

DEVILS LAKE BASIN JOINT WATER RESOURCE BOARD

Minutes of the regular monthly meeting held on Wednesday, November 12th, 2025, Historical Meeting Room, Ramsey County Courthouse, Devils Lake, ND, and Online via Teams.

Chairman Mike Tweed called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Roll call of the counties was taken.

Cavalier County
Eddy County
Nelson County
Pierce County
Ramsey County
Towner County
Walsh County

Ordale Morstad (**absent**)
Mike Tweed
Dave Sateren (**absent**)
Floyd Slaubaugh
Duaine Ash
Randy Benson
Albin Jallo

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

APPROVAL of MINUTES: The meeting minutes for October 8th, 2025, were presented. **Ash made a motion to approve October 8th, 2025, minutes, as presented, seconded by Benson, motion carried unanimously.**

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

APPROVAL of MONTHLY BILLS FOR NOVEMBER 2025:

November 2025 Bills		Amount	Ck #
	Intuit QuickBooks Online Monthly	\$115.00	ACH
	Ramsey County Water Resource District (Copier Rent)	\$125.00	5201
	Ramsey County Water Resource District (Office Assistant Services)	\$600.00	5201
	Ramsey County Water Resource District (Ash Conference)	\$310.00	5201
	Ramsey County Water Resource District - Leet Rd. Morrison Outlet	\$2,125.00	5202
	Leevers Foods North - Meeting Expenses	\$16.88	5203
	NDTC - Website Hosting	\$21.83	5204
	Ramsey County Auditor: Rent	\$190.00	5205
	Ramsey County Auditor: Telephone	\$55.49	5205
	Ramsey County Auditor - Health Insurance	\$2,377.10	5206
	Ramsey County Auditor - Wages & Withholding Taxes	\$6,176.20	5207
	Creel Bay Digital - Website Support	\$125.00	5208
	Jeff Frith - Cell Phone Expense	\$101.25	5209
	Blue Water Consulting	\$310.00	5210
	Pierce County Tribune - Yearly Subscription	\$48.00	5211
	Walsh County Press - Yearly Subscription	\$45.00	5212
	Blue Water Consulting	\$735.30	5213
	ND Water Users Association - Conference Sponsorship	\$1,500.00	5214
	Eddy County Water Resource District (Tweed Conference)	\$310.00	5215
	ND Water Coalition - 2026 Yearly Membership	\$1,000.00	5216
	Total Admin	\$13,116.75	
	Total General Project	\$3,170.30	
	Total	\$16,287.05	

The November 2025 bills were presented. **Benson made a motion to approve the November 2025 bills, as presented, seconded by Ash, motion carried unanimously.**

OTHERS PRESENT:

Bryan Sea - ND Game & Fish, Jim Olson - Blue Water Consulting, Patrick Samson – Ackerman-Estvold Engineering, Arne Berg – Retired Ramsey County Commissioner, and State Water Commissioner. Online: Amanda Lee, National Weather Service, Alexis Faber, Department of Water Resources, Dani Quissell, ND Water Association.

AGENCY REPORTS:

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE: Amanda Lee, Service Hydrologist/Meteorologist, was in attendance, online. She reviewed her monthly report, including the short- and long-term forecasts, and stated that the next lake outlook is scheduled for January 22, 2026.

ND GAME & FISH: Bryan Sea was in attendance and gave a report on the various activities the department personnel are working on in the district. The activities Sea mentioned were the fall sampling numbers; they were able to take samples from 50 of the 70 lakes within the Devils Lake District.

NRCS: No one in attendance.

US FISH & WILDLIFE: Dave Azure, District Refuge Manager, was not in attendance

AGENCY REPORTS CONTINUED:

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES: Alexis Faber was in attendance, online. Yaping provided an update on Devils Lake's level, noting it is currently 1448.8 feet, 0.6 feet lower than a year ago. Alexis stated that at West End Outlet, they replaced some of the air relief valves downstream from the Josephine Tanks. Based on previous analysis, they appeared to be blocked, which could have been a reason for the overflow issues at the Josephine Tank. On the East Outlet, they continue to have issues removing and cleaning the sediment from the intake screens on pump one. The Engineer is developing options to address that situation.

