

METRO FLOOD STUDY WORK GROUP MEETING  
Thursday, March 4, 2010  
3:00 p.m.  
Fargo City Commission Room

A meeting of the Metro Flood Study Work Group was held at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 4, 2010 in the Fargo City Commission Room.

Work Group Members present: Fargo City Commissioners Tim Mahoney and Brad Wimmer, Moorhead Council Members Nancy Otto and Dan Hunt, Cass County Commissioners Scott Wagner and Darrel Vanyo, Clay County Commissioners Kevin Campbell and Grant Weyland, Cass County Water Resource District Manager Tom Fischer, Buffalo-Red River Watershed District Manager Gerald VanAmburg.

Work Group Members absent: Moorhead Council Member Diane Wray-Williams.

Staff Members present: Fargo City Administrator Pat Zavoral, Fargo City Engineer Mark Bittner, Moorhead City Manager Mike Redlinger, Moorhead City Engineer Bob Zimmerman, Cass County Administrator Bonnie Johnson, Cass County Engineer Keith Berndt, Clay County Administrator Vijay Sethi.

Others present: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Project Manager Aaron Snyder, Moorhead City Attorney Brian Neugebauer, Clay County Attorney Michelle Lawson, Southeast Cass Water Resource District Attorney Sean Fredricks, Cass County Assistant Attorney Traci Peters, Buffalo-Red River Watershed Attorney Tami Norgard.

Commissioner Campbell opened the meeting.

Grant Weyland moved the minutes from the February 25, 2010 Metro Flood Study Work Group meeting be approved. Brad Wimmer seconded the motion. All members present voted aye and the motion was declared carried.

Aaron Snyder gave a brief update on the results from the technical review and the regional economic development study. He said there are no major issues that cannot be overcome from the technical review. He distributed the results from the Regional Economic Development Study prepared by the Corps and he said the chart reflects how money from a diversion project would impact the local economy.

Mr. Snyder said there have been some questions regarding comments made by General Walsh and he would like to provide clarification. He said the Corps can only carry one Locally Preferred Plan (LPP) forward. In response to a question from Commissioner Mahoney regarding a waiver for a plan other than the NED, Mr. Snyder said a waiver would not be requested until a decision is made on a LPP. He said if a North Dakota plan is selected and approved, the cost share would be 65/35 of the NED and any amount above that would be a local responsibility.

In response to a question from Commissioner Campbell regarding the Corps doing more study on a North Dakota plan, Mr. Snyder said if a North Dakota plan is selected the schedule may not be met and funding could be in jeopardy. He said there would also be additional costs from \$600,000 to \$1 million associated with the study for a North Dakota plan.

Jerry Bents, Houston Engineering said he is representing Perley, Hendrum, Halstad and Shelly and the firm has been working with the four communities and has developed levee protection with a phased approach to help improve additional protection. During the 2009 flood, he said, temporary protection was added to the communities' existing levees. He said the Wild Rice Watershed District got involved after the 2009 flood event but plans for improved protection and internal storage are on hold pending the possible diversion project. He said the communities have received state funding for the projects and any local costs are kept within an affordable range.

Mr. Bents said Houston Engineering has also been working with the communities of Georgetown, Nielsville and Climax. He said, pending geotechnical concerns, the plan is to have 100 year flood protection. In response to a question from Nancy Otto regarding the effect of a Metro Flood Plan on those communities, Mr. Bents said flooding may peak sooner but only last a couple of days longer.

Georgetown Mayor Traci Goble said sixteen properties would be lost if the current levee is built up 2 feet higher for additional protection and the loss of revenue to the City would be substantial.

Dick Sunberg, Harwood, said Harwood is sensitive to increased flood levels. He said Harwood had protection from a project along the Sheyenne River but there was foundation failure so they are back to where they started.

Dilworth Mayor Chad Olson said Dilworth did not have any flood water from the Red River in either 1997 or 2009.

Jeff Volk, Moore Engineering, gave a report on retention and metro flood protection alternatives. He said they looked at the watersheds to help find answers for retention and to mitigate the downstream impacts. Supplemental projects would include a Northwest tributary option that would provide protection for the Harwood area and would cost from \$165 to \$250 million depending on levels of protection.

Gregg Thielman, Houston Engineering, said modeling was used to figure upstream storage in order to reduce downstream impacts to zero. He said implementation of effective storage would take 40 years and would cost over \$80 million. The average cost for additional protection using dikes and buyouts, he said, would be \$25 to \$35 million and bringing up levees downstream would cost \$7 to \$10 million.

Ed Schaefer gave a presentation in support of a North Dakota diversion.

There was discussion regarding an opportunity for public input and it was scheduled for the March 11th Metro Flood Study Group meeting.

Kevin Campbell said financing options need to start coming together. He suggested various groups begin gathering details and bring a preliminary report in two weeks.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

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