

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

March 21, 2019

The regular meeting of the North Platte Natural Resources District (NRD) Board of Directors was called to order at 3:00 p.m. MDT, March 21, 2019, 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 March 7, 2019, 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, Chuck Henkel, Pete Lapaseotes, Roger Eirich, Ryan Reuter, and Dan Weinreis. Absent: Dave Deines, Roger Eirich, and Mark Westphal. Others present: Barb Cross, Danielle Schafer, Scott Schaneman, Craig Uhrig, Jody Fiscus, Dave Christian, Kyle Ann Hopkins, Todd Filipi, Jordan Neuwirth and Amanda Sheppard, NPNRD staff; Thad Kuntz, Adaptive Resources, Inc; Megan Dockery, Simmons Olson Law Firm; Sarah Gray, Natural Recourses Conservation Service; Xin Qiao, UNL Panhandle Research and Extension Center; and Doak Nickerson, Nebraska Forest Service.

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, February 14, 2019.
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 10, 2019.
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Manager's Report
5. Presentation from Xin Qiao with the UNL Panhandle Research and Extension Center regarding the partnership with UNL on variable speed pivot technology and nitrate leaching and potential solutions.
6. Cost Share Application Evaluation Standards.
7. Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program Questionnaire.
8. Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program Ranking Sheet.
9. Cost Share Apportionment for Conservation Trees.
10. 2019 Cost Share Program Practice NC-17 Tier Ranking Procedures.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes of the February 14, 2018, regular Board meeting.

Moved by Henkel, seconded by Weinreis, to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2019 regular Board meeting. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: Eirich

Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal

4. Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable

Ryan Reuter reviewed the Treasurer's report with the Board. Moved by Eirich, seconded by Henkel, to accept the Treasurer's report and pay the bills as listed. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal

5. Comments from the Public

No comments from the public were received.

6. Manager's Report

Barb Cross provide the Manager's Reports on John Berge's behalf since he was attending the National Climate Summit in Lincoln, NE.

The District is exploring other options to cut costs on our office cleaning contract. Options for installing a panic button at the front counter of the District office and installing direct line extensions for staff are also being considered. The District is hoping to host an estate planning seminar for staff and Board members in the near future.

Sign-ups for the TAPP H2O program are ongoing and staff has been working with Richael at Mammoth Trading to get landowners enrolled. We have 500 subscriptions available and encourage producers to sign-up if they are interested.

EPIC program sign-ups were completed, and applications have been ranked and approved. Our EPIC program appears to be more popular in producer interest than last year and we have approved just over \$306,000 worth of applications. The District hopes to receive a partial reimbursement of these funds.

The final installation of telemetry units will begin this spring after the units are delivered. They have been ordered and are currently being built. These final units will be installed to the east of the District in Morrill County.

The District received over \$280,000 worth of NSWCP and NRD cost-share applications this year which have been scored and approved. The District budgeted \$160,000 for these programs which was approximately an 18% cut to each program for FY19. Landowners should have received notice of approval/denial of their applications. Payments under these applications should be made in late spring once invoices are received and final inspections are completed.

The last meeting of the IMP stakeholders was held on February 28, 2019. The draft IMP was voted on by these stakeholders, but no consensus was reached. The final IMP planning will revert back to the District and DNR to complete. This will have no effect on the scheduled timeline for approval and public hearings for adoption. The Basin Wide Plan timeline will run parallel to the IMP and both should be ready for adoption this fall.

The Water Resources Committee and District Operations Committees held a joint meeting on March 19, 2019 to continue discussions on the draft Rules changes. Approval and adoption of the new Rules & Regulations will also run parallel to the IMP and BWP to be adopted this fall.

The database is continuing to progress, and Kyle Ann is working with Heath Kuntz at Adaptive Resources to get details worked out.

John attended the Manager's meeting and senators' lunch on March 6th in Lincoln as well as the NPVWA meeting on March 11th.

Staff has been helping and participating in the events associated with the Smithsonian Water Way Exhibit at the Legacy of the Plains. John also will also be providing a presentation on March 22nd relating to world water issues.

The Producer Round Table and PRECIP meeting was held on March 8th in Bridgeport. There were approximately 40 producers who attended these meetings from around our District and several from the UNWNRD and SPNRD.

Barb will be attending the Water for Food Conference at the end of April.

7. Presentation on Partnership with UNL on Variable Speed Pivot Technology

Xin Qiao and Bijesh Maharjan have been working on and investigating if we can use a variable speed irrigation system to help with nitrate leaching. Results were presented from the months of July to September 2018 showing the comparison of the amount of irrigation water to the nitrate levels five feet down in the soil.

UNL is still looking for additional landowners to participate.

8. Presentation from Todd Filipi on the Soil Conservation Department

Todd Filipi provided an update on the Soil Conservation Department. Todd Filipi and Jordan Neuwirth are the two employees who make up the department and during spring, there are a few seasonal workers who come on board to assist with the busy season. So far this year, approximately 45,000 trees have been sold, which is down from last year.

Doak Nickerson from the Nebraska Forest Service also spoke to the Board regarding the need for Eastern Red Cedars in this area.

Todd also informed the Board that the online ordering for trees is up and running again and they are planning to have grass plantings again this year as well as buffalo grass conversions. This department is continuing to educate the community through different

presentations.

Another project planned for this spring is to plant native grasses around the greenhouse.

9. Consideration of Cost-Share Evaluation Standards

Barb discussed the changes being made to the application evaluation standards which includes the reconsideration of multiple applications filed by the same landowner. Moved by Weinreis, seconded by Henkel, to approve the suggested changes to the Cost-Share Evaluation Standards. Motion passed.

10. Ayes: Andreas, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

11. Nay: None

12. Abstain: None

13. Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal

14. Consideration of Cost-Share Questionnaire

Barb explained the changes to be made to the Questionnaire for NSWCP applications that are completed by NRCS. The higher points will be awarded to ground water applications. Moved by Eirich, seconded by Reuter, to approve the changes to the NSWCP Cost-Share Questionnaire. Motion passed.

15. Ayes: Andreas, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

16. Nay: None

17. Abstain: None

18. Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal

19. Consideration of Cost-Share Apportionment for Conservation Trees

Barb explained that going forward, 20% of the total cost share funds will be apportioned to conservation trees instead of a set monetary number. Moved by Henkel, seconded by Lapaseotes, to approve the Cost-Share Apportionment for Conservation Trees. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal

20. Consideration of Ranking Procedure for Cost-Share Practice NC-17

Barb explained that surface water or commingled pipelines will receive 0 points and surface or commingled SDI systems will receive 0 points as well. Moved by Henkel, seconded by Eirich, to approve the changes to the Ranking Procedure for Cost-Share Practice NC-17. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal

21. Adjourn

Moved by Eirich, seconded by Reuter, to adjourn at 3:51 p.m., MDT. Motion passed.

Ayes: Andreas, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal