

CASS COUNTY JOINT WATER RESOURCE DISTRICT
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING
ORIGINATING AT THE CASS COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
HERITAGE CONFERENCE ROOM
WEST FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA
JANUARY 9, 2025
10:30 A.M.

A special meeting of the Cass County Joint Water Resource District Human Resources Committee was held on January 9, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.

Present were Keith Weston, and Rick Steen, Southeast Cass Water Resource District; William A. Hejl, Rush River Water Resource District; Melissa Hinkemeyer, Director, Secretary; Leilei Bao, Treasurer; Elizabeth Smith, Administrative Assistant; and Sean M. Fredricks, Ohnstad Twichell, P.C.

Minutes

It was moved by Manager Hejl, seconded by Manager Steen, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the July 8, August 23, and September 11, 2024, meetings, as presented.

Office staffing

Discussion was held on the current workload of the office staff. The Director noted it is a very busy time of year for the Cass County Water Resource Districts. The Treasurer proposed creating a training manual and potentially looking into grant opportunities to hire an intern to assist with the project. Manager Steen encouraged reaching out to Cass County to see how they may be able to assist the Water Resource Districts with items such as payroll or other accounting related tasks to provide staff more time for other tasks. Manager Weston will bring this topic to a future Cass County Joint Water Resource District meeting for discussion. The committee said an accounting training manual is important but there are other tasks that take priority during this time of year such as taxes and the audits.

The committee discussed potentially providing additional compensation for staff for additional hours worked during this busy time of year. Manager Hejl asked the Director and Treasurer to analyze the current workload compared to previous years. The committee discussed developing and implementing policies to provide the Director the same authorities as other Cass County department heads. Manager Steen asked the Director to prepare a future plan regarding office staffing. The Director indicated she will prepare a plan and research the Cass County employment manual regarding the authorities of the department heads.

Manager Steen left the meeting at this time.

Staff Salaries

Discussion was held on staff salaries for 2025. The committee discussed cost of living adjustments and step increases for staff. The committee indicated they are interested in adopting a step system similar to Cass County's for Cass County Water Resource Districts staff.

Manager Hejl made a motion to recommend to the Cass County Joint Water Resource District a 3% cost of living adjustment for 2025, step adjustments as discussed, and implementing a bonus policy or compensation time for extra hours worked during the months of December and January. Manager Weston seconded this motion. Upon roll call vote, the following Managers voted in favor: Weston and Hejl. Manager Steen was absent. The motion carried.

Staff continuing education / professional development

The Director requested reimbursement for two educational classes through the University of North Dakota not to exceed a total of \$3,500. The Director reported the previous class she enrolled in was very helpful for her position.

The Treasurer requested the Cass County Water Resource Districts join the Government Finance Officers Association. The membership dues are approximately \$200 and Cass County is also a member of the organization.

The committee inquired if the requests would include time during business hours. The Director and Treasurer indicated that it would not require time during business hours.

A motion was made by Manager Hejl and seconded by Manager Weston to approve the staff continuing education requests as presented, not to exceed a total of \$3,700. Upon roll call vote, the following Managers voted in favor: Weston and Hejl. Manager Steen was absent. The motion carried.

Payroll software

Manager Weston will get feedback from the Cass County Joint Water Resource District on the idea of partnering with Cass County for payroll before further considering a payroll software.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be considered by the Board, it was moved by Manager Hejl, seconded by Manager Weston, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting.

APPROVED:

Keith Weston
Chairman

ATTEST:

Melissa Hinkemeyer
Secretary