

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

October 12, 2017

The regular meeting of the North Platte Natural Resources District (NRD) Board of Directors was called to order at 12:02 p.m. MDT, October 12, 2017, by Roger Eirich 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 5, 2017, Scottsbluff *Star-Herald*. Eirich 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: Gary Darnall, Gerald Dillman (arrived at 12:15), Roger Eirich, Chuck Henkel, Pete Lapaseotes, Dave Ostdiek, and Dan Weinreis. Absent: Kent Andrea. Others present: John Berge, Barb Cross, Tracy Zayac, Lydia Hanson, Travis Preston, Scott Schaneman, and David Wolf NPNRD staff; Thad Kuntz, Adaptive Resources, Inc; Steve Smith, Simmons Olsen; and Senator John Stinner, Nebraska Unicameral.

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

MAILING, OCTOBER 5, 2017-

1. Meeting Notice

2. Agenda
3. Minutes, North Platte Natural Resources District, Board of Directors, September 14, 2017.
4. Treasurer's Report (Preliminary)

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

1. Agenda
2. North Platte Natural Resources Project Tour Materials.
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Minutes, North Platte Natural Resources District, Board of Directors, September 14, 2017.
5. Manager's Report
6. North Platte Natural Resources Nitrate Measurement Graphs for Banner County.
7. North Platte Natural Resources Monitoring Wells Historical Nitrate Levels Graph.
8. North Platte Natural Resources Select Monitoring Wells Historical Nitrate Levels Graph.
9. North Platte Natural Resources District, Policy Statement for Water Well Decommissioning Program.
10. North Platte Natural Resources District, Policies & Procedures for Handling Applications for Water Well Construction Permits.

11. North Platte Natural Resources District, Board of Directors delegating authorities to the General Manager, and his/her Assistant Manager.

3. Depart for Informational Tour of Projects for Area State Senators

The Board and Senator John Stinner participated on a tour of various North Platte NRD water management projects. The sites that were toured included: the Minatare project, a telemetry site, the Rusch property, and a ground water quality sampling site. The Minatare project and Rusch temporary retirement are examples of the types of projects that can be funded by the extra levee authority that would be extended under LB 98.

4. Return from Informational Tour of Projects for Area State Senators

The Board and Senator Stinner returned to the NRD conference room at 1:45 p.m. MDT and continued the regular board meeting.

5. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes of the September 14, 2017, regular Board meeting. Moved by Ostdiek, seconded by Lapaseotes, to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2017, regular Board meeting
regular Board meeting. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Andreas

6. Treasurer’s Report and Accounts Payable

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

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

Nay: None

Abstain: Lapaseotes

Absent: Andreas

7. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

8. Manager’s Report

Berge reported he has counseled staff on being very detailed in information related to their credit card statements. Administrative staff are interested in having as much transparency as possible in our expenditures. All of the staff have completed harassment training.

Jackie Bishop is working with Dana Cole to get time scheduled with the board to go over the financial audit for FY 17. She has also been pulling policy statements that need to be updated and appropriate staff has been reviewing and updating. Those statements will be placed on upcoming agendas as possible to get them approved. The

Board has two on your agenda today. Kyle Ann Hopkins will begin reporting directly to Berge effective immediately.

The district had \$2.6 million available to us (requiring a 40% match) for the Water Resources Cash Fund, but given the staff's concerns about the long-term viability of match dollars, staff decided the District is going to forgo using about half of those dollars. With the reduction of \$300,000 from the budgeted Yensen Drain Project, the District will be able to access most of these funds with very little fiscal impact. To that end, the District is requesting \$558,583.65 to reimburse existing surface water, ground water, commingled lease, and retirement projects that we entered into for the purpose of reducing consumptive use in the District. That reimbursement is 60 percent of the historic total of payments made on those contracts, plus payments that the District will make in FY 2018. These include leases for Lake, CCPN Lapaseotes, Ziegler, Rogers, Meyers/Strauch, Everett/Clark, Rush, Schaneman, and LRK Farms.

Secondly, the project Ducks Unlimited on Blue Creek will be funded through Water Resources Cash Fund dollars. This is a \$675,000 project used to set aside approximately 400 acres of SW ground on Blue Creek, Hooper and Union ditches (\$325,000 of that is now grant money). The water will be impounded in catchments for habitat, maintaining historic return flows while accumulating consumptive use credit. This was initially a Water Sustainability Fund application that the District was pursuing with Ducks, but that application will be withdrawn as this other source of money is now

available. The NRD will then build out surface water leases on Enterprise Irrigation District, Minatare Mutual Canal, and potentially Nine Mile/Wrangler. Total Water Resources Cash Fund Dollars requested for these expansions are \$420,000. The District's match will be \$280,000.

