

MINUTES

Northwest Area Water Supply Authority Minot, North Dakota January 29, 2026

The Northwest Area Water Supply (NAWS) Authority held a meeting in Conference Room 3 of the Minot Public Works Building, 1025 31st St SE, Minot, ND, and via Microsoft Teams on January 29, 2026. Dan Schaefer, Chairman of the NAWS Authority, called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM. A quorum was present.

NAWS AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:

Mark Jantzer, Mayor and City of Minot Representative (virtual)
Kenny Rodgers, Garrison Diversion Conservancy District (GDCCD)
Craig Haskins, North Prairie Regional Water Representative (virtual)
Dan Jonasson, City of Minot Representative
David Lakefield, City of Minot Representative
Dan Schaefer, Chairman, All Season Water Users District Representative
Tony Schwalbe, Cities with Direct Service Representative
Jason Sorenson, Vice Chairman, City of Minot Representative
Ann Vallie, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians (TMBCI) Representative (virtual)

NAWS AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES ABSENT:

Kristine Goettle, Upper Souris Water Users District Representative
Jason Zimmerman, State Water Commission (SWC) Representative

OTHERS PRESENT:

Sindhuja S. Pillai-Grinolds, Director, Water Development Division, Department of Water Resources (DWR)
Brandon Hicks, NAWS Project Manager, DWR
Travis Thyberg, Project Support Assistant, DWR
Erin Stieg, Project Specialist, DWR (virtual)
Dustin Offerdahl, Electronic Industrial Controls Specialist, GDCCD (virtual)
Rachel Wald, Assistant Manager, All Season Water Users District (virtual)
Veronica Meyer, Public Works, City of Minot
Ryan David, Project Manager, Houston Engineering (virtual)
Annika Plummer, ND Water (virtual)

CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA

Vice Chairman Sorenson requested for any corrections or additions to the agenda. As there were none, the agenda was approved as presented by voice vote.

CONSIDERATION OF THE NOVEMBER 25, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

Meeting minutes were sent to the Authority for review prior to the meeting. Vice Chairman Sorenson requested for feedback or changes to the meeting minutes from the previous Authority meeting on November 25, 2025. No feedback was presented, and the meeting minutes were approved as presented by voice vote.

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES DIRECTOR UPDATE

Sindhuja S. Pillai-Grinolds, DWR Water Development Division Director, updated the Authority on progress made toward initiatives and studies, as well as the process efficiency taskforce at the DWR. A draft report has been received for the Cost Share study and a draft report for the Governance and Finance Study is expected by the end of February. An update on both studies is expected at the March 26th meeting of the Water Topics Overview Committee, along with an update on the NAWS project and other larger projects.

December 16, 2025 STATE WATER COMMISSION (SWC) MEETING UPDATE

Sindhuja S. Pillai-Grinolds, DWR Water Development Division Director, noted that the State Water Commission approved the 2026 NAWS water rates which were approved by the NAWS Authority at the November meeting.

The SWC also authorized the SWC's Secretary to finalize and execute the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NAWS customers, which was approved by the NAWS Authority at the September meeting.

They also approved repairs to the City HSP #1 and City HSP #3 as eligible Replacement and Extraordinary Maintenance (REM) projects and approved reimbursement up to \$90,000 from the REM fund. Similar action was taken at the November NAWS Authority meeting.

Finally, the SWC appointed Ms. Ann Vallie, recommended by the TMBCI council to the NAWS Authority as TMBCI representative.

January 22, 2026 PRE-COMMISSION MEETING UPDATE

Sindhuja S. Pillai-Grinolds, DWR Water Development Division Director, noted that no NAWS related items were discussed at the January Pre-Commission meeting.

NAWS BIOTA WATER TREATMENT PLANT (WTP) OPERATIONS UPDATE

Sindhuja S. Pillai-Grinolds, DWR Water Development Division Director, noted that DWR has an executed cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation, which provides funding for the operations of the NAWS Biota WTP. City of Minot has submitted six reimbursement requests to DWR for operations and maintenance expenses related to the NAWS Biota WTP, covering the period from August 2024 through November 2025. These six requests total \$765,364.84, and DWR has fully reimbursed the City for this amount. Reclamation has to date awarded \$463,700 toward federal fiscal year (FFY) 2024 expenditures and \$1,932,225 to cover FFY 2025 expenses for a total of \$2,395,925. Reclamation recently requested a revised budget for FFY 2026 due to the delay in the construction completion of the Biota WTP.

DWR and City of Minot staff continue to meet with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to understand requirements to be met by the Biota WTP and the Minot WTP. Work change directives that incorporate revisions required by DEQ have been issued to the Contractor. DWR may manage some revisions requested by DEQ outside the construction contract if warranted.

Houston Engineering has been authorized by DWR to complete the Capacity Assessment document for the Biota WTP required by DEQ. Second draft of the document has been reviewed by DEQ. Houston Engineering will continue to address these comments. Another draft from the Houston Engineering is expected in mid-February. The document also requires operations and maintenance manuals for equipment at the facility which will not be available until the Biota WTP nears substantial completion. It was clarified that the Capacity Assessment would need to be completed before DEQ would allow the plant to operate.

NAWS CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Sindhuja S.Pillai-Grinolds gave a brief construction update on NAWS projects following the memo included in the packet.

NAWS OPERATIONS UPDATE

NAWS Personnel Update

Sindhuja S.Pillai-Grinolds noted the personnel updates at DWR: Brandon Hicks, NAWS Project Manager started his employment with DWR on January 6, 2026. Interviews for the NAWS Operator position were held at the Biota Water Treatment Plant on January 14, 2026 and DWR has hired Cody Lockyer for the position. The Water Resource Senior Manager position at DWR is currently advertised with the closing date of January 29, 2026.

Isovault 2 Flooding

Sindhuja S.Pillai-Grinolds noted that one of three underground isolation vaults located along the pipeline between the Pressure Reducing Station south of Minot and the Minot Water Treatment Plant (WTP) was discovered to be completely flooded in early December, resulting in the loss of all electrical and electronic upgrades that were made as part of Contract SA No. 98. DWR staff discussed the findings of an investigation that determined low discharge pressure at the Minot Sundre Booster Pump Station likely caused the flooding. City of Minot staff will now ensure that minimum discharge pressure is maintained. Additionally, DWR staff are implementing preventative maintenance measures to avoid similar incidents in the future.

High Service Pump Station (HSPS) Pump Repair

Sindhuja S.Pillai-Grinolds noted that a 250 hp pump (City HSP#1) that became inoperable in March 2025 was rebuilt in August 2025, and another 250 hp pump (City HSP#3) that failed in August 2025 is currently at a shop facility in South Dakota for rebuild, with repairs expected to be completed soon. The Replacement and Extraordinary Maintenance (REM) fund was approved to cover the repair expenses for these two pumps. In mid-December, a 350 hp pump (NAWS HSP#1) also became inoperable. The pump and motor have been removed from the HSPS; the motor is at a shop in Mandan for repairs, and the pump will be transported to the South Dakota shop for repairs. Approval to use REM funds for these repairs will be requested once the cost estimate is received.

Agreements with City of Minot

DWR staff will begin to work on developing various agreements with the City of Minot. At this time, the identified agreements include: an Operations and Maintenance Agreement for the HSPS, and a Water Service Agreement with the City of Minot. DWR staff hopes to present the Operations and Maintenance Agreement for the HSPS at the March NAWS Authority meeting.

Potential agreement with Garrison Diversion Conservancy District (GDCCD)

DWR staff is reviewing the emergency sequence of operations at the Snake Creek Pumping Plant to determine if assistance from GDCD staff is necessary for the operations of the intake pumps and an agreement will be drafted accordingly.

OTHER BUSINESS

Dustin Offerdahl, Electronic Industrial Controls Specialist for GDCD shared camera footage of ongoing construction at the Snake Creek Pumping plant and shared some photos of the tunnel inspections and installation to the NAWS Authority members.

Sindhuja S.Pillai-Grinolds noted the next NAWS Authority meeting is scheduled for the same date as the Water Topics Overview Committee meeting in Bismarck. A new date of Thursday, April 2nd, 2026 at 10:30am was proposed.

It was moved by Representative Lakefield, seconded by Representative Jonasson, and approved unanimously to approve the proposed meeting date of April 2nd, 2026 at 10:30am.

There being no further items of discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Erin Stieg, DWR Project Specialist