OLD BUSINESS:

BASIN WIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE: Jim Olson from Blue Water Consulting and Patrick Samson, Engineer with Ackerman-Estvold, were present to provide an update and possible direction for the board to consider when looking at the Water Management Plan. There are several areas the board could focus on; however, narrowing it down to be more precise would yield the best outcome. The top priorities could include Lake Stabilization, Upper Basin Storage, and Inundated Acres. There was considerable discussion about the priorities and the distinction between actions that can be taken versus those that should be taken. The cost of developing such a plan is a concern. Frith stated that the board may be able to afford the forty-thousand-dollar amount mentioned at the previous meeting, but that it would be best split between this year and next. The board asked if a project could be narrowed down before the next meeting and get more information then. Olson said he and Frith will follow up with Patrick and his supervisor at Ackerman-Estvold and come back in December.

ND Water:

Dani Quissell, Executive Director, was present online and gave an update on the Annual Water Conference, taking place in Bismarck, December 9th – 11th. Dani mentioned that a legislative study is underway regarding irrigation and the economic benefits of irrigated acres. She asked the Water Resource Board if they could provide maps of the permitted drains within their counties. Dani discussed the interim legislative committee meeting in Bismarck tomorrow. Both she and Frith are on the agenda; Dani will discuss wetlands and federal regulations, while Frith will address inundated lands in the Devils Lake Basin.

WATER STEWARDSHIP AWARD: Frith stated that no nominations were submitted. He said he had some possible nominees in mind, but board members thought it would be best to submit them next year, since the deadline has passed.

INTERNATIONAL WATER INSTITUTE COST-SHARE REQUEST (IWI LiDAR): Frith provided the board with an update from Chuck Fritz, the Executive Director, regarding the cost-share request that was approved at the October meeting. Frith reminded the board that during the October meeting, it was decided to offer a cost share to the IWI for upgrading their equipment, contingent upon the other Joint Boards agreeing to do the same. He noted that Fritz had met with all but one Joint Board and was currently in a meeting with that board. Frith confirmed that our cost-share amount is \$7,584.

OTHER OLD BUSINESS: No other old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

BANK TRANSITION – BREMER TO OLD NATIONAL:

Frith stated that the transition from Bremer to Old National Bank has been complete, not without some challenges, but for the most part has been smooth. He distributed a signatory sheet that Old National requested for the “Certificate of Authorized Persons” portion, for their records. Frith stated that all other documents have been filed, completing the transition.

MANAGER ANNUAL REVIEW:

Frith stated that this is something that should have been in the October meeting in order to have approval for a wage increase at today’s meeting to reflect on January’s payroll which is paid in December. Tweed commented that Frith must be okay with his current wages, and no action was taken.

2026 MEETING DATES:

Frith distributed a draft of the 2026 meeting dates, continuing with the second Wednesday of the month, and asked about the November meeting date, which falls on Veterans Day next year. It was discussed to change the November 2026 meeting to the third Wednesday. Frith stated that he would check the room availability and report back at the next meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE & MISCELLANEOUS: Frith shared a letter from Levi Otis. Ellingson Irrigation stated that they are working with the ND Irrigation Association on a study examining the economic impacts of irrigation within the state. Frith also shared that the Lake Region State Annual Key Event is scheduled for Friday, October 24th, at the Hofstad Ag Center. Frith also mentioned that he had sent information on precipitation and lake levels via email.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS: No other new business.

BASIN BOARD REPORTS:

Ramsey County: Ash mentioned they met yesterday. He mentioned that nothing controversial was discussed.

Walsh County: Jallo mentioned that they didn't meet yesterday due to the Veterans Day holiday. They continue to work on assessment projects.

Eddy County: Tweed mentioned that they continue to try to reach a resolution to an issue involving six different landowners; however, progress has been slow. Tweed asked at what percentage other counties assess snag and clear projects.

Pierce County: Slaubaugh mentioned that they had a

Towner County: Benson stated that beavers have become such a problem that they are paying bounties for beavers.

Nelson County: Sateren was not present; no update was given.

Cavalier County: Morstad was absent; no report was provided.

VISITORS:

Arne Berg, retired Water Commissioner and Former County Commissioner, was present and stated that it has been a while since he attended a Joint Board meeting and wanted to say that he is glad to hear of the progress on the Water Management Plan, as that continues to be an important part of the Joint Board's purpose.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Frith mentioned he will be in Bismarck tomorrow for the Interim Legislative Committee, as he is on their agenda to discuss inundated lands in the Devils Lake Basin. He continues to work on the Basin Water Plan with consultants. He had surgery to repair his broken leg on October 21st, which helped stabilize his leg but also took him out of the office for a few days to recover.

Meeting adjourned at 10:57 AM.

Approved December 11th, 2025:

Mike Tweed, Chairman

Jeff W. Frith, Manager