

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

September 14, 2017

The regular meeting of the North Platte Natural Resources District (NRD) Board of Directors was called to order at 3:00 p.m. MDT, September 14, 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 September 7, 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, Roger Eirich, Pete Lapaseotes, Dave Ostdiek, and Dan Weinreis. Absent: Gerald Dillman and Chuck Henkel. Dave Deines arrived at 3:02 p.m. Others present: Barb Cross, Tracy Zayac, Lydia Hanson, Jody Fiscus, Seth Popp, Kyle Anne Hopkins, Jackie Bishop, Travis Preston, Amanda Shepperd, Paula Kihlthau, Scott Schaneman, Emily Hauck, and Jenny Sauter, NPNRD staff; Thad Kuntz, Adaptive Resources, Inc, Steve Smith, Simmons Olsen, and Amy Seiler, Nebraska Forest Service; and Cinda Munoz.

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, August 10, 2017.
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Minutes, North Platte Natural Resources District Budget and Personnel Committee, August 31, 2017.

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, August 10, 2017.
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Manager's Report
5. Minutes, North Platte Natural Resources District Budget and Personnel Committee, August 31, 2017.
6. North Platte Natural Resources District Budget FY-2018.
7. DRAFT Deed of Conservation Easement between Wetlands America Trust, Inc., and the North Platte Natural Resources District.
8. Map and Legal Descriptions of the Tracts involved in the Ducks Unlimited-Beam Easement.

9. Beam East Conservation Easement, Garden County, Nebraska, Baseline Documentation Report NE-223-1, dated December 5, 2016, and prepared by Erica Gnuse, Biologist, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes of the August 10, 2017, regular Board meeting. Moved by Eirich, seconded by Darnall, to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2017, regular Board meeting. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Eirich, Lapaseotes, Ostdiek, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Deines, Dillman, Henkel

4. Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable

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

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman, Henkel

5. Comments from the Public

Amy Seiler with the Nebraska Forest Service noted that 274 trees are currently being housed at the District office. Todd Filipi is helping the NFS distribute 10 free trees to communities in the District; this represents about \$1,000 of free trees that are available to area communities that want them.

6. Manager's Report

Cross reported that the FY18 budget process concludes with the hearing today. This budget features reductions in overall spending of around \$700,000 and in the property tax asking and mill levy. It represents an attempt to scale back spending in the face of expected levy-authority and valuation reductions.

District staff have completed anti-harassment training, and similar training will be scheduled for the Board in the coming months.

The Harrisburg Water System has sustained damage from multiple lightning strikes this season. Repairs have been ongoing, and insurance payments have been received for the first two (of three) incidents.

The District now hosts two Americorps volunteers; we are the first NRD to have these. Jenny Sauter is working with Barb Cross on the greenhouse project, and Emily Hauck is working on outreach with Dave Wolf and Amanda Shepperd.

Construction plans for Yensen Drain repairs have been completed and are out to Paul Reed to obtain a cost estimate for the work. We hope to begin work in the fall. District staff will perform some of the minor work on the project.

The District will be submitting testimony regarding LR210 to the Appropriations Committee. We are increasing our outreach for the Water Sustainability Fund grant in order to get the remaining acres signed up. The greenhouse project has \$52,000 in donations as of today, and the District has also submitted a \$31,000 grant to NET for the project.

7. Report from Budget & Personnel Committee

Dave Ostdiek reported the committee met on August 31, 2017, for a last look at the budget. The committee considered recommendations by the staff on the opportunity to take advantage of Water Resources Cash Fund dollars, administered through the Platte Basin Coalition, in the coming fiscal year. These dollars require a 40% match from the NRD. The committee considered three options: (1) going for the full amount of money that could be available, over \$2 million dollars, which would go toward a “wish list” of water management projects; (2) requesting no money at all; or (3) request 60% reimbursement of existing groundwater, surface water, and commingled leases (past and FY18 payments) which are already built into the FY18 budget. The committee chose the third option, based on staff recommendations.

8. Public Hearing on Proposed FY18 Budget

The public hearing on the proposed North Platte NRD FY18 budget was opened at 3:18 p.m., MDT, by Hearing Officer Dave Ostdiek. Notice of this hearing was published in the Scottsbluff Star-Herald on Thursday, September 7, 2017. Cross reviewed the

reductions in the proposed budget, compared to FY17, along with the total proposed property tax asking and mill levy. No one offered testimony on the proposed FY18 budget. The hearing was closed at 3:23 p.m., MDT.

9. Public Hearing on Setting Final Tax Request

The public hearing on the proposed North Platte NRD tax request for the FY18 budget was opened at 3:24 p.m., MDT, by Hearing Officer Dave Ostdiek. Notice of this hearing was published in the Scottsbluff Star-Herald on Thursday, September 7, 2017. No one offered testimony. The hearing was closed at 3:25 p.m., MDT.

10. Adoption of Proposed FY18 Budget

Moved by Eirich, seconded by Lapaseotes, to approve the FY18 budget as proposed. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman, Henkel

11. Adoption of Final Tax Request

Moved by Ostdiek, seconded by Eirich, to set the North Platte NRD property tax request at \$3,065,390.01 for FY18. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman, Henkel

12. Consideration of Adding Barbara Cross and Chuck Henkel to Bank Accounts and Securities for Signature Authority

Previous motions, at past meetings, on adding Barb and Chuck as signatories were too specifically worded. The motion for consideration today is a general authorization to include Barb and Chuck on all financial instruments.

Moved by Darnall, seconded by Weinreis, to add Barb Cross and Chuck Henkel as signatories to all NRD bank accounts and securities. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman, Henkel

13. Consideration of Ducks Unlimited Easement Proposal

The conservation easement proposed for consideration is for a property south of Oshkosh on the North Platte River. Staff have concerns over the demands on staff time that maintaining and monitoring the property would require, as well as the investment of dollars that DU and the City of Oshkosh are asking from the NRD, in order to develop the property as a public space as Oshkosh desires. Staff recommends denying the DU request and not taking on the conservation easement.

Moved by Lapaseotes, seconded by Deines, to deny the DU request and not approve the conservation easement. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman, Henkel

14. Adjourn

Moved by Eirich, seconded by Darnall, to adjourn at 3:29 p.m., MDT. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Dillman, Henkel