

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

**October 13, 2016**

The regular meeting of the North Platte Natural Resources District (NRD) Board of Directors was called to order at 3:17 p.m. MDT, October 13, 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 October 6, 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, Dave Deines, Gerald Dillman, Roger Eirich, Chuck Henkel, Dave Ostdiek, Pete Lapaseotes, and Dan Weinreis. Absent: Gary Darnall. Others present: John Berge, Barb Cross, Dave Wolf, Tracy Zayac, Elizabeth Miller, Lydia Hanson, Scott Schaneman, and Amanda Shepperd, NPNRD staff; Thad Kuntz, Adaptive Resources, Inc, Steve Smith, Smith, Snyder, Pettit, Hofmeister, & Snyder; Kelvin Schanaman, FSA CED, Sarah Gray, NRCS District Conservationist; and Dave Fisher from the public.

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

1. Meeting Notice

2. Agenda
3. Meeting Notice (Special)
4. Draft Agenda
5. Minutes, North Platte Natural Resources District Board of Directors Meeting, dated September 8, 2016.
6. 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, September 8, 2016.
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Manager's Report
5. DRAFT, Letter to Don Krause, dated October 14, 2016, regarding clarification of CNPPID's request for involvement in the WWUMM Internal Model Review.
6. City of Gering's Easement Agreement.
7. NPNRD Variances Rules for Consideration.
8. USDA Service Center Employee Biographical Sketch, by Sarah Gray.

### **3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings**

The Board reviewed the minutes of the September 8, 2016, regular Board meeting.

Moved by Eirich, seconded by Henkel, to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2016,

regular Board meeting. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall

#### **4. Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable**

Dave Ostdiek reviewed the Treasurer's report. Moved by Weinreis, seconded by Eirich, to accept the Treasurer's report and pay the bills as listed. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall

#### **5. Comments from the Public**

Dave Fisher thanked Berge and Lapaseotes for being on the discussion panel for the documentary Thirsty Land. He mentioned that California has lined their canals and empty rivers, while our area has unlined canals and water in the river. Our canals also provide recharge for our aquifers. We need to protect our water system, so we will have water for agricultural and wildlife.

#### **6. Manager's Report**

Berge reported the budget and levy information from the October meeting

was sent promptly to the required state and local agencies for their review and action as it pertains to the collection of the levy that we are requesting from property owners.

Our staff was summoned to Morrill County to further explain our budget and the necessary increase in property tax asking to fund our projects and programs. As budgeted, we have completed a major overhaul of the parking lot and the northern sidewalk. The total cost has come in under budget by nearly \$13,000. We are awaiting a visit from Simon Contractors to inspect a few problem areas on the parking lot project.

Recently the US Army Corps of Engineers completed dam assessments on several structures under our purview. While those inspections are on file here at the office, it is worth noting that the Corps requested information related to the operations plans and the emergency plans for each. The District has provided those to that agency for their use where possible and will be raising the others as an issue at the upcoming Gering Valley Flood Control Project meeting later in November.

Drought Tournament planning continues in earnest, and we now have 30 positive RSVPs for the tournament. Final touches are being put on the drought scenario. The National Drought Mitigation Center was integral in the planning the tournament. The Drought Tournament will take place on November 18<sup>th</sup>.

Next week, Berge and Cross will be meeting with Mark Brohman to discuss

our 2<sup>nd</sup> Year funding through NET for telemetry equipment to ensure that we can make our third order in a timely way. The next meeting of the Basin Wide Planning Group is scheduled for November 16<sup>th</sup> in North Platte. Prior to that meeting, staff hope to meet with all of our stakeholder representatives to ensure that they understand their limitations in this process and to fully brief them on the Western Water Use Management Model.

The District has had excellent weather for flow meter reads so far this fall, and 638 meters have either been read or have been attempted to be read. This does not indicate that final reports are ready to be prepared, but it is very good progress. Staff are working with ARI to utilize a software program that the District owns to do our own quick reference retirement analyses. Berge estimates that this could save the District \$10,00-\$12,000 per year.

