		\$24,428.39	

Ash moved to pay the bills as listed, seconded by Slaubaugh, and the motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

2025 MEETING DATES:

The 2025 meeting dates were presented for final approval. Frith said he kept the dates on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Frith pointed out that the January meeting will occur in the Ramsey County Commission meeting room due to the Ramsey County Extension Round-Up going on simultaneously. The annual Devils Lake Area Water Tour will be in conjunction with the Summer Joint Water Conference, which is taking place at the Spirit Lake Casino on the shores of Devils Lake, and the December meeting in Bismarck again in conjunction with the Annual Convention. Frith stated that with the Legislative Session going on, he might have to be in Bismarck on occasion and was wondering if it would be okay with Board Members to keep the meeting dates, and if something unexpected came up, Stacy Peters could start the meetings. The board said it could be considered if Stacy was okay with it on a case-by-case basis.

2025 MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY, January 8th ... 9 a.m.	Ramsey County Commissioner Meeting Room – Ramsey County Courthouse
WEDNESDAY, February. 12th9 a.m.	Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse (Devils Lake)
WEDNESDAY, March 12th9 a.m.	Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse (Devils Lake)
WEDNESDAY, April 9th.....9 a.m.	Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse (Devils Lake)
WEDNESDAY, May 14th....8a.m.	Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse (Devils Lake)
WEDNESDAY, June 11th....8 a.m.	Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse (Devils Lake)
July 9th – 10th Joint Summer Conference	Spirit Lake Casino, Devils Lake
WEDNESDAY, July 16th...8 a.m.	Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse (Devils Lake)
WEDNESDAY, August 13th...8 a.m.	Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse (Devils Lake)
WEDNESDAY, September 10th....8 a.m.	Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse (Devils Lake)
WEDNESDAY, October 8th....8 a.m.	Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse (Devils Lake)
WEDNESDAY, November 12th ...9 a.m.	Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse (Devils Lake)
THURSDAY, December 11th12:00 p.m. State Convention	Bismarck Hotel – Bismarck ND,

Jallo moved to approve the 2025 meeting dates, seconded by Tweed, motion, passed unanimously.

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES:

Director Dr. Andrea Travnicek and Devils Lake Project Engineer Yaping Chi were present, as well as Alexis Faber and Garrett Larson. Director Travnicek started the updates on behalf of the ND Department of Water Resources by stating that Yaping would provide the particulars concerning the season's outlet operations and the planned capital improvements. Dr. Travnicek noted that the basin received a considerable amount of precipitation during the spring and summer months emphasizing the importance of the state trying to push out as much water as possible. Dr. Travnicek stated that The DWR remains committed to outlet operations and will be working to schedule the Outlets Advisory meeting before the spring operations, all the while trying to meet community expectations of the timing of the meeting.

Yaping Chi, P.E. – Devils Lake Basin Project Manager presented the to the meeting attendees. **2024 Outlets Operation:** Department of Water Resources (DWR) began the Devils Lake West End Outlet (West Outlet) operation for the 2024 discharge season on May 6th and was shut down for winterization on October 22nd. The Devils Lake East End Outlet (East Outlet) operation for the 2024 discharge season was started on May 14th and was shut down for winterization on October 18th. The operation of the outlets has been adjusted multiple times from May through October to meet the downstream water quantity and quality requirements. For the year of 2024, the total discharge volume from the West Outlet was 68,328 acre-feet, and the total discharge volume from the East Outlet was 44,751 acre- feet **The combined total discharge from both outlets was 113,079 acre-feet**, which is the highest combined discharge rate since 2019. The total discharge volume from the outlets since it began operation is 1,589,683 ac-ft. DWR remains committed to operating the Devils Lake Outlets and will discharge as much water as possible within the operating constraints.

Engineering Services for the Devils Lake Outlets Operation: For the year of 2024, several projects have been completed for maintaining the continued operations of the West Outlet and East Outlet.

