

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
DEVILS LAKE BASIN JOINT WATER RESOURCE BOARD

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

Chairman Van Howatt called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM. Roll call of the counties was taken. All were 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

BOARD REORGANIZATION: Frith mentioned that at last month's meeting, the board reorganized for Chairman and Vice-Chairman, but did not vote for Secretary/Treasurer. **Sateren made a motion for Jeff Frith to continue in the role of Secretary/Treasurer, seconded by Ash, motion passed unanimously.**

APPROVE AGENDA:

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

APPROVAL of MINUTES:

Howatt asked if everyone had an opportunity to read the minutes from December 7th, 2023 and if there were any corrections or additions. **Ash made a motion to approve the minutes from December 7th, 2023, seconded by Sateren, motion passed unanimously.**

The financial report for the month was presented:

Sateren made a motion to approve the December 2023 financial reports; seconded by Tweed. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL of MONTHLY BILLS for January 2024:

	January 2024 Bills	Amount	Ck #
	NDTC - Website Hosting	\$20.75	4993
	Creel Bay Digital - Annual Website Hosting	\$240.00	4987
	Ramkota - December Conference		
	Jeff Frith - December 2023 Travel	\$320.90	4988
	Jeff Frith - Cell Phone Expense	\$101.25	4988
	Ramsey County Auditor: Rent	\$190.00	4991
	Ramsey County Auditor - Postage	\$29.45	4991
	Ramsey County Auditor: Telephone	\$55.49	4991
	Ramsey County Water Resource District (Copier Rent)	\$125.00	4992
	Ramsey County Water Resource District (Office Assistant Services)	\$300.00	4992
	Ramsey County Auditor - Wages & Withholding Taxes	\$5,882.09	4990
	Ramsey County Auditor - Health Insurance	\$2,062.94	4989
	Intuit QuickBooks Online Monthly	\$45.00	ACH
	Total Admin	\$9,372.87	
	Total General Project	\$0.00	
	Total	\$9,372.87	

Frith mentioned that the bill for the hotel stay for December's conference has not been received yet. Frith asked for this bill to be paid once it is received. **Jallo made a motion to pay the January 2024 bills listed, along with the hotel bill once received; seconded by Slaubaugh. Motion carried unanimously.**

OTHERS PRESENT:

Stacy Peters-Ramsey County WRD Office Manager, Dave Azure-US Fish & Wildlife, & Brian Sea-ND Game & Fish. Online: Amanda Lee-National Weather Service, Sindhuja Pillai-Grinolds, Yaping Chi, & Jeff Tranna, ND Department of Water Resources, Julie Ellingson-ND Water Users Association. Other guests present: Dick Johnson, Mike Connor & Julie Beckstrand, Benson County Water Resource District.

AGENCY REPORTS:

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE: Amanda Lee, online, presented her report. She mentioned it has been pretty quiet. She said the current lake level is currently 1449.2, similar to before. She said the Lake Level Outlook is scheduled to come out on January 25th, 2024.

ND GAME & FISH: Ben Sea, new NE Supervisor, was in attendance. He discussed various lakes and various fish information.

NRCS: No one in attendance or updates provided.

US FISH & WILDLIFE: Dave Azure was in attendance. He discussed that in 2023 there was 160,000 acres of land that they had been managed. He mentioned that there were 200 wetland easements restored. He said for 2024 there is nothing out of the ordinary and they continue to work on the Low Stress Bison Facility at White Horse Hill. He mentioned they received \$487,000 to restore & reconstruct grass and he sees this as one of the best weed controls. He said they are starting to hire summer staff and find it difficult.

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES: Sindhuja Pillai-Grinolds, Yaping Chi, & Jeff Trana were in attendance, online. Yaping Chi mentioned that the East End Outlet pipe had been repaired in December 2023. She said they have bids out for Engineering Services for the East & West End Outlets in Devils Lake. Sindhuja mentioned they are working on the upcoming Outlets Meeting and a date should be picked soon.

ND WATER ASSOCIATION: Julie Ellingson was in attendance, online.

