

**Renville County Water Resource Board**

Minutes of RCWRB Special Meeting, October 6, 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. Hearing no objections, and no further corrections or additions, the Chair declared the agenda approved as presented.

No members of the public were present for the open mic portion of the agenda.

The minutes of the July 14, 2025, regular meeting were reviewed. Vice Chair Dan Steinberger moved to approve the July 14, 2025, 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. Vice Chair Dan Steinberger moved to approve payment of bills as presented. Manager Guy Solemsaas 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 income since the last meeting, and reported the account balances as follows: \$18.65 in the Drain No. 1 Bond fund; \$18.92 in the Checking Account; and \$26,651.04 in the Savings Account. Manager Guy Solemsaas moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. Vice Chair Dan Steinberger seconded the motion. After opportunity for discussion, the motion carried.

Treasurer Victoria Klingbeil-Trout left the meeting at 9:12 a.m.

**Old Business:**

Culvert – Section 22/23, T158N, R86W: At the last meeting, 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. No changes were known of since the last meeting. The consensus of the Board was to keep this item on the agenda as Old Business until Farden Construction has time to complete the work.

Culvert – Section 12/13, T160N, R87W (Ward County): At the last meeting, Chair Gates reported that the Renville County Board of Commissioners notified him that the County is going to replace this culvert based on an order of the Road Supervisor. Chair Gates reported that Renville County installed a new 24” culvert on the Renville County side, and this is now complete. The consensus of the Board was to remove this item from the agenda since the work in Renville County is complete.

Scophammer Dam – Sections 4/5, T158N, R85W: Engineer Jennifer Malloy (Apex Engineering) reported on the records obtained and reviewed from the Department of Water Resources (DWR) pertaining to the Scophammer Dam in Sections 4/5, T158N, R85W.

The DWR records are limited, but state that this is a livestock dam constructed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and assigned SWC Project No. 1477. The dam is on Mackobee Coulee and has a contributing area of 4096 acres (6.4 square miles) with low hazard class. The DWR has inspection data available from the 1950s, and the dam is present on a 1936 Renville County map. The DWR has records from inspections in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The DWR also has records of a principal spillway modified from a straight 36-inch pipe to a riser structure in the summer of 2009 and inspection records up through April 16, 2019. The 2019 inspection records include photos. No design records have been found.

The Board discussed the DWR records and inspection requirements. The consensus of the Board was to direct Engineer Jennifer Malloy (Apex Engineering) to follow up with the DWR on its anticipated inspection rotation. The consensus of the Board was also to direct Apex Engineering to gather an inventory of dams under the District’s jurisdiction for inspection and maintenance.

Vice Chair Dan Steinberger moved to direct Apex Engineering to do a dam inventory for Renville County Water Resource District. Manager Guy Solemsaas seconded the motion. After opportunity for discussion, the motion carried.

2026 Budget: Chair Peter Gates opened the hearing for the proposed 2026 Renville County Water Resource Board Budget.

Based on the new information learned regarding the Scophammer Dam after the initial draft proposed 2026 Budget was approved, the Board discussed whether to add additional funds to the 2026 Budget for inspection and maintenance of the Dam. The consensus of the Board was that inspections would be taking place in 2026 and the information learned from inspections in 2026 might inform a new estimated expense item for dam maintenance and repairs for the 2027 budget.

No members of the public were present to ask questions about, or comment on, the proposed Budget.

Chair Peter Gates closed the public hearing for the proposed 2026 Renville County Water Resource Board Budget. Attorney Kale Van Bruggen (Rinke Noonan Law Firm) reminded the Board that noticing and holding the hearing is optional, but now that the hearing is completed, the Board needs to authorize certifying the final draft of the proposed Budget to the Renville County Board of Commissioners for final approval.

Manager Guy Solemsaas moved to approve the proposed 2026 Budget, and to authorize Treasurer Victoria Klingbeil-Trout to certify the proposed 2026 Budget to the Renville County Board of Commissioners for approval. 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.

**New Business:**

Rinke Noonan Law Firm – Notice of 2026 Rates: Attorney Kale Van Bruggen (Rinke Noonan Law Firm) reviewed correspondence from Rinke Noonan Law Firm to the Board of Managers outlining the annual hourly rate increases for the Firm for 2026. Van Bruggen noted that the Firm continues to offer a discount to the District, a governmental client, compared to the Firm's rate for its private-sector clients. Van Bruggen also noted that the Firm is not increasing the flat monthly retainer fee for basic legal services, secretary officer duties, and attendance at four quarterly meetings per year. The rate for additional special meetings of the District Board will also remain the same flat rate as in 2025. The terms of the District's Engagement Agreement with the Firm authorize rate increases on an annual basis to account for increases in experience and inflation. The District remains able to terminate its services with the Firm at any time, at the direction of the Board.

2026 Meeting Schedule Resolution: Attorney Kale Van Bruggen (Rinke Noonan, Ltd.) reviewed a draft Resolution Setting Regular Meeting Schedule for the Year 2026. After Board review and discussion, Vice Chair Dan Steinberger moved to approve the Resolution Setting Regular Meeting Schedule for the Year 2026. Manager Solemsaas seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Chair Peter Gates – AYE, Vice Chair Dan Steinberger – AYE, Manager Guy Solemsaas – AYE. Motion carried.

**Items for Discussion and Information:**

January 2026 Calendar: The regularly scheduled first quarterly meeting of the Board for 2026 will be held on January 12, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in the Community Room of the Renville County Courthouse, 205 Main Street East, Mohall, North Dakota. The agenda for the meeting will be made available the week prior to the meeting.

**Souris River Joint Board Update:** Vice Chair Dan Steinberger gave a report on the construction group formed for the Souris River Joint Board to address lack of contractor bids on construction projects.

**Engineer's Report:** Engineer Jennifer Malloy (Apex Engineering) reported on the Waters Users Convention December 9-11, 2025, in Bismarck, ND. The morning of December 10, the ND Water Resource District Association will offer its manager training. Apex Engineering and Rinke Noonan will circulate the registration information once released by the Association.

**Letters of Complaint:** Vice Chair Dan Steinberger noted that in 2026, the bridge on 50th Ave. in White Ash Township (T158N-R86W), which was downgraded, is proposed to be replaced with box culverts. Steinberger is concerned about the box culverts creating obstructions to flow, particularly in the spring when there are ice-jams to deal with. Steinberger will address the concerns with the road authority.

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, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 10:19 a.m.

Minutes approved by the Board on January 12, 2025.

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Peter Gates, Chair

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Kale R. Van Bruggen, Secretary