

**NORTH PLATTE NATURAL RESOURCES
DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING**

May 12, 2016

The regular meeting of the North Platte Natural Resources District Board of Directors was called to order at 3:00 p.m. MDT, May 12, 2016, by Kent Andreas at the North Platte NRD conference room, 100547 Airport Road, Scottsbluff, Nebraska. Notice of the meeting was given to the public by publishing a legal notice in the May 5, 2016, Scottsbluff *Star-Herald*. Andreas informed meeting attendees that this meeting would be conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, a copy of which is posted in the meeting room for public inspection.

Board members present: Kent Andreas, Gary Darnall, Dave Deines, Gerald Dillman, Chuck Henkel, Dave Ostdiek, Pete Lapaseotes, and Dan Weinreis. Absent: Roger Eirich Others present: John Berge, Barb Cross, Scott Schaneman, Dave Wolf, Carolyn Hudson, Kyle Ann Hopkins, Tracy Zayac, Travis Preston, Jody Fiscus, and Dave Christian, NPNRD staff; Steve Smith, Smith, Snyder, Petitt, Hofmeister, and Snyder; and Thad Kuntz, Adaptive Resources, Inc.

The following items of informational material were made available to the Directors electronically prior to the Board Meeting:

1. Meeting Notice
2. DRAFT, Agenda
3. Minutes, North Platte Natural Resources District, Board of Directors Meeting, April 14, 2016.

4. Treasurer's Report

The following items were provided to the Directors at the Board Meeting:

1. Agenda
2. Minutes, North Platte Natural Resources District Board of Directors Meeting, April 14, 2016.
3. Treasure's Report
4. Manager's Report
5. Spring Water Level Graphs, from 1996-2015
6. Budget Subcommittee Report.
7. Proposal for Sponsorship-American Doorstop Project, submitted as a New Project in the Program Focus Area: Public Relations, Agriculture Education & Preservation.
8. Excess Flows Recharge Permanent Agreement Template between the North Platte Natural Resources District, and Irrigator.
9. DRAFT, Task Order Template Agreement for Excess Flow Diversions between the North Platte Natural Resources District, and the Irrigator.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

The Board reviewed the minutes of the April 14, 2016, regular Board meeting.

Moved by Ostdiek, seconded by Henkel, to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2016, regular Board meeting. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Dillman, Eirich, Lapaseotes, Ostdiek

Nay: None

Abstain: Weinreis

Absent: Henkel

4. Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable

Dave Ostdiek reviewed the Treasurer's report with the Board. Moved by Dillman, seconded by Henkel, to accept the Treasurer's report and pay the bills as listed. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Dillman, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Ostdiek, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich

5. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

6. Manager's Report

Berge reported with the pending retirement of Roy Lyles and some planned changes in the Soil Conservation Department, we have made an addition of Steve Smith to work as a Resource Technician. Steve comes to us from Lincoln where he most recently worked for US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. He has a bachelor's degree in Finance and is pursuing a second degree in Fisheries and Wildlife. Travis Preston and others are working on several different projects related to web-based GIS applications, including an improved version of the agricultural mapping app that Jeff presented to you over a year ago. This app's availability is dependent our ability to utilize our ESRI licensing for this purpose and some technical issues are still being worked on with potential vendors. In addition to that, we will be hosting telemetry

data on our website for review and management by landowners. We have had two conferences with Idea Bank, the firm that we are working with on re-development of our website. We have seen a mock-up of the site and are working with the firm on content, including a portal to dashboards related to telemetry data, water use and potentially the agricultural mapping app.

The District is in preliminary talks with ARI to prove up irrigation efficiency numbers in our model, which could really make a difference when it comes to calculating consumptive use. This would potentially be a collaborative project between the NRD, USDA ARS and NRCS utilizing telemetry, soil moisture probes, precipitation monitoring and data loggers. As this proposal gets more fleshed out, we will apprise the board. We are in discussions with Enterprise Irrigation District on some potential leasing projects on their ditch. We currently have obligated funds for about a quarter of the required meters in the fully appropriated area of the district. We are working on outreach, including phone calls directly to each landowner who has not yet applied for cost-share. We will likely have plenty of grant dollars to complete this important project.

Staff attended a presentation by Jacob Fritts of the Nature Conservancy and Trenton Franz of the University of Nebraska in reference to their Western Nebraska Irrigation Project which is using data collection devices, specifically moisture sensors in a stretch of the South Platte River as a way for landowners to better manage their water usage. TNC and the University expressed interest in doing a similar project in our District.

At the March Board Meeting, I was instructed to open a CD at Valley Bank with the proceeds from an expiring CD at First State Bank. That task is complete. We have

experienced a few delays in the shipment of the components of the telemetry project. Those delays are related to shipping problems that AMCI is experiencing from one of their vendor sources in China. We have informed the Department of Natural Resources of these delays and are working with AMCI to receive the shipment as soon as possible. The North Platte NRD was awarded a \$750,000 grant with a \$250,000 cash match from the Nebraska Environmental Trust for telemetry expansion. This grant, in conjunction with the DNR DAMP money that we've already received, will expand our budget to nearly \$1.3 million and expand our reach with these devices to 861 meters by the end of 2019.

Jerry, Kent, and Dave Deines from the board and Dave, Barb and I met with members of the North Platte Valley Water Association for a regularly scheduled meeting. One of the items on the agenda of that meeting was the future of the organization. Following a very robust discussion with those members, it was decided that NPVWA would continue to exist and function, but the Association would not be soliciting money this year, and would be very mindful of expenses. That organization will meet immediately after the NRD Board meeting every other month starting in June.

The Scottsbluff-Gering United Chamber of Commerce Agribusiness Committee is again hosting the annual water tour of the North Platte Project. I am co-chairman of the Water Tour, and will be speaking during the two-day tour. The tour takes place on July 19-20, and reservations will be accepted beginning on May 1. I spoke to the Nebraska LEAD class about our management activities in the North Platte NRD on April 4. Kyle Ann Hopkins is a participant in this year's Water Leaders Academy. It is my hope that each year we can have an employee go through this important program. Scott

Schaneman was in the program last year. I will be speaking at the Global Water for Food Conference in Lincoln on April 22. Barb, Tracy, Carolyn and Lynn will be attending and participating in the National Groundwater Summit in Denver next week.

7. Spring Water Level Presentation

Carolyn Hudson presented on the 2016 spring ground water levels. Because of abnormal precipitations the area has received the past two years, Hudson provided graphs of annual precipitation for Oshkosh, Bridgeport, Scottsbluff, and Harrisburg for the past 65 years to show how they compare to the past. She also provided maps of spring ground water level changes for one, five, ten, fifteen, nineteen, and twenty years' levels with the 2016 levels. When comparing to 2015, eighty-two percent of the monitoring wells shown a positive gain. While this is welcomed news, the maps when comparing 2001, 1997, and 1996 show we have not reached those levels. It should be noted that the early and mid-1990's had received more rainfall and the effects of the 2000's drought are still being seen.

8. Keep Scottsbluff-Gering Beautiful Presentation – Pharmaceutical Take Back

Cassidy Baum reported the Pharmaceutical Take Back was a great success despite the weather. They collected 1000 pounds of needles, 1200 pounds of pills, 500 pounds of inhalers and filled up five 65 gallon bins with recyclable pill bottles and cardboard. She thanked us for our contribution.

9. Consideration of 1 Percent of Budget Led for FY17

Berge reported that the Budget and Personnel Subcommittee and staff discussed provided for the 1% increase in the budget that is allowed by law above and beyond the lid limits by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the Board at the March 24th meeting. Though no votes were taken,

staff is recommending that we proceed with this action, so this item will appear on the Board agenda until such time as a ¾ super majority vote affirmatively. Approval of the 1% increase does not mean the money has to be spent, but it can go into the “unused restricted fund authority,” and is something that this district has routinely in the past. Moved by Lapaseotes, seconded by Dillman, to increase the total restricted funds authority by an additional 1%. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Dillman, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Ostdiek, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich

10. Consideration of Donation to “The American Doorstop Project”

Last month, the Board heard a presentation from Melody Dobson from “The American Doorstop Project”. They are requesting a one-time donation of \$7,500 to help fund the project. Moved by Henkel, seconded by Lapaseotes to approve a donation in the amount of \$5000 to “The American Doorstop Project”. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Deines, Dillman, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Ostdiek, Weinreis

Nay: Darnall

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich

11. Consideration of Excess Flows/Recharge Permanent Agreement Template

For the past year, staff have been working on drafting agreements to take advantage of excess flows and divert water into surface water canals. It provides two main

functions: (1) it provides immediate flood relief to the river, and (2) it provides aquifer recharge through seepage from the canals. The agreement is for five years and only comes into play if the North Platte River is declared to have excess flows. The template is not set in stone or locking the District into paying if they choose not to. It does help expiate the permit process with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources. Moved by Henkel, seconded by Lapaseotes to approve the Excess Flows/Recharge Permanent Agreement Template. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Dillman, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Ostdiek, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich

12. Consideration of the Task Order Template for Excess Flows/Recharge Agreements

Berge explained a task order template for the Excess Flows/Recharge Agreements also needs to be approved. The task order simply spells out what duties each party has agreed to. Moved by Lapaseotes, seconded by Henkel, to approve the Task Order Template for Excess Flows/Recharge Agreements. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Dillman, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Ostdiek, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich

13. Staff Spotlight: Barb Cross

Barb Cross has been with the District for 4 months. She previously worked for the

Farm Service Agency in Scotts Bluff/Banner County for 32 years. She lived in Harrisburg, and has recently moved to Scottsbluff. Her husband, Brad, was killed in a farming accident last year. She has three children and four grandsons. He family originally homesteaded in Bridgeport in the 1880s.

14. Adjourn

Moved by Henkel, seconded by Dillman, to adjourn at 4:18 p.m., MDT. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Dillman, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Ostdiek, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich