

**NORTH PLATTE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
100547 Airport Road, Scottsbluff, Nebraska**

August 11, 2022

3:00 P.M.

1. Call Meeting to Order

This meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Roger Eirich. Notice of the meeting was given to the public by publishing a legal notice on August 4, 2022, in the Scottsbluff Star Herald.

2. Inform Public of Open Meetings Act

Eirich informed the meeting attendees that this meeting would be conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, which is posted by the door for public inspection.

Attendance

Board Members Present: Dave Deines, Gary Darnall, Roger Eirich, Ryan Reuter, Pete Lapaseotes, Kent Andreas

Board Members Absent: Chuck Henkel, Mark Westphal, Dan Weinreis

Eirich called for a motion to excuse the absences.

A motion was made by Deines, seconded by Reuter, to excuse the absences. Motion passed.

Aye: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Eirich, Lapaseotes, Reuter

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Henkel, Westphal, Weinreis

Others Present:

North Platte NRD Staff: Craig Uhrig, Todd Filipi, Ken Ridgeway, Kyle Ann Hopkins, Lydia Hendrickson, Scott Schaneman, Travis Preston

Adaptive Resources, Inc. (ARI): Thad Kuntz

Simmons Olsen Law Firm: Megan Dockery

J.G. Elliot : Lex Larson

Documentation Provided

The following documents were made available at the meeting for the Board of Directors and public review:

1. Meeting Notice
2. Agenda
3. Minutes of the July 14, 2022, Board of Directors Meeting
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Manager's Report

6. NPNRD Annual Report of 2021 Water Use Activities
7. Minutes, North Platte Natural Resources District, Budget & Personnel Committee Meeting, dated August 1, 2022.
8. North Platte Natural Resources District Current Insurance Plan for Health, Dental, and Vision Employer Coverage Costs.
9. Data and Outreach Department Report

4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes of the July 14, 2022, regular monthly meeting.

A motion was made by Reuter, seconded by Deines, to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2022, regular monthly meeting. Motion passed.

Aye: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Eirich, Lapaseotes, Reuter

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Henkel, Westphal, Weinreis

5. Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable

Reuter reviewed the monthly expenses from the Treasurer's Report with the Board.

A motion was made by Darnall, seconded by Deines, to accept the Treasurer's Report and pay the bills as listed. Motion passed.

Aye: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Eirich, Lapaseotes, Reuter

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Henkel, Westphal, Weinreis

6. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

7. Manager's Report

Scott Schaneman provided the Board with the following update:

On July 16th we hosted our annual Water Expo in combination with celebrating NRD Week. This year happened to be the 50th anniversary of the NRD system in Nebraska, and we were pleased in capping off the week with our annual Water Expo. The Expo was again an enormous success. We counted 450 plus people in attendance. This outreach continues to grow in popularity, our ability to share the mission of this organization grows with it. This event will continue to be one of the top events we host as we enter a new fiscal year.

We were once again privileged to host the Nebraska Water Leaders Academy for an evening get together here on our campus on July 14th. This group was able to get a look at our greenhouse after supper as well as having an opportunity to visit with others from around the State. This organization

is a resource that our staff has come to utilize over the years. Many of the district staff have been through the academy and have become better water leaders because of it.

On July 21st, Travis, Kyle Ann, and myself attended the annual Upper Platte Basin meeting in Ogallala. I was able to provide our annual activities report (please see Board packet for annual reporting documents, 6a) to the group and Heath Kuntz provided a power point presentation on the Enterprise Recharge Project. After the basin meeting, we began the introductory meeting of the Upper Platte Drought Task Force. This group of stakeholders will be responsible for creating an Upper Platte Basin Drought Plan. This drought plan is required in the Upper Platte Basin IMP. The next meeting will be held sometime in February of 2023.

I had the opportunity to speak to the Scottsbluff Lions Club on July 27th at their noon lunch meeting. The group was extremely interested in hearing about the way this NRD has been managing our natural resources. They were amazed in the number of trees not only our staff has planted in the last 50 years but the number of trees NRD's are responsible for planting Statewide. Water quality and quantity were issues on their mind, and they are now more aware of how important the NRD system is to the residents of the district.

Last week we finally after several years of back and forth with NDNR able to provide Dan Gueck a copy of the temporary surface water retirement agreement on his property on the Enterprise Canal system. This agreement has been in the hands of DNR and held up from execution for close to three years. Dan received a copy of the agreement on Thursday of last week and if he agrees with the language, it will be an important addition to the Enterprise Recharge Project. Once the agreement is finalized, NDNR will be receiving an application to transfer water from the Gueck property to the Enterprise pits.

Kevin Sylvester and his team from Dana Cole and Company were in the office last week working on our annual audit. They finished their work here on Friday of last week and will continue reviewing our information at their office. Once completed, Kevin will provide a written report as well as an in-person report at a future Board of Directors meeting.

NRD staff is continuing daily operations on the Enterprise Recharge Project. We have been diverting for close to 60 days now and have yet to fill our second pit. This site is demonstrating its ability to infiltrate a rate of diversion of close to 2 CFS continuously. It will be interesting to see how many acre feet we were able to put back in the aquifer at the end of the irrigation season.

Next week Travis and I will be on the Chamber of Commerce Water Tour. The tour is scheduled to leave Gering on August 16th and return on August 17th. We will be touring the Kortes Power Plant, Pathfinder Dam, the Bureau of Reclamation Control Center in Mills, as well as the Whalen Diversion. Last I heard there were only nineteen registered for the tour so this may be one of the smallest groups they have had in quite some time.

