

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

February 8, 2018

The regular meeting of the North Platte Natural Resources District (NRD) Board of Directors was called to order at 3:00 p.m. MDT, February 8, 2018, 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 February 1, 2018, 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, Chuck Henkel, Pete Lapaseotes, Dave Ostdiek, and Dan Weinreis. Absent: Dave Deines. Others present: John Berge, Barb Cross, Tracy Zayac, Lydia Hendrickson, Kyle Ann Hopkins, Seth Popp, Jody Fiscus, Travis Preston, Scott Schaneman, Carolyn Hudson, Jordan Neuwirth, Todd Filipi and David Wolf, NPNRD staff; Thad Kuntz, Adaptive Resources, Inc; and members of the public Roy Lyles, Ryan Reuter, and Steven Dolberg.

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, January 11, 2018.
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, January 11, 2018.
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Manager's Report
5. Request for Qualifications for Facilitation of North Platte Natural Resources District & Nebraska Department of Natural Resources 2nd Increment Integrated Management Planning Process.
6. Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska, Fee for Service Agreement Contract for the Nebraska State Climate Office.
7. DRAFT Proposal Irrigation Extension and Research Project to Evaluate Different Irrigation Technologies for Crop Production with Principle Investigators, North Platte NRD, and Xin Qiao (PHREC).
8. Letter to PBC Administrators from John Berge, dated January 8, 2018, regarding Water Resources Cash Fund Request for 2018 Update.
9. Former List of North Platte Natural Resources District, Projects and Programs.
10. Former List of North Platte Natural Resources District, Programs for Long-Range Planning.
11. Overview of the Ogallala Aquifer
12. Letter to Honorable John Gale, Nebraska Secretary of State, dated February 1, 2018, regarding a draft "Notice of Vacancy" that was published in the Star-Herald on February 4, 7, 11, and 14. This notice was precipitated by the death of Gerald Dillman who passed

away on January 12, 2018.

13. Board Vacancy Notice, Published in the Star-Herald
14. U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, Notice of Grant & Agreement Award to the North Platte Natural Resources District, for the Project to Complete Construction of Gering Valley Watershed, Yensen Drain.
15. Board of Directors' Executive Summary Statement on Drought Planning in the North Platte Natural Resources District.
16. Joint Letter to Senator Erdman, District 47, dated February 8, 2018, regarding LB 98 & LB 1123.
17. Memo to North Platte Natural Resources District, Board of Directors from General Manager, John Berge, dated February 8, 2018, regarding Tribute to Gerald Dillman.
18. Resolution of the North Platte Natural Resources District, regarding the *Mitigation Agreement*.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes of the January 11, 2018, regular Board meeting. Moved by Ostdiek, seconded by Darnall, to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2018, regular Board meeting. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Darnall, Henkel, Lapascotes, Ostdiek, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: Eirich

Absent: Deines

4. Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable

Dave Ostdiek reviewed the Treasurer's report with the Board. Moved by Darnall seconded

by Henkel, to accept the Treasurer's report and pay the bills as listed. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Deines

5. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

6. Manager's Report

Berge reported he will be proposing updated language for the District's credit card and vehicle policies. He also reported the District has sent out Request for Qualification letters to potential facilitators for the development of the second increment of the Integrated Management Plan (IMP). The letter is attached in the board packet. The District has signed an operation and maintenance agreement with the University of Nebraska State Climatologist Office to maintain two NOAA caliber weather stations for Morrill and Garden Counties. The NRD will purchasing the stations soon and will get two for the price of one. The operation and maintenance agreement will be for five years.

Staff is working with Xin Qiao, Irrigation Management Specialist at PREC/UNL, to develop a program to place varying degrees of irrigation management technology throughout the District. The cooperators will utilize the technology while participating in a study to determine the value of this technology on water savings, input savings, and yield improvements. The draft proposal is a work in progress.

The District is working on potential repairs for some of the drop structures further upstream from the major repair work that the NRD is doing with NRCS grant dollars. The

District also received \$200,000 from the Platte Basin Coalition Water Resources Cash Fund to expand the allocation buy down program this year. The master plan needs to be reworked, and two documents, included in board packet, were produced several years ago that will hopefully be helpful as the District undertakes to write the new plan.

Berge reported, given a potential unbudgeted review increase, the District will be holding a budget and personnel subcommittee meeting in the coming weeks to determine what the NRD should do with these new funds.

Staff will be participating in the KNEB Farm and Ranch Show this weekend, and staff will also appear in front of the Scotts Bluff County Planning and Zoning and County Commissioners for a conservation easement request on the Diamond Rafter, LLC lease that the District recently signed. The rest of the report was submitted in the board packet.

7. Legislative Update

Berge reported staff met with approximately 30 state senators while attending the Nebraska Association of Resources District's (NARD) Legislative Conference. The main focus was LB 98, but there were also several conversations about LB 1123. The bill was introduced by Sen. Groene from North Platte and could separate the ground water rights from the land that holds it.

