

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

January 12, 2017

The regular meeting of the North Platte Natural Resources District (NRD) Board of Directors was called to order at 3:03 p.m. MDT, January 12, 2017 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 January, 5 2017, 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, Roger Eirich, Chuck Henkel, Pete Lapaseotes, Dave Ostdiek, and Dan Weinreis. Absent: Gerald Dillman. Others present: John Berge, Barb Cross, Tracy Zayac, Dave Wolf, Lydia Hanson, Amanda Shepperd, Elizabeth Miller, Kyle Ann Hopkins, and Todd Filipi, NPNRD staff; Thad Kuntz, Adaptive Resources, Inc; and Sarah Gray, NRCS District Conservationist.

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, December 8, 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, December 8, 2016.
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Manager's Report
5. 2017 NARD Bill Summary
6. North Platte Natural Resources District Drought Tournament Recap
7. North Platte Natural Resources District Drought Tournament Final Report, Submitted by the National Drought Mitigation Center on January 10, 2017.
8. Board Subcommittees Organization List for 2016-2017.
9. Policy Statement, North Platte Natural Resources District, Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program, North Platte NRD Conservation Program.
10. Letter from Jerry Kenny, Executive Director, Platte River Recovery Implementation Program, to North Platte Natural Resources District, regarding Program Participation on Internal Review Board for Western Water Use Model, dated November 17, 2016.

11. Letter from Brian Barels, Nebraska Public Power District, regarding Western Water Use Model Review, dated December 19, 2016.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

The Board reviewed the minutes of the December 8, 2016, regular Board meeting. Moved by Eirich, seconded by Ostdiek, to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2016, regular Board meeting. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman,

4. Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable

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

Ayes: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Eirich, Henkel, Ostdiek, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: Lapaseotes

Absent: Dillman

5. Comments from the Public

No comments from the public.

6. Manager's Report

Berge reported that the directors recently received a legal opinion from Steve Smith via email. He suggested reviewing that letter and follow up with Smith or Berge with any questions that they might have. Administrative staff has discussed offering, as an option, that employees use their personal phones for NRD business rather than carry two phones. The NRD would then provide a partial reimbursement to offset data costs. After conferring with our attorney, staff has decided to forgo this as an option, because it might unnecessarily expose personal information in the event of a records request or during discovery for a court proceeding.

The annual employee appreciation dinner will be held on February 3. This year, there will be two additional categories of awards for employees: 1) the Assistant Manager's Award which recognizes the hard work of one of our Department Heads and 2) the Manager's Award which recognizes the hard work of one of our other employees. These awards will be presented in conjunction with the Employee of the Year award, which is pulled from the voting of all employees. Barb Cross, Jackie Bishop, and Berge are exempt from selection.

The District is working with a group from NRCS and our neighboring NRDs to revamp the former "No-Till Partnership" into the "Conservation Partnership of Western Nebraska." This is designed to recognize and market conservation and tillage practices beyond no-till and to gain a wider audience and following for those practices.

The first annual conference will take place on February 22 in Bridgeport.

Berge has been working directly with Jerry Kenny, Executive Director of the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program to determine how the District might be able to influence more directly and effectively the workings of the PRRIP. We will continue to work on this with existing Committee members and with the Executive Director's Office.

Berge reported the District has been working with NRCS in many areas, including cost-share, jointly funding EQIP Dryland Conversion contracts, and sharing information more effectively. They are also working to schedule a Local Working Group (LWG) meeting in March to review priority applications for EQIP and to evaluate cost share programs. Water Use Reports are currently being delivered to landowners across the District. As of this writing, there are only about 100 left to print and mail. This has been a yeoman's effort by the field staff, Bishop, Kyle Ann Hopkins, Lydia Hanson, and the front office staff. This is about one month ahead of last year's schedule.

The district has recently submitted a reimbursement request for funds related to the Schneider Retirement in Sioux County, and are awaiting payment for that retirement under the Water Sustainability Fund (WSF) grant. Staff is also anticipating that the McVicker's Retirement in Morrill County will be approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission and County Commission in the next few weeks, allowing us

to then submit their initial payment for reimbursement to the WSF Grant as well. A few weeks ago, the District received nearly \$1.9 million from the Platte Basin Coalition. These funds are Nebraska Environmental Trust dollars that the NRD fought for to help to reimburse payments for the Hardt and Tighe permanent retirements. The District reimbursed ourselves \$237,638.03 for payments made to date and the remaining funds were placed in the "PBC Retirement Account" at Western States Bank, where it will draw from when payments are made on these two contracts in the future. Staff will continue to work with PBC on contracts related to reimbursements for the Cow Camp Project.

