

Renville County Water Resource Board

Minutes of RCWRB Regular Meeting, April 14, 2025, held in the Community Room of the Renville County Courthouse, 205 Main Street East, Mohall, North Dakota.

Present:

Chair Peter Gates

Vice Chair Dan Steinberger

Manager Guy Solemsaas

Attorney Kale Van Bruggen (via video conference)

Engineer Jennifer Malloy (via video conference)

Treasurer Victoria Klingbeil-Trout

Meeting called to order by Chair Peter Gates at 9:00 a.m.

Chair Gates called for corrections or additions to the agenda. Chair Gates requested to add “Bank Signature Cards” to the agenda under New Business. Hearing no objections, the Chair declared the agenda approved as amended.

The minutes of the January 13, 2025, regular meeting were reviewed. Vice Chair Dan Steinberger moved to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Manager Guy Solemsaas, seconded. After discussion, the motion carried.

Treasurer Victoria Klingbeil-Trout presented the bills for approval by the Board and reported the income since the last meeting. Manager Guy Solemsaas moved to approve payment of bills as presented. Vice Chair Dan Steinberger seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Chair Peter Gates – aye, Vice Chair Dan Steinberger – aye, Manager Guy Solemsaas – aye. Motion carried.

Treasurer Victoria Klingbeil-Trout reported the account balances as follows: \$18.65 in the Drain No. 1 Bond fund; \$26.46 in the Checking Account; and \$39,544.58 in the Savings Account. Vice Chair Dan Steinberger moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report. Manager Guy Solemsaas seconded the motion. After opportunity for discussion, the motion carried.

Old Business:

Culvert – Section 22/23, T158N, R86W: Chair Peter Gates reported that the crossing between Section 22 & 23, Township 158 North, Range 86 West, Renville County is still on the Township’s list to correct. Farden Construction will be the contractor. The consensus of the Board was to keep this item on the agenda as Old Business.

Culvert – Section 12/13, T160N, R87W (Ward County): Vice Chair Dan Steinberger reported that he will coordinate with the Complainant and Township to use a metal detector to locate the buried culverts. The consensus of the Board was to keep this item on the agenda as Old Business.

New Business:

Legislative Update: Attorney Kale Van Bruggen (Rinke Noonan Law Firm) reported on some of the proposed bills for the 2025 legislative session that may affect the Renville County Water Resource District and which the ND Water Resource District Association is weighing in on. Van Bruggen reported that the State Water Commission (SWC) considered a request from the ND Water Resource District Association to increase the cost-share for assessment drain projects, at its April 10, 2025, meeting. The SWC Secretary recommended an increase from 45% up to 60% effective with H.B. 1020 (2025) passing with a specific funding level to cover the increased project costs, and contingent on the legislature keeping the 20.5% revenue stream from oil extraction tax. After discussion, the SWC approved a motion to approve the increased cost-share request with all members of the SWC voting in favor.

The Board also discussed FEMA BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) funding being pulled and the indirect affect that might have on assessment drain projects.

Considering S.B. 2180, the Board consensus was to add "OPEN MIC" as a standing agenda item for all future agendas. Attorney Van Bruggen will monitor the bill and if a formal policy is required, will draft a policy for the Board to consider at its July meeting.

Bank Signature Cards: Treasurer Victoria Klingbeil-Trout reported that the Renville County Water Resource District's bank requires written authorization to remove former District managers from the District's accounts, and to add current managers to the accounts with signatory authority. Manager Guy Solemsaas moved, effective immediately, to remove Mark Cook and Robbie Iverson from all Renville County Water Resource District bank accounts, signatory cards, and any related financial authority associated with the District, and to add Managers Peter Gates (Chair-2025), Dan Steinberger (Vice Chair-2025), and Guy Solemsaas as authorized signatories on all District bank accounts. Vice chair Dan Steinberger seconded the motion. After opportunity for discussion, the motion carried.

The Board directed its Legal Counsel/Secretary to provide the draft April 14, 2025, meeting minutes to Treasurer Victoria Klingbeil-Trout to provide to the District's bank. Approved minutes may be provided to the bank after those minutes are reviewed and approved at the Board's regularly scheduled July 14, 2025, meeting.

Items for Discussion and Information:

Assessment Drains: The Board requested Rinke Noonan Law firm compile an informational sheet on how assessment drain projects are initiated, funded, and approved; how assessment drain projects impact wetland conservation compliance with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and USDA-Farm Service Agency (FSA), and how assessment drain projects navigate land-use restrictions within U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conservation easements.

DRAFT/UNOFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

The Board discussed holding an in-person informational meeting mid-June for interested landowners and members of the public on assessment drain projects. Attorney Van Bruggen and Engineer Malloy would present on assessment drains and take questions from the audience. The consensus of the Board was to hold the informational meeting at 9:00 a.m. on June 24, 2025, at the Fire Hall, 101 Bertelson Street, in Tolley, North Dakota. The Board directed Attorney Van Bruggen to prepare an invitation to the informational meeting and a special meeting notice. The Board will invite landowners who have requested information and publish the invitation in the newspaper.

Souris River Joint Board:

Vice Chair Dan Steinberger reported on updates from the Souris River Joint Board, noting that Alternative Contracting Methods (ACM) process is occurring now for the Mouse River Park Bridge with Acerkman Estvold managing.

Letters of Complaint:

White Ash Township/Poppinga Dike – Sec. 10-158-86: Chair Peter Gates reported he visited the site and took elevation-measuring equipment. Gates noted the dike diverts the water north out of the road ditch, where there is a rise in elevation in the Southeast Quarter (SE¼) of Section 10, White Ash Township (Township 158 North, Range 86 West) north of where the water is diverted, which would direct the flow into the farmland in the SE¼. Chair Gates talked to Harvey Poppinga who mentioned that if the Township would allow it, he would be willing to remove the dike in the Township right-of-way to allow the water to continue to flow in the road ditch to the east, and then build up his driveway and install culverts to protect any potential impacts to his farmyard. After discussion with the Board, Chair Gates will suggest to Mr. Poppinga that he proceed to remove the dike.

A motion to adjourn was made by Manager Guy Solemsaas. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Dan Steinberger. On voice vote, the motion carried. Having completed all business on the noticed agenda, as amended, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 10:11 a.m.

Minutes approved by the Board on July 14, 2025.

Peter Gates, Chair

Kale R. Van Bruggen, Secretary