Senator John Stinner will prioritize LB 98 this year and believes he has enough "yes" votes to end a filibuster, if one would arise. Berge will keep the board updated when new information becomes available.

8. Presentation on the Ogallala Water Coordinated Agriculture Project (OWCAP)

Amy Kremen, from the Ogallala Water Coordinated Agriculture Project, presented on what they do and what they hope to accomplish. Her group, which consists of local water

managers, producers, academics, and state officials, hopes to address issues of water decline and long-term agricultural sustainability of the aquifer. They intend to work together to help improve water decisions. Tracy Zayac has been asked to join the advisory board.

9. Update on Board Vacancy

Berge reported the staff has filed the necessary notice to replace Gerald Dillman on the Board of Directors, and the notice will run through February 16th. The Executive Committee will meet on February 22nd to interview applicants, with the hopes of having the new board member voted on and seated at the March Board Meeting. Berge did remind potential applicants that they would need to file for election by March 1st, or they will not be able to get on the ballot for November and could lose their seat.

10. Update on the Greenhouse Project

Berge reported two new updates for the Greenhouse Project. First, the Nebraska Environmental Trust Grants Committee has recommended to fund the project. Since the project has made the list, the NRD can start construction. Staff hopes to start building in March.

Second, the Scottsbluff/Gering Rotary has made the greenhouse their gold project for the 2018. They will have their fundraiser on Saturday April 14th at the Gering Civic Center and typically raises between \$30,000 to \$40,000.

11. Discussion of Basin Wide Planning Efforts

At the last basin-wide meeting, the discussion focused on how much money was spent on water management programs and projects, with \$107 million being spent collectively by the Upper Platte NRDs and \$10.4 million spent by the North Platte NRD alone. Jesse Bradley, from Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, provided an update on where the Basin stood at the end of the first increment. The North Platte NRD is the only NRD to exceed their goals.

The question placed before the stakeholders was the amount of money spent worth the results they have seen. Berge reported the decisions going forward are really going to be determined by what is required under the second increment.

12. Update on Yensen Drain Repair and Cooperative Agreement Contract with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Berge reported since projects utilizing federal funds require bids, he had Megan Dockery, from Simmons Olson create the bid requirements for the repairs. The bid notice will be published in the next week or so. The repairs will be completed in 2018.

13. Consideration of Drought Plan Executive Summary

Director Dave Ostdiek and Zayac created an executive summary that revised the drought plan to help alleviate the concerns expressed by directors in the previous committee meetings. Berge reminded the Board that drought will play a big role in the Basin-wide Plan and the District's Integrated Management Plan.

After discussion about the plan, some of the directors still had concerns about the stress the plan could place upon the staff, they decided to table the topic until the March meeting. Ostdiek and Zayac were asked to revise the plan again to better address the concerns of some of the Directors.

Moved by Henkel, seconded by Ostdiek, to table the Drought Plan until a future meeting. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Deines

14. Consideration of Joint LB 98 Advocacy Letter with UNWNRD and SPNRD

In conjunction with the other two panhandle NRDs, a joint letter to Senator Steve Erdman of Bayard has been drafted in support of LB 98 and in opposition to LB 1123. Since each of the board chairman would be required to sign the letter, it needs to be approved by the Board. Moved by Eirich, seconded by Ostdiek, to approve the Joint LB 98 Advocacy Letter with UNWNRD and SPNRD. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Deines

15. Consideration of Expenditure Related to the Expense of Repair to Brown’s Canyon.

The Mitchell Irrigation District is looking to make permanent repairs to the Brown’s Canyon culvert that washed out a couple of years ago and are looking to recoup some of the costs of the temporary repairs. The NPNRD pledged \$15,000 but has only paid \$10,000. Staff have recommended that the board could place a condition upon receiving the \$5,000. The condition would require the Irrigation District to set up a drain committee, similar to the Gering Valley Permanent Maintenance Committee, in order to help make future repairs easier to complete. Moved by Ostdiek, seconded by Weinreis, to provide the Mitchell Irrigation District with \$5,000 pledge for the repairs to Brown’s Canyon, contingent on the development a permanent maintenance committee. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Deines

16. Consideration of Tribute to Gerald Dillman

Berge reported after some conversations with board members, the board discussed renaming the education room, the “Gerald Dillman Memorial Education Room”. Funds that would be needed by repurposing the room would come from funds left over in the recognition monies in the FY 18 budget. It estimated to cost around \$2000. Once the room is ready, the NRD will host Dillman’s family and friends for a proper dedication.

Moved by Eirich, seconded by Henkel, to rename the education room the “Gerald Dillman Memorial Education Room.” Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Deines

17. Consideration of Ratification of the May 1st Mitigation Agreement with the City of Oshkosh and Resolution

Berge reported the only thing that is left to do to complete the process of mitigation for the City of Oshkosh is signing the resolution. Moved by Henkel, seconded by Eirich, to approve the Mitigation Agreement with the City of Oshkosh and Resolution. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Deines

18. Adjourn

Moved by Eirich, seconded by Ostdiek, to adjourn at 4:51 p.m., MDT. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Deines