

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

November 9, 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, November 9, 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 November 2, 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, Gerald Dillman, Pete Lapaseotes, Dave Ostdiek, and Dan Weinreis. Absent: Roger Eirich, Chuck Henkel. Others present: John Berge, Tracy Zayac, Travis Preston, Paula Kihlthau, and David Wolf 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:

MAILING, OCTOBER 5, 2017-

1. Meeting Notice
2. Agenda
3. Minutes, North Platte Natural Resources District Board of Directors Meeting,

October 12, 2017.

4. Treasurer's Report

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, October 12, 2017.
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Manager's Report
5. Western Water Use Management Modeling, Brief Modeling Overview, Internal Model Review, Review of Upcoming Update and Analyses, by Thad Kuntz, P.G. Principal Hydrogeologist, Adaptive Resources Inc., dated November 7, 2017.
6. North Platte Natural Resources Community Drought Plan, dated November 9, 2017.
7. North Platte Natural Resources District, Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program, Policy Statement and Procedures.
8. North Platte Natural Resources District, Policy Statement Safety and Loss Prevention Program.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes of the October 12, 2017, regular Board meeting.

Moved by Darnall, seconded by Deines, to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2017, regular Board meeting

regular Board meeting. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich, Henkel

4. 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: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Dillman, Ostdiek, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: Lapaseotes

Absent: Eirich, Henkel

5. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

6. Manager's Report

Berge reported the District has recently severed ties with the Nebraska Conservation Education Fund and Americorps as it became clear over the last several weeks that their goals and ours did not align. Jenifer Berge-Sauter remains involved in the greenhouse project and Emily Hauck will continue working with Americorps at the

City of Scottsbluff. Staff anticipates collaborating with her in the future. The fundraising for the greenhouse continues to be quite brisk. The application for Oregon Trail Community Foundation funds was recently approved for \$5,000, and our total amount raised is approximately \$71,000. Doug Millay will be attending the December Board Meeting to provide a presentation on the recently completed financials and at that time the Board will have an opportunity to approve the audit so that it may be submitted to the State Auditor of Public Accounts before December 20 as required by state statute.

An internal working group including Barb Cross, Jackie Bishop, Tracy Zayac and Berge have begun a top to bottom review of the most recently approved NPNRD Master Plan in the hopes of tackling a rewrite of that in the coming year. These plans are usually completed every five years, and we hope that we can embark on a rewrite that is more meaningful and involved than the plan that was passed in 2012.

A date has been set for the Employee Recognition Dinner to be January 19 at the Gering Civic Center. Directors will be receiving a "Save the Date" card in the mail in the coming weeks. The annual carry-in dinner for Thanksgiving will be tentatively held on Tuesday, December 12. You are welcome to attend. It will begin about 11:30 a.m.

The District is entertaining a quote from Capital Business Systems to become a “virtual CIO” for our computer needs. They will be brought in for the December Board Meeting to compare their pricing and services with Bytes.

Berge has been in contact with officials from the City of Scottsbluff, the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, the Scotts Bluff County Planning and Zoning Committee and others about the planned construction of a cement facility adjacent to several concerned landowners between Scottsbluff and Minatare. He has requested information about water use from Croell and received a written response that the company only plans to use up to 8 million gallons per year in the facility which would negate any need for offsets. Berge alerted the city and the interested landowners that while the North Platte NRD has limited authorities over such a project, the NRD does have authorities that would allow for us to monitor groundwater and air quality around the facility and are one of the authorities involved when it comes to soil and water erosion. Berge also forwarded along several questions to NDEQ and Scotts Bluff County for their action and response.

Berge has been in contact with several interested landowners and the City of Gering about the proposed landfill site on the Uttecht property encompassing Bald Peak. These ongoing conversations, since July, culminated in a meeting last week of “stakeholders” at the City of Gering offices where attendees were informed that indeed the city has tendered an offer for that property. Neighbors have expressed concern

about water quality, air quality, erosion and runoff into the adjacent Gering Ft. Laramie laterals. Our authorities for the monitoring of groundwater quality, air quality and enforcement of erosion complaints are broad. Given that the city's interest in the property has evolved to the point of purchase, the District also intend to provide mapping information including LIDAR layers and AEM aquifer mapping so that the city, while determining where to site the landfill within the parcel that they buy can make the best decision based on information that is made available to them. After siting, permitting and construction we will then need to decide as to our monitoring capabilities in the vicinity.

