

A virtual meeting of the Metro Flood Diversion Authority Public Outreach Committee was held on February 24, 2021. The following committee members were present: Bernie Dardis, Mayor, City of West Fargo; David Ebinger, Clay County Commissioner; Jake Gust, Cass County Joint Water Resource District; Jim Kapitan, Cass County Commissioner; Kevin Campbell, Clay County Commissioner; Rick Steen, Cass County Commissioner; Rodger Olson, Cass County Joint Water Resource District; Shelly Carlson, Mayor, City of Moorhead and John Strand, Fargo City Commissioner.

Members absent: Gerald Van Amburg, BRRW Manager and Katie Mastel, Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chambers.

1. MEETING TO ORDER

Mr. Olson called the meeting to order at 2 PM. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 2021 MEETING

MOTION passed

Mayor Dardis moved to approve the minutes from January 2021 as presented and Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. APPROVE ORDER OF AGENDA

MOTION passed

Mayor Carlson moved to approve the order of the agenda and Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. Motion carried.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

Communication Director Update

Ms. Darling provided an overview of the communications department after her first 74 days. She indicated that she is building a foundation and planning. The focus on outreach has brought the Project to where it is now.

COMMUNICATIONS VIEW

High-level view of the communications landscape for this project

CORE INITIATIVES

Priorities we must keep moving over the next six-months while the local team is being built

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Streamline and evolve the ways we're communicating to educate, build community engagement and awareness

NEXT STEPS

Drive strategic initiatives to stay on schedule while building the local team

2021 COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET

Previous spend, current spend and savings

Ms. Darling indicated that it is vital that we focus on the core initiatives and they will be our priority over the next six months. They are as follows:

- **Build** the communications team
- **Engage** ND Legislative Assembly funding
- **Align** communications approach to all constituents
- **Brand** language, visuals, templates, project status
- **Proactive** media relations
- **Strengthen** impacted landowner communications
- **Build** national coalition partnerships
- **Enhance** partner communications (Corps, Fargo-Moorhead, Cass, Clay, MN DNR, ND OSE, consultants)
- **P3** strategic planning, announcement, onboarding, transition to construction
- **Activate** opportunities at key events

The team is also working on branding and gaining consistency with the Project and Authority names and the multiple logos that have been used in the past.

A consistent message needs to be conveyed on all of our communication channels which will entail a lot of updating, especially with the website.

Ms. Darling outlined the next steps in the communications approach and those that will be on the team.

High level strategic support during transition – PR for Good (local)

- Plan for and activate communications in high visibility phase
- Expertise to support critical move to construction phase

- **Full Team**
- Joanne Henry (Local) - proactive media relations, project management support, community outreach
- Mike Klein (National Expert) - P3 communications, strategic planning, onboarding, transition to construction
- Photographer (Local) - visual media repository and website
- Videographers (Local) - podcasts, interviews, project storyline (history, overview, future)
- Graphic design (Local) - brand alignment, templates, project newsletter

The 2021 budget will result in an anticipated \$502,140 savings from prior year.

2021 Communications Budget

Original \$969,140 Funds previously included in AE2S 2021

New \$237,000 PR for Good contract

New \$ 60,000 GA Group (previously approved)

New \$170,000 Creative Media Team – Photo, Video, Web

SAVINGS \$502,140

Ms. Darling provided a recap and took questions from the committee. There was significant dialogue around the definition of “local” and inquiries as to how new roles were filled and how they will be filled going forward.

Mr. Campbell asked if an RFP process was utilized to retain the consultants. Mr. Paulsen indicated that they searched for consultants that would fit and were available relatively soon.

Mr. Strand cautioned that we need to be fair, and the message can't be that we are *just handing someone a job*.

Mr. Olson stated that we need to support the communications role and it is understood that going forward, new hires will be local.

Mr. Campbell addressed the fact that PR for Good was “named” and based on the way in which they were selected, he will not vote in favor of retaining their services.

MOTION passed

Mayor Carlson made a motion to move forward with the with the PR for Good agreement and re-examine it in one year. The motion is to support and recommend Ms. Darling's request to the DA Board. Mayor Dardis seconded the motion and on a roll call vote, the motion carried.

MFDA Organizational Chart

Mr. Paulsen walked through the MFDA organizational chart and indicated that it will be updated as roles change. Mr. Strand suggested that everyone have a professional email address; not personal.

5. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be March 24, 2021.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Carlson made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Gust seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 3:07 PM.