- (1) The Capital Improvement Plan for the West Outlet was completed in April, which has been used as a guide to prioritize future projects at the West Outlet.
- (2) New flow meters at the West Outlet were installed in September to accurately measure the discharge rates.
- (3) The permanent backfill around the East Outlet pipe leakage area and the surrounding electrical repair work is expected to be completed in November.
- (4) Preventative maintenance of switchgears at both outlets which aims to identify and repair potential issues to ensure a smooth operation in the future was completed in November. A comprehensive engineering report including findings, test data, and recommendations is expected soon from the contractor.

There are several ongoing projects for both outlets, which include:

- (1) In October, all pumps at both outlets were inspected on site. The inspection report is currently under review.
- (2) Investigation of the overflow issue at the Josephine tank is complete and the revised hydraulic analysis report was submitted to DWR in November 2024,. The report includes possible causes and recommendations for mitigating the overflow issue. The report is currently under review, and the possible cause identified in the report is being further investigated in the field.
- (3) East Outlet pump intake area sedimentation removal around pump 1, a 75 cfs pump, was originally scheduled to be completed in November 2024. This will bring the East Outlet back to its full pumping capacity of 350 cfs. The project has been postponed due to the weather and will resume when conditions are suitable.
- (4) Engineering assistance in evaluating the pump priming system at the Round Lake pump station and determining options for replacement or improvement.

USGS – Lauren Castillo:

Lauren Castillo, Hydrologic Technician with the US Geological Survey Dakota Water Science Center in Grand Forks, was in attendance and presented the information gathered through the Real-time gages within the Devils Lake Basin, the rise of lakes in the basin in 2024. Lauren went through the 2024 inflows into Devils Lake that USGS monitored and stated there were no significant inflows following the spring runoff. Still, it mainly occurred from May through July due to increased precipitation. Chairman Howatt, Frith, and board members thanked Ms. Castillo for her presentation. A copy of the presentation will accompany the official minutes.

RED RIVER BASIN COMMISSION’S INTERNATIONAL LAND AND WATER

SUMMIT: Julie Goehring, Red River Basin Commission representative, was present and gave an overview of the conference in Grand Forks on January 14th – 16th. Frith stated that he would regularly attend these conferences, but his schedule hasn’t allowed that over the past few years. Frith noted that his schedule would be favorable for him to attend the 2025 conference and asked for board approval to attend the conference, plus the non-state rate for the hotel, which is \$156 per night. **Jallo made a motion to approve Frith to attend the RRBC Conference in Grand Forks and allow for the non-state hotel rate of \$156 per night, seconded by Sateren, the motion passed unanimously.**

OTHER NEW BUSINESS:

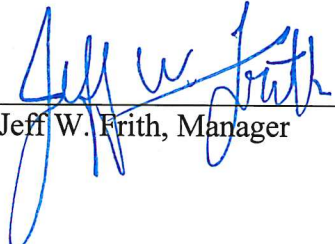
ELECTION of 2025 OFFICERS:

Chairman Howatt stated that his time as chairman has run its course, and it was time to elect officers for 2025 so that new officers could be seated at the January meeting. It was noted that Tweed is the current vice-chairman, and it is standard that the current vice-chairman be elected chairman. **Ash made a motion to nominate Tweed as chairman, that nominations cease, and a unanimous ballot be cast, seconded by Jallo. Tweed was elected as the 2025 Chairman. Howatt then opened the floor for nominations for the 2025 Vice-Chairman. Sateren made a motion to nominate Albin Jallo as 2025 Vice-Chairman, that nominations cease, and a unanimous ballot is cast, second by Slaubaugh, and the motion passed. Howatt then asked for nominations for Secretary/Treasurer. Jallo nominated Frith, and that a unanimous ballot be cast, seconded by Sateren. Frith was re-elected to serve as Secretary/Treasurer.** Howatt congratulated the new officers. Frith thanked Howatt for his leadership throughout this past year.

Frith reminded everyone that the next Joint Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 8th, at 9 a.m. in the Ramsey County Courthouse.

Date approved: **January 8th, 2025**


Mike Tweed, Chairman


Jeff W. Frith, Manager