

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

June 9, 2016

The regular meeting of the North Platte Natural Resources District Board of Directors was called to order at 3:00 p.m. MDT, June 9, 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 June 2, 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, Roger Eirich, Chuck Henkel, Dave Ostdiek, and Pete Lapaseotes. Absent: Dan Weinreis. Others present: John Berge, Barb Cross, Scott Schaneman, Dave Wolf, Carolyn Hudson, Kyle Ann Hopkins, Steve Smith, Seth Popp, Todd Filipi, Lydia Hanson, and Amanda Shepperd, NPNRD staff; 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. Agenda
3. Minutes, North Platte Natural Resources District, Board of Directors Meeting, May 12, 2016.

4. Treasurer's Report (Preliminary)

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, May 12, 2016.
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Manager's Report
5. Data Access Monitoring Program (DAMP) Telemetry Project Status Update.
6. Western Water Use Management Modeling, Upcoming Modeling Extension & Update, by Thad Kuntz, Principal Hydrogeologist, Adaptive Resources Inc., June 2016.
7. North Platte NRD Excess Flows Diversions 2016, dated June 9, 2016.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

The Board reviewed the minutes of the May 12, 2016, regular Board meeting.

Moved by Henkel, seconded by Ostdiek, to approve the minutes of the May 12, 2016, regular Board meeting. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: Dillman, Eirich

Absent: Weinreis

4. Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable

Dave Ostdiek reviewed the Treasurer's report with the Board. Moved by Darnall,

seconded by Eirich, to accept the Treasurer's report and pay the bills as listed. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: Dillman, Eirich

Absent: Weinreis

5. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

6. Manager's Report

Berge reported the District is nearly 100% complete with the staff requested budget for consideration by the budget committee. This request, as of this writing, results in about \$200,000 less property tax asking than did last fiscal year's budget. This is largely because of our enormous amount of grant awards over the past year, and includes some increases in budgeted expenditures for 10/30 and EPIC, budgeted expenses for excess flows, and some major capital improvements and purchases, including several vehicles. We are planning a Budget and Personnel Subcommittee meeting next week that will result in the recommendation to the full board. We are continuing to work on staff recommended rules changes as discussed with the Water Resources Subcommittee and the District Operations Subcommittee and are looking forward to the scheduled meetings of both subcommittees upcoming. Our intent is still to hold rule hearings this fall.

Our insurance policies renew on July 1, and we have provided all of the requisite information to EMC/Inspro for that effort. Staff meetings will be moving from every other Friday to every other Tuesday to accommodate staff's summer weekend schedules. We are actively seeking quotes for the resurfacing of the parking lot and repairing of our sidewalk, and expect to get this work done in the next fiscal year. Amanda is joining our staff as a partnership employee with the Nebraska Forest Service. Amanda has served as an intern for the last year, and will be continuing her undergraduate studies at Oregon State Online while the NFS will reimburse us \$15,000 per year for services to that entity. Dave Wolf and Amy Seiler will share supervision of Amanda.

I have decided to forgo an application for the WSF "big fund" for water sustainability projects given our staff being stretched thin with three major grant funded projects at present. We will, however, be applying for some study money related to Soil Moisture Monitoring. We have been working with the other Upper Platte NRDs and DNR to revise a recent study that was conducted on the difference between Fully and Over Appropriated in the upper Platte. In our opinion, that study missed the mark wildly, and we are working on another scope of work to revise the numbers. In addition, I've been named to a small working group to define Fully Appropriated, as the definition is not spelled out in law, and the context of this definition is important in providing context to the resulting numbers.

Dave Christian, Dave Deines and I recently participated in the Annual Tour and

Annual Meeting of the Permanent Maintenance Committee of the Gering Flood Control Project. We have budgeted \$26,000 for our portion of expenses related to our role on that committee. I remain Secretary of that Board. We will be travelling to the Basin Wide Annual Meeting and First Meeting of the Basin Wide Planning Process next week on June 15 and 16. In addition to our statutory stakeholders and those that we helped volunteer for that process, our Board Representative, Chuck Henkel will be joining Barb, Tracy and myself at that initial meeting. We will be working in parallel with the Basin Wide Planning process on our District Wide IMP to also be completed in the next couple of years. We are working on a coordination plan to ensure that both will be complete at the same time, and with minimal objections.