As always, my month continues to be busy with Upper Platte Basin meetings like the Platte Basin Coalition, the Platte Over Appropriated Committee, as well as the Upper Platte Principles group that continues to meet monthly to discuss ways this basin can achieve a fully appropriated status. Most of these meetings are held in person usually in North Platte.

At the end of the month there will be a NRD managers retreat held in Alma. I do plan on attending, but due to a conflict may only be able to attend the business meeting.

8. Discussion of Insurance Proposal Provided by FNIC

Travis Preston discussed the insurance proposal presented by FNIC on behalf of Glatfelter. The deductible will go from \$1,000 per occurrence to \$10,000 on any windstorm or hail claims. All infrastructure complete replacement value estimates went up substantially. Cyber protection for the NRD will be included in the proposal. The new Glatfelter annual premium will be \$59,226.00, down from the LARM premium of \$65,742.80. It was explained that many other NRDs with downstream liabilities are also having to switch insurances and the Gering Valley Flood Control Permanent Maintenance Committee also switched to Glatfelter.

9. Report from the Budget and Personnel Committee

Ryan discussed the August 1st meeting. The budget remains fairly flat. Salaries were down, but indoor building maintenance is higher due to the necessary replacement of the air conditioning.

Scott discussed the similarities of last years budget. Changes to note; inflation and staff salary increases, discussion with other NRDs salary increases fell between 6-10%. Scott is proposing a 5% cost of living increase and a 2% performance increase for a total of 7%. The HVAC system is having trouble with motors and blowing fuses. There is a need to replace the entire system. Some bids have come in and two more are expected. Waiting for valuations on august 20th to hold another budget and personnel committee meeting and finalized the proposed budget. Expect mill levy to go down. Increased NSWCP in hopes to fund more good projects. Scott talked to Mike Murphy, Middle Niobrara NRD General Manager, and they are dealing with the same issues. They hope to get with the natural resources commission to see if there is more money. There is a consideration for an increase district share in health insurance coverage from 50-75% and this increase has been accounted for in the budget should the Board choose to accept the increase. Valuations will be sent out to the board when the NRD receives them.

10. Discussion and Consideration of District Policy Handbook Change Regarding Health, Dental, and Vision Insurance Coverage for Dependents

Scott outlines the recommendation from the Budget and Personnel Committee meeting to increase the NRD share of dependent health insurance from 50% to 75%.

Scott went into what other NRDs are doing as well as NARD. Gary asked if there was a change to the insurance itself aside from the increased cost. There was no change.

A motion was made by Reuter, seconded by Andreas, to approve changes to the “Group Insurance” policy of the employee manual regarding an increase in the district share of health, dental, and vision premium payments for dependent coverage from 50% to 75%. Motion Passed.

Aye: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Eirich, Lapaseotes, Reuter

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Henkel, Westphal, Weinreis

11. Discussion and Consideration to Set the Budget Hearing for Fiscal Year 2023 for September

Scott let the Board know there is a hearing that needs to be independent of the board meeting. Discuss to have the hearing before.

A motion was made by Reuter, seconded by Deines, to set the fiscal year 2022-2023 budget hearing prior to the normal board meeting on September 8th, 2022. Motion Passed.

Aye: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Eirich, Lapaseotes, Reuter

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Henkel, Westphal, Weinreis

12. Data and Outreach Department Presentation

Kyle Ann presents on Data and Outreach department. July 1st combined data and IE department. Explained the new chain of command within the department. Informed of how many contacts have been made. Advertising is going to ramp up. Outlined what will be happening over the next few months in the handout every board member received.

Gary asks about combining departments and if staffing remained the same. Kyle Ann explained the changes required for these changes to take place.

Data and Outreach Department

July 1st we officially combined the Data Management Department and the Information and Education Department to create the Data and Outreach Department. I am the Coordinator, or the Head of the Department. Amanda is the Community Educator and Data Technician. While Lydia has officially move out of the Department into the GIS Coordinator position, we still rely on her to help with some of the Database duties, as she has time.

Over the past twelve months, Amanda was able to make over three thousand contacts with the public, including adults and children. Our goal for the next 12 months is to increase that number.

We will be ramping up media contact to include weekly radio spots and helping Travis with press releases as needed.

Fall Events in addition to scheduled school visits:

- September:
 - Sensory Safari - Zoo
 - Area Range Contest in NPNRD
 - Branched Out – Wildcat Hills Nature Center
 - State Range Contest – UNWRD
 - Tools through Time – Legacy of the Plains
 - Prep work for flow meter reads and maintenance
 - Annual NARD Fall Conference

- October:
 - Water Education for Tomorrow – NPNRD
 - Area Land Judging – UNWRD
 - State Land Judging – NPNRD
 - Quarterly I & E Meeting – Grand Island
 - Along with Flow Meter Reads, Telemetry Reads, Levels, and Maintenance

- November:
 - Prep work for Water Use Reports
 - Proofread and edit articles for the Newsletter

- December:
 - Water Use Reports checked for Quality Control
 - Finalize Newsletter for print
 - Nebraska Ag Expo - Lincoln

Ongoing work with the Database includes:

- Gering Valley Flood Control
- Nutrient Management
- Harrisburg Water System
- Cost Share

13. Adjourn

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

A motion was made by Andreas, seconded by Reuter, to adjourn at 3:33p.m. Motion passed.

Aye: Andreas, Darnall, Deines, Eirich, Lapaseotes, Reuter

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Henkel, Westphal, Weinreis