On November 15, the upper Platte Basin NRD's will be making a presentation to stakeholders at the Basin Wide Planning session about first increment spending. The purpose is to outline for stakeholders both specific and cumulative totals for monies spent during the first ten-year increment of the Basin Wide Plan and Integrated Management Plan. Approximate values for the first increment in the basin are near \$90 million. This NRD is responsible for nearly \$12 million (though this includes future obligation under several leases). It is the group's hope that this conversation will help communicate to the stakeholders the necessary financial realities of continuing to seek FA status with dwindling revenue streams. This is not an effort to shirk our statutory responsibility, but rather to ensure that they continue at an even pace. Berge hopes to be able to provide a meaningful update to the Board at the December meeting.

As reported last month, the Platte Basin Coalition committed to providing this NRD with nearly \$2.6 million for a variety of conjunctive management projects including the DU/Blue Creek partnership, and reimbursements for already existing contracts, as well as technology/pivot improvements. Several agreements are under legal review by DNR, and we hope to execute those contracts by the end of the year.

Zayac will be providing an update on our drought planning efforts later on the agenda. The draft plan is an excellent work in progress, but does pose some challenges, particularly as it relates to human resource needs. There are a great deal of outreach and reporting responsibilities in the plan that will necessarily require a reprioritization of drought. Staff hope to have the plan in front of the Board in December for your consideration. As noted above, the funds for this project have already been approved and committed. Scott Schaneman has been working with pertinent landowners to get commitments and ensure that contract language is agreed to. Staff will also be doing some significant outreach with the affected surface water districts.

The District jointly applied for a Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET) grant with the South Platte NRD, Upper Niobrara White NRD, NEWBA and Aquamart to work on a pilot project for technology improvements on groundwater only acres in the District. Staff had a planning meeting last week to discuss next steps if we receive the funds.

The NRD recently received the perennial request from CNPPID for pumping data in the District and will be providing that aggregate data as we have in the past.

As part of our ongoing efforts to prepare for rules changes, Cross has been doing some research and meeting with experts in the field to determine our best steps for nitrogen management across the District. This has long been an issue in our District and as we noted recently to the Water Resources Committee, staff would like to provide some workable solutions for the Committee, and ultimately the Board to consider.

The legislative session is right around the corner, and as such, we are preparing for a busy winter and spring. Obviously, there will be much action on LB 98, and NARD and others have identified the following Senators that we will be our focus on that issue: Albrecht, Brasch, Brewer, Briese, Larson, Linehan, Lowe, and Schumacher.

Next week, Berge will become the third graduate in a row from the North Platte NRD to complete the Nebraska Water Leaders Academy. This is an excellent program, and he has encouraged additional staff to participate in 2018. Berge also completed his certificate in the Climate Change and Energy Program at the Harvard Kennedy School last month. This was an excellent learning opportunity with 45 individuals from 5 different continents discussing mitigation and resilience as it relates to energy and water needs. It was also an excellent networking opportunity and allowed him to visit at length about conjunctive water management with the Global Sustainability

Lead for the Coca-Cola Corporation who has a strong interest in partnering with an organization like ours to meet their sustainability goals.

NARD Legislative Conference will be held on January 23 and 24 in Lincoln – details are still being developed. Board Members will need to arrive a half hour early for the December Board Meeting to complete Harassment training. If you cannot make that, please let staff know and they will accommodate your schedule.

7. Western Water Use Management Model Update

Thad Kuntz provided his annual update on the Western Water Use Management Model. They are doing an internal model review between the three models to get a better sense on how they all work together. The Hydrogeology of Western Nebraska Project will be completed this year. Kuntz also described the updates to the database they did and the upcoming analysis, which will include the Robust Review and analysis for water management.

8. Drought Planning Update

Zayac provided an update on drought planning process. She reviewed the whole planning process and provided some highlights to the drought plan the committee drafted. She also provided the next steps for the plan. The NRD is taking public comments right now, and it will go before both the District Operations and Water Resources Committee for comments and recommendations.

9. Consideration of Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program and District Cost

Share Program Policy Statement

Staff have also updated the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program and District cost share program policy statement to reflect changes in the application. Staff recommended approving the new policy statement. Moved by Ostdiek, seconded by Deines, to approve the revised Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program and District cost share program policy statement. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich, Henkel

10. Consideration of North Platte NRD Safety and Loss Prevention Policy Statement

Staff have also updated the North Platte NRD Safety and Loss Prevention policy statement to reflect the update in reporting requirements. Staff recommended approving the new policy statement. Moved by Deines, seconded by Weinreis, to approve the revised North Platte NRD Safety and Loss Prevention policy statement. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich, Henkel

11. Adjourn

Moved by Lapaseotes, seconded by Weinreis, to adjourn at 4:07 p.m., MDT.

Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich, Henkel