

***These are DRAFT minutes, subject to amendment before final approval by the Sargent County Water Resource District.***

Richland-Sargent Joint Water  
Resource District Special Meeting  
Sargent County Courthouse  
Forman, North Dakota  
September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – 9:03 a.m.

In attendance: Chairman Bruce Speich, Managers Todd Stein (with Stein appearing virtually), Luke Siemieniewski, Michael Wyum, Roger Zetocha; Manager Arv Burvee was present via Teams. Also in attendance were Wendy Willprecht Secretary/Treasurer; Nathan Trosen, Moore Engineering; landowner Richard Ruch, Sargent County Road Supervisor, Tim Faber. Present via video conference were Attorneys Sean Fredricks, and Stephen Hilfer of Ohnstad Twichell; and Leon Mallberg.

At 9:03 a.m. Chairman Bruce Speich called the meeting to order.

A motion was made by Manager Wyum, and seconded by Manager Roger Zetocha, to approve the 4/17/25 meeting minutes. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**SB 2180 “Public Comment” Resolution**

The Legislature approved SB 2180 this session, a bill that will require water resource districts (along with cities, counties, school districts, and park districts) to include a “public comment” period at each regular meeting. The bill allows WRDs to develop and implement a policy for this process, including rules for time limits on speakers, rules that require speakers to submit their personal information in advance of a meeting, rules that limit the topics to items on the current or immediately previous meeting agenda, etc. The statute went into effect August 1.

Fredricks prepared a resolution for the Board’s consideration regarding the requirements in SB 2180. Manager Siemieniewski moved to approve the public comment resolution. Manager Wyum seconded the motion. Upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously.

There was no public comment presented at this meeting.

**BILLS:**

The following bills were presented for approval and payment:

<b>Ohnstad Twichell</b> -Petition/Supreme Court cases	<b>\$</b>	<b>410.00</b>
<b>Moore Engineering</b> -Develop petition/Estimate SWC cost-share	<b>\$</b>	<b>786.25</b>

A motion was made by Manger Burvee and seconded by Manager Zetocha to approve the bills. Upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously.

**PROJECT/PETITION UPDATE:**

The joint board is considering the possibility of proceeding with a project to reconstruct a portion of the Richland-Sargent Drain. Fredricks prepared a petition for signature by landowners within the RS-1

assessment district to request that the Board proceed with the development and construction of the proposed project. The petition states that the District will proceed with the project without new special assessments for landowners. Rather, the petition indicates the District will fund and finance the local share of the project costs with annual levies collected by the joint board under N.D. Cent. Code Section 61-16.1-45, along with cost-share funding from the State Water Commission, and funds from the Sargent County Commission regarding crossing improvements for the project under N.D. Cent. Code Sections 61-16.1-42 and 61-16.1-43. The local share of project costs (those project costs not covered by SWC cost-share and the County share under Sections 61-16.1-42 and 61-16.1-43) will be less than the six-year maximum under Section 61-16.1-45, including both funds on-hand and additional borrowing.

Trosen of Moore Engineering said there is not a lot of engineering work left to do as most was completed during the design of the project the Board was previously developing.

A motion was made by Manager Wyum and seconded by Manager Zetocha to approve the petition form as presented. Upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously. Manager Siemieniewski will be circulating the petition to landowners. Once landowners submit the petition for the Board to consider, the Board will determine next steps.

The permit for the previously pursued project has expired, and the State Water Commission recommended that the Joint Water Resource District consider de-obligating the remaining cost-share funds and reapplying when the new project is ready to proceed, and when all requirements, including permitting, are in place. A motion was made by Manager Wyum and seconded by Manager Siemieniewski to de-obligate the cost-share funding previously approved by the State Water Commission and to direct administrator Willprecht to send correspondence to the DWR to request de-obligation of those cost-share funds for Surface Drain No. 6195 – Richland-Sargent Drain 1 Phase III Improvements. Upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously.

#### **Drain Clean Out:**

Manager Siemieniewski said that the drain is in need of a clean out. The drain needs cleaning from the county road south of Geneseo, to the east. The drain starts in Section 11 and cleaning is needed for about a mile from the start of the drain. Siemieniewski said JBX will do the cleaning. JBX is not sure if they can use the spoil material from the clean out some other place.

JBX will charge \$12,500/mile for cleaning and spoil spreading. The board will also be installing 3 intercept culverts with flap gates.

A motion to hire JBX to do the drain clean out and install the culverts and flap gates was made by Manager Siemieniewski and seconded by Manager Zetocha. Upon roll call, the motion carried unanimously.

The next RS1 joint board meeting will be December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

#### **FINANCIAL REPORT:**

Account balances as of July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025: **\$485,053.27**

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 a.m.

APPROVED:

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Bruce Speich- Chairman

ATTEST:

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Wendy Willprecht Secretary-Treasurer