

**North Platte Natural Resources  
District Board of Directors Meeting**

**November 18, 2021**

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 18, 2021, by Roger Eirich at the North Platte NRD Conference room, 100547 Airport Road, Scottsbluff, Nebraska (Agenda item #1). Notice of the meeting was given to the public by publishing a legal notice in the November 11, 2021, 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 (Agenda item #2).

Board members present: Kent Andreas, Gary Darnall, Roger Eirich, Chuck Henkel, Pete Lapaseotes, and Ryan Reuter. Board members absent: Mark Westphal, Dan Weinreis, and Dave Deines.

Chairman Eirich called for a motion to excuse Deines, Weinreis and Westphal from the meeting.

*Motion made by Andreas, seconded by Henkel to excuse board member Deines, Weinreis and Westphal from the meeting. Motion passed.*

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

Nay: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Deines, Weinreis, Westphal

Others present: John Berge, Scott Schaneman, Danielle Schafer, Kyle Ann Hopkins, Lydia Hendrickson and Craig Uhrig of NPNRD staff; Thad Kuntz, Adaptive Resources, Inc; Megan Dockery, of Simmons Olson Law Firm.

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

1. Meeting Notice
2. Agenda
3. Minutes, North Platte Natural Resources District Board of Directors Meeting, October 14, 2021.
4. Treasurers Report
5. Manager's Report
6. North Platte Natural Resources District, Long Range Implementation Plan.
7. Power Point Presentation, "Aquifer Life Analysis-Historical Water Levels" by Thad Kuntz, with Adaptive Resources Inc.
8. Power Point Presentation, "Small Watershed Study in Garden County, Ash & Plum Creek Analysis" by Thad Kuntz, with Adaptive Resources Inc.

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

The Board reviewed the minutes of the October 14, 2021, regular Board meeting.

*Moved by Andreas, seconded by Reuter, to approve the minutes of the October 14, 2021 regular Board meeting. Motion passed.*

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

Nay: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Deines, Weinreis, Westphal

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

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

Nay: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Deines, Weinreis, Westphal

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

There were no comments from the public.

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

### **Administrative:**

Staff Committee Assignments – The NRD has internal staff committees that have not been terribly active over the past year. We will be reconstituting those committees to include the Safety, Wellness and Technology Committees in the coming months. The purpose of these committees is to make recommendations to management for the betterment of the workplace.

Open Enrollment for Benefits – Benefit open enrollment for health, dental, vision, dependent life, flex spending and the like will be happening over the next several weeks for employees.

Producer Roundtables – We are beginning to plan for our annual producer roundtable(s) to occur in February. We are determining now whether we will hold just one centralized meeting or meet with our landowners in each of the counties that we serve. We will continue to keep you apprised of planning. COVID – COVID numbers and hospitalizations are on the rise again in our

area and as such, we will continue to keep our masking mandate in place for NRD personnel and highly recommend masking for the public as they visit our offices.

Holiday Information – Thanksgiving is on the 25th of November and the office will be closed the 25th and 26th. We will close at noon on December 23rd and observe the Christmas holiday on the 24th. The New Year’s holiday will be observed on December 31st .

We will be doing a staff food drive and toy drive for Christmas/Thanksgiving.

We will decorate the public spaces for the holidays at our first staff meeting in December.

### **Projects and Programs:**

Cost Share for Fire Damage – NEMA has been silent on the question as to whether they might reimburse the NRD for cost share related to fire damage sustained over the summer. We continue to consider these applications on a case-by-case basis.

Telemetry – We recently met with Justin Reinmuth of Ditto Labs to discuss potential data transmission options for our telemetry program that would be more effective and less costly using radio rather than cellular technology.

Schaneman Recharge Project – We anticipate that our permits for the Schaneman Recharge Project will be issued by the end of November.

Community Conservation Tree Program – Todd and I are working toward developing the policies and procedures for our previously proposed Community Conservation Tree program where we would cost share the removal of dead and dying trees and the replacement of those trees in our communities in our District.

DWFI Corporate Sustainability – I met via zoom recently with Nick Brozovic of the Daugherty Water for Food Institute at the University of Nebraska to discuss potential funding

options for corporate dollars to assist in resource conservation as Frito Lay and PepsiCo are doing in other parts of the state.

LR 23 – We submitted our most recent response to the letter from Senator Erdman on LR 23 and are told that there is a hearing on December 3rd in Lincoln. We have not yet been asked to testify.

Unified Plan – I will be meeting with principals from NPPD, CNPPID and the Upper Platte NRDs next week to further discuss the Unified Plan.

### **Outreach:**

Newsletter – We will be issuing a newsletter District Wide twice this year with the first issue in Jan/February of 2022.

NSIA/NWRA Meeting – I will attend the NSIA/NWRA Meeting in Kearney November 22-23. I am on the Board of Directors of NWRA.

Gering Valley Flood Control Meeting – We hosted the semi-annual meeting of the Gering Valley Flood Control Project Permanent Maintenance Committee yesterday. I continue to serve as Secretary of that Board.

## **7. Presentation from the Water Resources Department**

Craig Uhrig provided a presentation on the water departments activities for the past year.

There were 230 telemetry sites visited, inspected, or repaired.

450 telemetry sites were remotely read this season.

565 wells were sampled in the spring as well as the fall.

1,727 flow meters were read in October.

2,137 crop inspections were completed in October.

149 no-meter locations were inspected.

334 flow meters were inspected and maintained.

52 meters were read monthly at the village of Harrisburg.

We are in the process of completing the hazard mitigation plan with 95% of the jurisdictions reported.

## **8. Presentation from ARI on the Small Watershed Study in Garden County**

Thad Kuntz from Adaptive Resources Inc. provided a report on the analysis completed concerning the small stream flows in Ash and Plum Creek located in eastern Garden County.

Kuntz's analysis conclusions are below:

Only around 30% of the pumping affects these creeks in a 50-year timeframe.

Pumping is also already at or below the over appropriated area's allocation.

These streams likely also react to near term precipitation and the recharge from that.

## **9. Preview from ARI on the Aquifer Life Study**

Kuntz provided a report on the Aquifer Life Study. His analysis conclusions are below:

Much of the deeper Ogallala Aquifer in the area is showing increases in ground water levels, primarily due to recent increases in precipitation.

Two areas of concern are the deep Ogallala Channel near Albin and the area north of Lisco.

The deep Ogallala Channel near Albin is primarily affected by ground water depletions that are occurring across the state lines in Wyoming.

Kuntz's recommendations are below:

Add extra monitor wells along the deep Ogallala Channel near Albin to the east to determine if these ground water level declines are moving farther into the district.

Add some monitor wells in the area north of Lisco to confirm the ground water level declines and continue to understand the local geology.

Continue to monitor ground water levels in these areas.

## **10. Consideration of the 2021 Long Range Implementation Plan**

John Berge discussed the Long-Range Implementation Plan and asked for any questions on its content before the board took action. He stated the reason for planning is required by Statute Section 2-3277 that each natural resource district prepare and adopt a Long-Range Implementation Plan to summarize activities and project needs of the district. This plan will be reviewed and updated annually and sent to the Department of Natural Resources and the Nebraska Games and Parks Commission by October 1 each year. The purpose of the plan is to maintain a guide and implementing objectives mandated by statutes and to summarize programs, projects, and manpower necessary to meet those objectives. There were no alterations to the plan this year, other than *Section III – Assessment of Current and Projected Needs Parts A & B* which were updated, staff numbers as well as the table of budgeted amounts for current and planned activities.

*Motion made by Darnall, seconded by Reuter to adopt the 2021 Long Range Implementation Plan. Motion passed.*

Ayes: Andreas, Darnall, Eirich, Henkel, Lapascotes, Reuter

Nay: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Deines, Westphal, Weinreis

### 13. Adjourn

There being no further business, the Chairman called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion made by Reuter, seconded by Henkel to adjourn at 3:53 pm., MDT. Motion passed.

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

Nay: none

Abstain: none

Absent: Deines, Westphal, Weinreis