A representative from IdeaBank will be coming to the November board meeting to present on the new website for the NRD. Berge and Cross will be asking each subcommittee to come to terms with a regular schedule for meeting in the next few weeks. They have asked employee committees to do the same as our Board subcommittees to take the guess work out of meeting times and agenda items. Staff will be working on proposed changes to our Employee Manual for the Budget and Personnel Subcommittee to consider soon. The District has a little over 400 ac pending on groundwater retirements and several hundred surface water

leases pending that could be completed yet this calendar year.

Berge will be speaking at the Nebraska Water Symposium next Thursday in Lincoln. Berge and Lapaseotes served on a Panel for a discussion following the screening of the documentary “Thirsty Land.” Seth Popp, Scott Schaneman, Dave Wolf and Berge presented on our telemetry project at the NARD Annual Conference in September.

**7. Consideration of Letter in Response to CNPPID Request to Participate in Internal Model Review.**

Berge reported last month, the board tabled a request by Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District (CNPPID) to share the Western Water Use Management Model with their staff and modeler. The board requested Thad Kuntz to reach out and gather more information on what they wanted. Kuntz did contact both Don Kraus and CNPPID’s modeler. They worked out what information CNPPID wanted, and what we will share. A response letter has been prepared and was provided in the Board packet.

Moved by Deines, seconded by Dillman to approve request letter to be sent to Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District regarding their viewing of the model.

Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall

**8. Consideration of Easement with City of Gering for South City Drain**

Berge reported the City of Gering would like to bury electrical lines near Lockwood Road and County Road P. The lines need to be buried a little bit deeper because the lines are going under the South City Drain, which is part of the Gering Valley Flood Control Project. We own part of the drain, and an easement is necessary. An Easement agreement has been drafted and is available to the Board in their packets.

Moved by Deines, seconded by Ostdiek, to approve the Easement with the City of Gering for South City Drain. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall

**9. Discussion of Public Hearing Testimony for Purposed Amendment to Chapter 1 of the Ground Water Management Area Rules and Regulations.**

The public hearing on the proposed North Platte NRD Purposed Amendment to Chapter 1 of the Ground Water Management Area Rules and Regulations was opened at 3:00 p.m., MDT, by Hearing Officer Steve Smith. Notice of this hearing was published three times in the Scottsbluff Star-Herald on September 15, 22, and 29, 2016. The proposed amendment would insert a variance process into the rules. The North Platte

NRD submitted seven exhibits to the hearing and provided the only testimony. John Berge, General Manager of the North Plate NRD, provided the background and purpose of the amendment. The reason for the change is to allow our constituents to bring certain actions to the Board of Directors and have the Board consider actions that will have nominal or zero impact to third parties or other water users. The rules do not currently allow this avenue for our constituents.

Moved by Eirich, seconded by Dillman, to adjourn the Public Hearing regarding the proposed amendments to Chapter 1 of the Ground Water Management Area Rules and Regulations. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall

**a. Consideration of Adoption of Proposed Amendment to Chapter 1 of the Ground Water Management Area Rules and Regulations**

Moved by Eirich, seconded by Lapaseotes, to adopt the proposed amendments to Chapter 1 of the Ground Water Management Area Rules and Regulations. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None



Absent: Darnall

## **10. Introduction of USDA Services Center Employees**

John Berge wanted the Board to meet the new District Conservationist from NRCS and other new employees. Sarah Gray has been hired to replace Dallas Johannsen as District Conservationist. She is originally from Harrison and has worked in various other NRCS offices throughout the state. She is happy to be back in the area and excited to work with the NRD. Calvin Schaneman was raised on a farm near Hardin, MT. He served four years as a Program Technician in Montana, before moving to Norfolk, NE. For the past year, he has trained in Ord, Ponca, Tekamah, Columbus, and York. He has accepting the CED position in Scottsbluff.

## **11. Adjourn**

Moved by Dillman, seconded by Ostdiek, to adjourn at 3:49 p.m., MDT. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall