

## MINUTES

### **Northwest Area Water Supply Authority Minot, North Dakota May 23, 2024**

The Northwest Area Water Supply (NAWS) Authority held a meeting in Conference Room 3 of the Minot Public Works Building, 1025 31<sup>st</sup> St SE, Minot, ND, and via Microsoft Teams on May 23, 2024. Dan Schaefer, Chairman of the NAWS Authority, called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM. A quorum was present.

#### **NAWS AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:**

David Lakefield, City of Minot Representative  
Tom Ross, City of Minot Representative  
Dan Schaefer, Chairman, All Season Water Users District Representative  
Bob Schempp, City of Minot Representative  
Tony Schwalbe, Cities with Direct Service Representative  
Jason Sorenson, Vice Chairman, City of Minot Representative  
Jason Zimmerman, State Water Commission (SWC) Representative

#### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Dr. Andrea Travnicek, Director of Department of Water Resources (DWR) and SWC Secretary  
Sindhuja S.Pillai-Grinolds, DWR Water Development Division Director  
Perry Weiner, DWR NAWS – Water Resource Senior Manager  
Travis Thyberg, DWR Project Support Specialist  
Abby Ebach, DWR Director of Public Policy (via Teams)  
Annika Plummer, ND Water/Clearwater Communications (via Teams)  
Dustin Offerdahl, City of Minot Planning Commission Chairman (via Teams)  
Dave Schwengler, Houston Engineering, Inc. (via Teams)  
Eric Volk, ND Rural Water Systems Association Executive Director (via Teams)

#### **CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA**

**It was moved by Representative Sorenson, seconded by Representative Schwalbe, and carried unanimously that the agenda for the May 23, 2024, NAWS Authority meeting be approved as presented.**

#### **Consideration of March 21, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Meeting minutes were sent to the Authority for review prior to the meeting. Chairman Schaefer requested any feedback on the meeting minutes from the previous Authority meeting on March 21, 2024. No feedback was presented.

**It was moved by Representative Sorenson, seconded by Representative Schempp, and approved unanimously to accept the meeting minutes from the March 21, 2024, NAWS Authority meeting as presented.**

#### **Department of Water Resources Director Update**

Andrea Travnicek, Director of DWR and SWC Secretary noted that the interim Water Topics Overview Committee is meeting in Minot June 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> which includes the tour of the flood protection on the first day. It was noted that the Legislative Council is currently finalizing the agenda and DWR has been asked for an agency presentation on NAWS and Southwest Pipeline Project. Authority was informed that Tim Freije has accepted another position and is no longer with the Department. Tim's replacement, Travis Johnson who currently works for Houston Engineering, will begin employment with the Department on May 28<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Travnicek noted that over the next few months DWR will be working with the Authority on determining the resources that will need to be requested in the agency expected to be submitted to the Governor's Office no later than August.

Dr. Travnicek suggested that the Authority consider touring some NAWS infrastructures to one of the future summer meeting's agenda. It was suggested that the Biota Water Treatment Plant could be first with a possibility of adding Snake Creek for an afterhours walkthrough. It would be beneficial to have a better understanding of projects progress prior to the legislative session. DWR is also having ongoing discussions with contractors and making sure that DWR and contractors are both held accountable to keep things moving. There are supply concerns, but DWR is working to the best of its ability to ensure that progress continues around these logistical constraints.

#### **April 11, 2024 State Water Commission Meeting Update**

##### **Financing agreement with City of Minot**

Sindhuja S. Pillai-Grinolds, DWR Water Development Division Director, stated the Financing agreement that had been reviewed by the DWR staff, City of Minot staff, NAWS Authority, and City Council was presented to the SWC without changes at the April 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. Included in this packet is the fully executed financing agreement for the NAWS project between the State Water Commission and City of Minot.

#### **May 16, 2024 Pre-Commission Meeting NAWS Agenda Items**

##### **Biota Water Treatment Plant Operations Agreement**

S. Pillai-Grinolds, DWR Water Development Division Director, DWR presented a draft operation and maintenance agreement for the Biota Water Treatment Plant with the City of Minot. This agreement has been shared with City staff, and DWR is hopeful that the City Council will take action on it at their next meeting. This agreement states that the City of Minot would be operating the Biota Water Treatment Plant and the operations would be funded by the federal government. Representative Sorenson shared the concern about the level of staffing and training requirements of operators that is under discussion with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). It was noted that these concerns should be addressed during the finalization of the Cooperative Agreement that is in the works between the SWC and BOR. DWR will ensure the concerns are addressed. DWR recommends that the Authority approve DWR and City of Minot staff to finalize the Biota Water Treatment Plant operations and maintenance agreement to be presented to the City Council and SWC for approval. DWR will bring the finalized agreement to the Authority at the July meeting.

**It was moved by Representative Sorenson, seconded by Representative Schwalbe, the NAWS Authority approve DWR staff and City of Minot staff to**

**finalize the Biota Water Treatment Plant operations and maintenance agreement to be presented to both the City Council and State Water Commission for approval.**

**Representatives Lakefield, Ross, Chairman Schafer, Schempp, Schwalbe, Vice-Chairman Sorenson, and Zimmerman voted aye. There were no nay votes. The motion carried.**

## **NAWS OPERATIONS – RESOURCES UPDATE**

S.Pillai-Grinolds, DWR Water Development Division Director, noted that based on the discussion at the January 18, 2024, NAWS Authority meeting, efforts are underway to determine necessary staffing levels and a potential plan for shared resources with NAWS Authority member entities for the long-term operations and maintenance of the NAWS project.

It was noted that meetings are being set up for June and July by the rural water members of the NAWS Authority and Dr. Travnicek will plan on meeting with them after the initial discussions have taken place.

## **NAWS BIOTA WATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATIONS**

S.Pillai-Grinolds updated the Authority on the agreements related to the NAWS Biota Water Treatment Plant (WTP). The three-party Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has been fully executed by the City, State, and BOR since last August and DWR is working on finalizing a Cooperative Agreement with the federal government. This agreement would allow the City of Minot to be considered the contracted entity to the SWC, allowing for the federal funds transferred to the SWC to be transferred to the City for the operations of the Biota WTP. Federal funds are available for the Fiscal year 2024 (ending on September 30<sup>th</sup>). DWR expects the finalization and execution of the Cooperative Agreement before September 30<sup>th</sup>. The separate agreement between the City and State for the day-to-day operation of the Biota WTP was discussed previously.

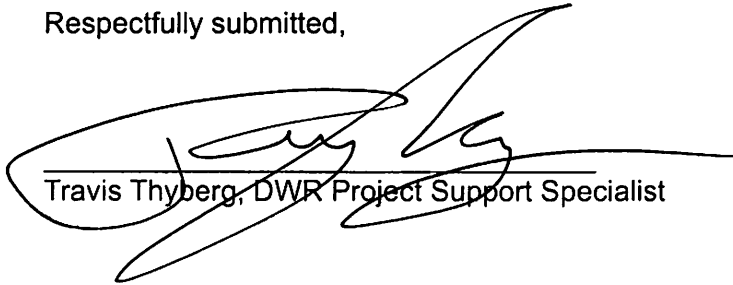
## **NAWS CONSTRUCTION UPDATE**

S.Pillai-Grinolds gave a brief update on NAWS projects including the Snake Creek Pumping Plant intake modifications with 5 open contracts (various delays but there is progress), the 2-1E discharge pipeline connecting Snake Creek to the NAWS main transmission line. DWR is working with BOR and Garrison Diversion Conservancy District on the permanent intake project with significant modifications from the original proposed horizontally drilled intake pipeline. The current plan entails cofferdam removal for lake bed installation of the intake pipeline. It was noted that alternate water delivery from the Sundre aquifer is currently being pursued for the partial startup and commissioning of the Biota water treatment plant. The South Prairie reservoir and hydraulic control structure are substantially complete and the Minot Water Treatment Plant phase II contract is getting ready for contract close out. The Bottineau reservoir and booster pump station, should be completed later this year.

Discussion was noted on contracts and supply change issues/concerns that DWR is diligently working to ensure that projects are moving forward, even with logistical concerns. Once South Prairie is complete and operational, pressure testing will be conducted on the transmission line.

There being no further items of discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Travis Thyberg', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Travis Thyberg, DWR Project Support Specialist