Minutes of Meeting
Souris River Joint Water Resource Board
Thursday, August 6, 2026

A regular meeting of the board of directors of the Souris River Joint Water Resource District was called to order by Chairman David Ashley at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 6, 2026, after announcing that a quorum was present. The meeting was held in Room 203 of the Minot Auditorium. The Joint Board members in attendance included Jason Sorenson, Dan Steinberger and Clif Issendorf.

The Joint Board discussed the proposed Agenda for the meeting. Ryan Ackerman offered several amendments, including striking Contract Amendments as Item 5 and replacing those with Project Evaluation Process. In addition, consideration of the Purchase Agreement and Lease Addendum with Steven and Evon Morris under Item 16.

> **Dan Steinberger made a motion to approve the amended Agenda. Tom Klein seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition.**

The draft minutes of the Souris River Joint Board's special meeting of July 16, 2026 were discussed.

> **Dan Steinberger made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2026 special meeting. Jason Sorenson seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition.**

Ryan Ackerman of Ackerman-Estvold presented the Balance Sheet and Budget Report produced as of the end of April, copies of which were included in the August Joint Board Packet.

> **Jason Sorenson moved to approve the Budget Report. Tom Klein seconded the motion. A roll call vote was cast. The motion passed without opposition.**

The Joint Board next considered Project Evaluation Process. Ryan Ackerman advised that significant effort has been expended over the past 12-18 months related to long-term funding commitments. Funding requests and strategies informed by the budgets developed during the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) Update process in January 2025 and ultimately adopted by SRJB in December 2025. At the State of North Dakota, conversations have been had with Governor Armstrong, DWR Director Haase, Legislative Leadership. It is to a point that the Governor is working with us and other large water projects to craft a bonding proposal to ask the legislature to consider in the next session. Ryan Ackerman advised in that in parallel to that, conversations have been ongoing with the City of Minot, including Executive Staff, Mayor Jantzer. A long-term sales tax commitments and modeling developed by SRJB are being considered by City Finance Team. A National Highway Construction Cost Index diagram was contained in the August SRJB Packet showing current funding commitments from the State of North Dakota include legislative intent to fund the project based on estimates provided prior to the hyper-inflationary period of 2021-2023.

Ryan Ackerman advised that the financial status quo carries the project through about 2032 without additional commitments from the State of North Dakota and the City of Minot. Project implementation efforts are continuing while commitments are being contemplated and secured from our funding partners to comply with prior action of the SRJB, retain relationships and commitment from industry/trade partners (contractors, engineers, etc.), manage inflationary risk to capital expenditures, reduce flood risk and remove mandatory flood insurance purchase requirements from as many residents as quickly as possible, and maintain project momentum and public support.

Ryan Ackerman further advised that there are concerns about committing funding to projects prior to settlement of the larger funding question. To address these concerns, the structured value engineering (VE) process proposed during the PER Update adoption process will be followed, to include that at or prior to the 30% design level, the SRJB engineering consultants will evaluate the preliminary (10%) design included in the PER Update and determine the veracity of the cost estimates based on verified topographic, geotechnical, natural resource, cultural resource, HTRW, etc. conditions and evaluate alternatives which would reduce flood risk and property damage for the flood of record and lesser events. Alternatives will include, but not be limited to flood of record plus freeboard, meeting all applicable USACE, FEMA requirements; flood of record without freeboard, meeting all applicable USACE, FEMA requirements; flood of record with operational intervention, including implementation of emergency raises, closures and evacuations to ensure life safety, meeting applicable FEMA requirements for accreditation; 100-year flood protection, meet all applicable USACE, FEMA standards; and the SRJB also has the option to do nothing/stop. No action was taken by the Joint Board on this agenda item.

The Joint Board reviewed and discussed various bills set forth in the August Board Packet totaling $2,240,338.14. Chairman Ashley indicated Verizon has been taken care of. Chairman Ashley opened it up for questions from the Joint Board on each bill being considered for approval. Regarding Peace Lutheran Church, Dan Steinberger questioned what this pertained to. Ryan Ackerman explained it was essentially a settlement whereby Peace Lutheran can take care of the items with the $10,000 set aside from Bluestone for that purpose.

> **Tom Klein moved to approve the payment of bills totaling $2,240,338.14. Dan Steinberger seconded the motion. A roll call vote was cast. The motion passed without opposition.**

Jerry Bents of Houston Engineering updated on Phase MI-4. A Project Status Report is contained in the August Board Packet. Jerry Bents indicated the teams are working toward submission of 90% and are targeting for around August 20, 2026 for that submission to go to USACE. Full details were included in the August Joint Board Packet.

Jerry Bents of Houston Engineering updated on Phase MI-5. A Project Status Report from Houston Engineering is contained in the August Board Packet. Jerry Bents updated on the defective work notice issued to the contractor related to concrete issues/curb and gutter. The contractor has accepted the proposal presented which involves the replacement work being completed by October 9, 2026.

Jerry Bents of Houston Engineering updated the Joint Board on Phase MI-6. A Project Status Report from Houston Engineering is contained in the August Board Packet. Jerry Bents showed a drone video to update the Joint Board.

Jerry Bents of Houston Engineering provided an update to the Joint Board on Phase MI-8/MI-9. A Project Status Report from Houston Engineering is contained in the August Board Packet. Jerry Bents indicated all comments have been received back on the 90% from USACE and IEPR so those are being reviewed.

Jerry Bents of Houston Engineering provided an update to the Joint Board on Phase WC-5 (Apple Grove), WC-6 (Chapparelle) and WC-7 (Eastside Estates). Jerry Bents indicated work has started on all three of these phases and that work has been focused on boring soil and lab tests. Reports from Geotech are expected in the coming weeks. An Update Memo on these three phases is included in the August Joint Board Packet.

Ryan Ackerman updated the Joint Board regarding Phase MI-7. A Project Status Report is contained in the August Board Packet. Ryan Ackerman showed a drone video to update the Joint Board on this phase. Ryan Ackerman indicated one thing being worked on is trying to get public access back into the skate park.

Ryan Ackerman provided an update to the Joint Board regarding WC-1. The Project Status Report is contained in the August Board Packet. Ryan Ackerman indicated there is not much news to report on this phase. Work is ongoing with CPKC on final agreements to allow the track raise and the associated closure when the time comes.

Ryan Ackerman provided the Joint Board with an update regarding WC-2 (Books Robinwood). Ryan Ackerman indicated that the design update is similar to Phase WC-5 (Apple Grove), WC-6 (Chapparelle) and WC-7 (Eastside Estates). The action item on this item is the Purchase Agreement and Lease Addendum with Steven and Evon Morris. Dwyer Law drafted the documents which have been signed by Steven and Evon Morris. Dan Steinberger questioned whether anything needs to be coordinated with the road authority regarding the vacated 40 feet. Ryan Ackerman indicated that it is a previously platted roadway that was vacated on the east side of the Morris property.

> **Tom Klein moved to accept the Purchase Agreement and Lease Addendum and authorize the Chairman to sign the documents on behalf of the SRJB. Clif Issendorf seconded the motion. A roll call vote was cast. The motion passed without opposition.**

Ryan Ackerman provided the Joint Board with an update on WC-4. An Update Memo was included in the August Joint Board Packet. Ryan Ackerman indicated the grading plan is done and being reviewed and will likely be before the Joint Board for consideration to remove the levee later this year.

Ryan Ackerman provided the Joint Board with the PER Update. A PER Update Memo was included in the Joint Board Packet. The Barr Engineering team has provided a pre-final draft of options for the 27th Street diversion. More information will be coming to the Joint Board after the quality control process takes place.

Ryan Ackerman provided the Joint Board with a Rural Program Update. An update memo summarizing the updates is contained within the August Joint Board Packet, largely permitting processes for the various phases of the project that are ongoing. A proposal has been received from Anna Zietz regarding property off County Road 15 W in Minot. The Zietz family owns adjacent land to the property owned by SRJB and they would like to rent the land for $100 per year to install a temporary fence and allow horses to graze. Dan Steinberger questioned liability for this. Jack Dwyer indicated that the SRJB has limited governmental immunity so there are statutory tort limits that apply. Additionally, there is insurance through NDRIF that exceeds the maximum exposure so there is not really any liability. Dwyer Law Office will draft a rental agreement and contract away liability and ask for indemnification from the renter.

> **Tom Klein moved to accept the proposal presented by Anna Zietz. Jason Sorenson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was cast. Dan Steinberger opposed the motion at this point and the remaining board members approved motion. The motion passed.**

Luke Rogers of HDR Engineering provided an update regarding Rural Bridges. A Project Status Report is contained in the August Board Packet. On Velva, Luke Rogers provided a drone flight to the Joint Board.

On Mouse River Park, Luke Rogers of HDR Engineering indicated there are a few RFIs that have been received from Steven Eberle and the HDR team is looking through those. Steven Eberle of Ackerman-Estvold Construction Management provided an update to the Joint Board on the Mouse River Park Bridge. An Update Memo regarding Rural Bridges is contained in the August Joint Board Packet. Dan Steinberger questioned the issues present with respect to rideability of the bridge and Steve Eberle explained HDR has said it is within tolerance, but they are looking at methods of alleviating the ovulation present from beam-to-beam. Dan Steinberger asked whether any mitigation exists for preventing trees from growing back into that area. Ryan Ackerman indicated that the protocol there will be preventative maintenance and spraying for woody vegetation, which is county responsibility.

The Joint Board took note of future meetings and events as set forth in the August Board Packet. The next meeting of the Joint Board is Thursday, September 3, 2026.

In Personal Appearances, Chairman Ashley invited any personal appearances to speak to the board. Billi Gunderson made an appearance. Ms. Gunderson addressed the Joint Board regarding her concerns regarding equal access, safety and community mobility on the public walking path north of the river, east of 7th Street Northeast. Ms. Gunderson shared three photographs with the Joint Board – the first depicting a path shown in yellow representing the only completed sidewalk because the section shown in orange was left incomplete. Photo 2 depicted a path shown in red where Ms. Gunderson indicated pedestrians are forced off the trail and into the street which is unsafe. Photo 3 depicted the site today. Ms. Gunderson's concerns relate to ADA accessibility at the location.

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman David Ashley entertained a motion to adjourn.

Tom Klein made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dan Steinberger seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition.

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Jack Dwyer
Legal Counsel