

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

**May 10, 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, May 10, 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 May 3, 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, Dave Deines, Chuck Henkel, Pete Lapaseotes, Dave Ostdiek, Ryan Reuter, and Dan Weinreis. Absent: Roger Eirich. Others present: Barb Cross, Lydia Hendrickson, Kyle Ann Hopkins, Travis Preston, Scott Schaneman, Seth Popp, Carolyn Hudson, and David Wolf, NPNRD staff; Thad Kuntz, Adaptive Resources, Inc; Sarah Gray, National Resource Conservation Service; Steve Smith, Simmons Olson; and Matt Steffel and Katherine Crawley, Nebraska Game and Park Commission; Terry Jessen.

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, April 12, 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, April 12, 2018.
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Manager's Report
5. Watershed Curriculum Update, dated May 10, 2018.
6. Annual Ground Water Level Measurement Charts for 2018.
7. Survey from Thad Kuntz, P.G., with Adaptive Resources, Inc., dated April 25, 2018, regarding Attorney Work Product: DRAFT Pumpkin Creek Subarea and Fully Appropriated Area Allocations Analysis.
8. Facilitation Services Request for the Upper Platte NRD Integrated Management Plans, to Assist in Obtaining Stakeholder Input and Consensus of Integrated Management Plans for the Central Platte, North Platte, South Platte, and Twin Platte Natural Resource Districts.
9. Letter from Western States Bank, Regarding a Proposal for a Certificate of Deposit.
10. DRAFT: Board of Directors' Executive Summary Statement on Drought Planning in the North Platte NRD.

### **3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Board reviewed the minutes of the April 12, 2018, regular Board meeting. Moved by Darnall, seconded by Ostdiek, to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2018, regular Board meeting. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Ostdiek, Reuter,

Nay: None

Abstain: Weinreis

Absent: Eirich

#### **4. Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable**

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

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

Nay: None

Abstain: Lapaseotes

Absent: Eirich

#### **5. Comments from the Public**

Matt Steffel, from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, wanted to introduce a new hire to the Board. Katherine Crawley will be joining Game and Parks and is stationed out of Sidney. She is excited to be working here in the panhandle. Terry Jessen told the board that he really liked our website, but the agendas and minutes have not been updated for a couple of months. He stated that having those updated helps with transparency and letting the residents of the District know what is going on. He also asked the board why they have so much money in reserve, when it is the taxpayer's money. If it is not going to be used, Jessen said it should have not been collected from them.

#### **6. Manager's Report**

Barb Cross reported management and staff are continuing to work on the budget request for FY 2019 and will get it in front of the committee soon after May 30. The tree cooler needs a new cooling system, and staff is hoping it won't be needed until after the end of this fiscal year as it could cost nearly \$25,000. Repairs are being made to Yensen Drain, and staff hope they will be done this month. The changes made to the District rules

regarding the Erosion and Sediment Control Act have been submitted to the State as required.

Cross reported the District is still waiting for reimbursements from the Department of Natural Resources for a number of retirements. The stakeholder process for the second increment of the Integrated Management plan will be on June 21<sup>st</sup>.

The District will again participate in the Scottsbluff-Gering United Chamber of Commerce Annual Water Tour on July 17-18. If any board member would like to attend and participate, please contact Berge as soon as possible. Berge will be attending the Platte Basin Wide Planning Meeting in North Platte on May 16, and the Manager's Meeting in Gothenburg on June 5 and 6. The District will be hosting the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts Manager's Retreat in August. Dave Wolf will be participating in the NWRA Tour of the Upper Platte Basin June 26-29.

The rest of the managers report was submitted in the Board packet.

**7. Presentation by Dr. Troy Gilmore on Nitrogen Study in the Morrill/Dutch Flats Area and the Watershed Curriculum for Nebraska NRDs**

Dr. Troy Gilmore has developed a curriculum for NRD Board Directors on valuable and concise technical information. The curriculum can both inform experienced Directors and help new directors get up to speed on NRD programs and projects.

Dr. Gilmore also provided a study on the how groundwater recharge rates, nitrate concentrations in groundwater, and which environmental variables have the strongest influence of groundwater nitrates. Some of the preliminary conclusions are there have been minor changes in recharge rates across Dutch Flats, despite lower precipitation and more efficient irrigation technology in the last 15 years. Also, there are some evidence that the average groundwater

nitrate concentration declined slightly for 1999-2013.

## **8. Presentation on Spring Water levels**

Carolyn Hudson reported on the 2018 spring water levels. Of the 768 wells that were measured, water levels in 296 wells went up, 395 went down, and 77 stayed the same when compared to 2017 data. She also provided some examples of water levels for the board to examine. She compared water levels with five, ten, fifteen and twenty years ago and looked at annual precipitation across the district.

## **9. Consideration of Proposal by Adaptive Resources, Inc. to Study the Effects of Changes to Allocation as Outlined in the April Board Recommendation**

At last month's board meeting, the Board asked ARI to come up with a proposal to study the changes they recommended to the allocations for the District. The proposal included six different analysis, which included pumping analysis, allocation analysis, Post-1997 depletions analysis, total depletion used in Basin-wide planning, aquifer life study, and Pumpkin Creek livestock analysis. DNR does have some concerns about the need for the proposal and how it will be completed. Staff recommend tabling the proposal until DNR can meet with the Water Resources Committee to discuss the proposal. After much discussion, the board decided to proceed with the pumping analysis only. Moved by Darnall, seconded by Deines, to have Adaptive Resources, Inc proceed with the pumping analysis of their proposal only. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich

**10. Consideration of Cost Association with Facilitation of the Second Increment of the Integrated Management Plan Stakeholder Process**

Cross reported the District has decided to have HDR facilitate the Second Increment. Since three other NRDs are utilizing HDR for their facilitation needs, it will cost all four NRDs considerably less for the shared services. The funding for the service is included in this year's budget. Moved by Henkel, seconded by Ostdiek, to approve HDR to provide the facilitation services for the second increment. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich

**11. Consideration of Investments Opportunities at Western States Bank**

Cross reported the District has \$1.42 million in the bank that is reserved from lease or retirements reimbursements only. The money is from DNR and will be used to reimburse the District over the next couple of years. The account is not making as much interest as it could be. Staff has looked into other investments options and have found some they recommend at Western States Bank. Moved by Henkel, seconded by Ostdiek, to authorize the General Manager to research the best available options for the money that is used for retirement/lease reimbursements. Motion passed.

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich

## 12. Consideration of the Drought Plan Previously Tabled

Dave Ostdiek went over the edits to the updated version of the Drought Plan. He proposed three options for the board to consider. First, the board could approve the plan as is. Second, they could make the plan broad enough that the requirements for the NRD would be less, and the third option is to make the individual points within the plan shorter, maybe bullet points, to shorten up the obligations on the NRD staff. After some discussion, the board decided to add the following statement to the drought plan. “The North Platte NRD board of directors hereby adopts the attached draft plan as a planning and guidance document with the understanding that its provisions will be carried out only as the need arises, as the funding is available, and as the staff resources are available. The board understands that parts of the plan might never be needed or need to be implemented, but also realizes that recent history has demonstrated that it is important to plan carefully for all potential effects of a drought, both expected and unexpected. This drought plan is expected to be a key component of the second-increment integrated management plan that NPNRD will be developing in conjunction with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources and a stakeholders group.” Moved by Ostdiek, second by Lapaseotes, to approve the Drought Plan with the addition of the statement list above.

Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Deines, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Ostdiek, Reuter

Nay: Darnall

Abstain: None

Absent: Weinreis

## 13. Adjourn

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

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

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Eirich