OLD BUSINESS:

REVIEW OF ANNUAL WATER CONFERENCE: Frith mentioned that he provided a printout of the USGS information that was presented by Dan Thomas at the conference for everyone to review. Julie Ellingson mentioned that the conference next year will be held December 10th-13th, 2024. It is later this year, because of the Organizational Session for Legislature. She mentioned that numbers were up a bit from last year. She also mentioned that the videos will be up and available soon on their YouTube channel. They are waiting for Live Wire to finish their editing. She stated that the silent auction may be done a bit differently next year. Everyone seemed to have positive feedback about the conference this year.

OTHER OLD BUSINESS: No other old business

NEW BUSINESS:

RAMSEY COUNTY OFFICE AGREEMENT: Frith reviewed the 2024 Office Agreement the Joint Board has with Ramsey County. **Satarn motioned to approve 2024 RC Office Agreement; seconded by Jallo. Motion carried unanimously.**

2023 YEAR-END BUDGET AMENDMENTS: After reviewing the 2023 year-end budget, there were no amendments that were needed.

DESIGNATRE DEPOSITORES: Tweed made a motion to leave Bremer Bank as Designated Depository; seconded by Ash. Motion carried unanimously.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES: Frith mentioned that the authorized signees will be Howatt, Tweed, Ash & himself. Jallo motioned to approve authorized signees as listed; seconded by Ash. Motion carried unanimously.

WATER TOUR FOR 2024: Julie Ellingson mentioned the joint board wanted to get the water tour on their radar. It is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, June 20th, 2024. Frith asked where do we want to go this year? Do we want to go west since we went east last year? The idea was mentioned to possibly start in Rugby. Julie will call the Cobblestone in Rugby to get hotel rates. Frith will work with Slaubaugh, Benson and Ellingson on the possibility of starting in Rugby.

CORRESPONDENCE & MISCELLANEOUS: Frith mentioned the Supreme Court ruling over Sargent County Water Resource District vs Beck. Frith will forward this to some of the water board members who have not seen this. Frith mentioned that there is a public hearing tomorrow regarding rerouting a drain west of Lakota, Hwy 19. He mentioned the joint board received a “thank you” from Dani & Julie for the sponsorship for the winter conference. Julie Beckstrand was in attendance from Benson County Water Resource District and she said that she would be attending a few more meetings and then she will write up her report and present to Benson County. Frith mentioned that Sean has the Bylaws in a holding pattern until the Water Topics discuss 2372.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS: Dick Johnson, the 2023 recipient of the Water Stewardship Award was present. He thanked everyone and mentioned how important it was for the Joint Board & Water Boards to get involved in the next legislature.

BASIN BOARD REPORTS:

Ramsey County: Ash mentioned that the water board had their meeting last week. He mentioned to the joint board that that the water board has a new board member, Randy Schemioneck. He said their meeting had updates on water complaints and RC Drain #10.

Walsh County: Jallo mentioned they have been meeting weekly. He said they have been receiving several complaints pertaining to permits that were issued.

Eddy County: Tweed mentioned they had their meeting last Tuesday. They just went over bills. He mentioned they are still waiting on engineering report for the New Rockford Canal.

Pierce County: Slaubaugh mentioned they met Monday morning. He said the drain out east of Rugby is planning by pass next week. He said they have some open water coming, and not sure on the source of the water.

BASIN BOARD REPORTS Continued:

Towner County: Benson mentioned he was not at their meeting & had no update to give.

Nelson County: Sateren mentioned they met a couple of weeks ago. He said they have just been preparing for the public hearing that's scheduled tomorrow.

Cavalier County: Howatt mentioned they had their meeting last week. He said they have been discussing RC Drain #10 and he said they have been working on an international issue with Canada. He said in 2008 a landowner had received a permit and he plugged a drain at the Canadian/United States border. He floods about 50 acres of another landowner's land, but that landowner doesn't want to get involved. He mentioned that there are 90 feet each section line that a landowner can farm, but this land is owned by the Queen.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Frith had mentioned he is trying to figure out what is paid by the State Water Commission and what gets paid by the Joint Board.

Meeting adjourned at 11:17 AM.

Approved December 7th, 2023:

Dave Sateren, Chairman

Jeff W. Frith, Manager