Managers from UNWNRD, TPNRD and SPNRD joined Berge in meeting with newly elected Senator Erdman of Bridgeport to discuss a wide range of topics related to his legislative agenda. Berge attended the first meeting of the Nebraska Water Center Advisory Board last month via telephone. He will be meeting with them monthly. Kent Andreas and Chuck Henkel will join several staff at a meeting of Platte Basin representatives and NDNR to discuss the Overappropriated to Fully Appropriated analysis and associated methodology on January 18th. This is a joint meeting of several directors. Kent Andreas as Chairman and Henkel as the Basin Wide Planning Representative will attend to represent the NPNRD. Also, on January 18th, several staff will join NDNR Director Jeff Fassett, Jerry Kenny of PRRIP and others from around the basin to discuss the ongoing plan to extend the first increment

of the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program. Finally, on January 18th, staff and our attorney Steve Smith will receive an update/briefing on the NDNR interest in the Panhandle Area Water System (PAWS) project that you received a briefing on a few months ago. He will report back to the Board on the outcome of that discussion.

The next basin-wide planning meeting will be held on March 15 in North Platte. Several staff, Dave Deines, Dave Ostdiek and Jerry Dillman will be participating in the NARD Legislative Conference January 22-25 in Lincoln. Staff will try to meet with every one of the 49 State Senators, university officials, USDA officials and representatives from DEQ while we are in town. Berge will be participating in the first meeting of the 2017 Water Leaders Academy immediately following that conference, also in Lincoln. The Water Leaders Academy is a project sponsored by the Nebraska State Irrigators Association. Scott Schaneman and Kyle Ann Hopkins are recent alumni of the program. Several staff will attend the Governor's remarks session at the airport this coming Friday as he visits Scottsbluff to discuss budget and legislative priorities. The event is sponsored by the Scottsbluff-Gering United Chamber of Commerce. Berge and his family will be travelling to the Gulf Coast February 15-19, and he will be out of the office at that time.

7. Legislative Update-

Berge highlighted the Nebraska Association of Resources District weekly legislative summary provided by Executive Director Dean Edson. Berge also highlighted

Governor Ricketts' State of the State Address and the following state-wide tour the Governor undertook to highlight some of his objectives. He also reported on the legislative committee make up.

8. Presentation on Drought Tournament

Tracy Zayac and Elizabeth Miller reported on the first ever North Platte NRD Drought Tournament. The National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) at the University of Nebraska helped moderate the tournament, and Zayac reported that the event was a success. The teams provided many different policy options and helped identified goals that the NRD could incorporate into a District-wide drought plan. The participants had several positive comments about the tournament. The NDMC will provide a report of the tournament and District staff will start compiling policy options and will bring them to District Operations Committee to discuss.

9. Board Reorganization

The Board leadership terms have expired and the Board needs to nominate and vote for Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. Moved by Henkel, seconded by Darnall, to nominate and approve Kent Andreas as Chairman, Roger Eirich as Vice Chairman, Pete Lapaseotes as Secretary, and Dave Ostdiek as Treasurer. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman,

Representatives to the NARD and the Basin-wide Planning Process also need to be nominated and approved. Dave Deines was selected by the caucus to represent the North Platte River Basin in the Natural Resources Commission. Moved by Eirich, seconded by Ostdiek to keep Henkel on as representative to the Basin-wide Planning Process and Dillman as representative to the NARD Board of Directors. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman

10. Consideration of Changes to the Conservation Policy Statement for the NSWCP Program

Last month, the Board of Directors approved an increase in the NSWCP cost-share maximum payment from \$3000 to \$5000 per landowner per practice. The changes were not made in the North Platte NRD's policy statement, and the edits need to be approved. Moved by Darnall, seconded by Henkel to approve the changes to the North Platte NRD's Conservation Policy Statement for the NSWCP Program. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman

11. Consideration of Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (PRRIP) Request Regarding the Western Water Use Management Model (WWUMM)

Jerry Kinney has asked to be involved in the Western Water Use Management Model. Thad Kuntz contacted Kinney, and he agreed to a similar status that was given to Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District (CNPPID). Kuntz and staff have recommend approving the request, and the South Platte NRD will be taking similar action soon. Moved by Lapaseotes, seconded by Ostdiek, to approve Platte River Recovery Implementation Program's (PRRIP) status request regarding the Western Water Use Management Model (WWUMM) review. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman

12. Consideration of the Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) Request Regarding the Western Water Use Management Model (WWUMM)

Nebraska Public Power District has requested to also be included in the WWUMM review process and has agreed to the same status given to CNPPID. As part of the status, NPPD has agreed to talk to the sponsors of the COYST Model and let Kuntz involved with their model's review process. Kuntz and staff recommend the approval. Moved by

Eirich, seconded by Darnall to approve Nebraska Public Power District's status request regarding the Western Water Use Management Model (WWUMM) review Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman

13. Adjourn

Moved by Ostdiek, seconded by Eirich, to adjourn at 3:48 p.m., MDT. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman