Official Proceedings of the Stutsman County Commission— July 30, 2025

At 9:00 a.m., Chairman Levi Taylor called the special joint meeting of the Stutsman County Commission and Water Resource Board to order. Ben Tompkins, Amanda Hastings, Chad Wolsky, and Levi Taylor answered the roll call. Mike Hansen was absent

Joel Lees called the meeting of the Stutsman County Water Resource Board to order: Anthony Roorda, Joel Lees, John Schock, Dennis Clark, and Arlyn Schmidt answered the roll call.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

At 9:02 Mike Hansen arrived at the meeting.

Michael Gunsch, Houston Engineering, gave a presentation on the Crystal Springs Watershed Initiative project. The feasibility study is almost complete, and the next step would be preliminary engineering. The preferred alternative is a pipeline profile approximately 83,000 lineal feet, with the pump systems starting in Stink Lake and ending at Long Lake Refuge. This route is preferred because it is the least expensive and most beneficial. Drainage permits would be necessary from Kidder County, the Department of Environmental Quality and the US Army Corp of Engineers. The only unknown is the ground water component. The target removal elevation is 1750, natural overflow elevation is 1744.

Gunsch states that a 20 CFS removal system, with a 30" pipe, would be needed to keep up with the removal of the water. The process would take about two years to get to the target elevation of 1750. The preliminary engineering costs of the project are estimated at $976,000. The project itself will cost about $24.6 million, with a yearly system upkeep charge of $250,000.

There are two opportunities for potential cost share. The first route is through HMGP, which is a federal grant. The federal portion of the grant could cover up to 75% of the preliminary engineering costs, with a 10% state contribution and 15% local contribution.

The second cost share opportunity is through the State Water Commission Rural Flood Control. The potential state contribution is 45%, with the local costs being 55%.

Gunsch stated that any actions going forward would a project cost, and those costs should be recoverable, whether it be a full assessment district process, or a public private partnership. A certain percentage should be attributed to the railroad and other beneficiaries, and the net cost to the constituents of the county overall should be zero.

A budgeting and funding discussion between the commission and water resource board was held. Abby Geroux, attorney, secretary and treasurer of the Stutsman County Water Resource Board informed the boards they currently levy 0.24 mills, but can levy up to 4 mills. They do have approximately $100,000 that they have accumulated over the years. Even if the Water Resource Board raises their mill levy, their budget will still have to be approved by the Stutsman County Commission.

At 10:34 a.m., a motion to adjourn was made by Hansen, seconded by Tompkins. Motion carried.

A motion to adjourn the water resource board meeting was made by Schock, seconded by Clark. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Jessica Alonge
Auditor/COO

Levi Taylor
Commission Chairman

Joel Lees, Chairman or Anthony Roorda,
Vice Chairman