Finally, the NRD has approved to receive \$300,000 (matched by our \$200,000) to develop a new NRD cost-share program for technology upgrades/pivot package upgrades with the caveat that recipients of the cost-share agree to an allocation reduction through an EPIC-like contract.

Ducks Unlimited has rescinded the application for funds for the Blue Creek Project in light of the project being funded by PBC/Water Resources Cash Fund dollars. The District still has a joint application with Upper Niobrara White NRD and South Platte NRD for WSF funds for technology improvements in our District. The Bureau of Reclamation grant that we received two years ago for flow meter installation in the FA has expired. Given an overestimation in the number of meters that needed to be installed, the District had an excess of funds and will likely be returning approximately \$17,500 to the US Treasury.

Velosys and AMCi are continuing to work on the development of the landowner dashboard for telemetry. This project will be complete by the end of the calendar year. Staff is still anticipating having an additional 600 telemetry units installed by March of

2018, leaving approximately \$126,000 for installs of an additional 100 meters in the later part of 2018 or the very beginning of 2019.

On October 2, the DAMP ILCA Board, comprised of NPNRD and DNR voted to dissolve the ILCA as the DAMP grant is spent and the project complete.

As of this report, the field staff is reading approximately 135-150 meters per day. The staff is responsible for reading several hundred more meters this year, and weather permitting, there will be no issue with completing these meters by the end of the month.

Berge was informed by NRCS that they had money available and committed to the Yensen Drain repairs that the District had planned for this fiscal year. That will free up nearly \$300,000 in our just-passed budget committed to the repairs. The money will be redirected to match and access more of the Water Cash Resources Fund dollars that are available to NPNRD through the Platte Basin Coalition. A team of engineers from NRCS will be out on

October 16 to survey the needed repairs and go over plans with staff and landowners.

The District has been working with the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (PRRIP) to provide information on projects that might be helpful to their cause and/or have mutual benefits for the NPNRD. This includes coordinating communications with area surface water (SW) districts. After attending an informational presentation on hazard mitigation that was presented by JEO staff, Berge approached them about helping to

identify mitigation dollars for drain/dam repairs in our District to assist SW Districts in repairing infrastructure before disasters occur.

Berge has had several conversations with concerned landowners in the vicinity of the proposed redi-mix plant, and will be attending two hearings with the Planning and Zoning Commission to learn more about the project and see if the District can't get some clarity on the issues involved. He has been contacted by a number of landowners around the proposed site of the new Gering landfill expressing concern about its placement. Scott Schaneman and Berge went and toured the site and have referred a number of their concerns to the city for their response.

Berge will be graduating from Water Leaders Academy on November 17 in Nebraska City. He will be the third graduate from this program from this District in three years. There are a number of people interested in attending next year.

The District is now entering the fifteenth month of planning. Berge will be meeting with other Platte Basin Managers on October 31 to discuss the target numbers for this increment. NRD Managers have also been asked to put together a financial accounting of all of their investments to date and the amount of water saved for those investments. Staff will present those at the November meeting.

Bishop, Kyle Ann Hopkins, Dave Ostdiek and Berge attended the fall conference in Kearney at the end of September. Berge will be attending a Climate Change and Energy Policy Seminar at Harvard October 15-22.

9. Water Quality Presentation

During the tour, Carolyn Hudson demonstrated a water quality sampling test for the Board and Senator Stinner. She went over the tools that are used, the process of extracting the sample, and how the sample is stored to keep it from being contaminated. Once back at the office, Hudson reported how the NRD deals with nitrates and how the data is utilized by many different organizations. She then demonstrated how to use the hydrographs and nitrate graphs on any of the District's monitoring wells.

10. Consideration of Well Decommissioning Policy Statement.

Staff has updated the well decommissioning policy statement to more accurately reflect current procedures. Staff recommend to the Board that they approve the policy statement. Moved by Henkel, seconded by Ostdiek, to approve the revised well decommissioning policy statement. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Andreas

11. Consideration of Well Permit Policy Statement

Staff have also updated the Well Policy Statement to reflect current procedures, rules updates, and new statues. Staff recommended approving the new policy statement. Moved by Dillman, seconded by Ostdiek, to approve the revised well permit policy

statement. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Andreas

12. Consideration of Delegation of Certain Authorities to the General Manager.

The past three chairmen have informally delegated the following authorities to the general manager, and Berge wants to have formal Board approval. The authorities would to approve: (1) cost-share applications; (2) well decommissioning applications; (3) well permits; (4) Lease agreements for retirements; (5) make purchases through Board action, and (6) and to apply for grants. Berge reiterated that the Board already approves these actions through the budget process, lease rates, and policy statements, but he wants to have specific board action to codify the authority. Moved by Deines, seconded by Weinreis, to grant the above mention authorities to the general manager. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Andreas

13. Adjourn

Moved by Henkel, seconded by Lapaseotes, to adjourn at 2:43 p.m., MDT.

Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Andreas