We received great news at our PBC meeting last week in that we will be receiving reimbursements totaling about \$1.9 million over fifteen years to reimburse the bulk of payments related to the Tighe and Hardt permanent retirements of groundwater. This is an enormous financial benefit because it will give us more money to leverage against future projects. Nearly two years ago Jeff Sprock and I demonstrated a mock-up of an agricultural mapping app that we were intending to make available to landowners in our NRD for planning purposes for their land use. Travis has taken up that project and we are currently working with Velosys, a GIS development company based in Seattle with representatives in Nebraska to refine the app. They are currently working on a scope of work to make those refinements to ensure that the management of ag lands and water is done more easily and effectively

and to provide an avenue for landowners to access NRD documentation for their specific properties. We will be working with landowners to ensure we are providing services that they need and have requested. This will likely be a fee for use service to ensure that revenues help offset costs.

Work continues in earnest on our Drought Tournament, generally slated for later this fall. We continue to work with the National Drought Mitigation Center and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln on this planning process. We are in very preliminary talks with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Panhandle Research and Extension Center on hosting a Water Summit in Scottsbluff in the Winter. This would be similar to the meetings that Dean Yonts used to hold many years ago in the area. I am serving on a working group with representatives from the community to develop a discussion related to resource conservation and climate. This project is funded by the Nebraska Conservation Education Fund and the Nebraska Humanities Council.

Kevin Adams and I briefed Congressman Smith and his entire staff - from both Washington and Nebraska on the excess flows efforts that we were involved in. I attended the NRD Manager's meeting in Ord earlier this week. These are important opportunities for NRD managers to compare notes. I will be in Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons June 17-23rd and will not be reachable, at all.

7. Presentation on Data Access Monitoring Program (DAMP) Telemetry Project

Seth Popp updated the Board on the Damp Project. They received the first shipment on May 24th, and after some training, started installing on June 1st. Popp showed the Board how the desktop

would work and provided some lesson learned. He also provided an outlook for phases 1.5 and 2. As of June 7th, 85 units had been installed.

8. Western Water Use Management Model Task Schedule Update

Thad Kuntz updated the Board on task schedule for the model. The model tasks include: peer review of the model, creating analyses easy buttons, moving model to a bigger server, updating the various models with the WWUMM, and other similar tasks. The South Platte NRD applied for and were approved for a Water Sustainability Fund Grant to help fund a portion of these tasks.

9. Presentation on Water Sustainability Fund Project

The District was awarded \$900,000 from the WSF to retire 1000 acres of ground water only acres. The District will match \$600,000. The target acres will be in the high depletion areas in both the North Platte Valley and Pumpkin Creek and will be distributed throughout the different counties to lessen the property tax implications of taking irrigated land out of production.

10. Flow meters in the Fully Appropriated Areas of the District Update

Berge reported that the District is using three different funding sources to offer cost-share on flow meters. We have around 200 meters installed/obligated and more are coming in. There are a total of about 390 flow meters in the Fully Appropriated area. Staff have started the process of asking for an extension on the Bureau of Reclamation Water Smart Grant, if we need it. The board will be updated on the progress.

11. Excess Flows update

Berge reported that the District has contracted with surface water interests on excess flows. The agreements are long term agreements (five years). The District has budgeted \$160,000, but will probably only spend \$60,000 - \$70,000.

13. Consideration of EPIC and 10/30 Payments Pending Title Search Results

Staff have received very limited applications for the EPIC and 10/30 programs. The payments for the application we have received totals about \$42,000, and staff recommends the Board approve the contracts pending the title search. The scoring was based upon the rules approved by the board. Moved by Eirich, seconded by Dillman, to approve the contracts for the EPIC and 10/30 programs pending the title searches. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Weinreis

14. Staff Spotlight: Steve Smith

Steve Smith moved to Scottsbluff from Lincoln, and before that, he was in the Army for five years. He got his degree in finance, but wanted to be outside. He went back to school, graduated, and started working for Game and Parks and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. He started with the NRD about a month ago.

14. Adjourn

Moved by Dillman, seconded by Ostdiek, to adjourn at 4:00 p.m., MDT. Motion

passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Weinreis