

LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

December 18, 2014

Ord, Nebraska

The December meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lower Loup Natural Resources District was held at the Headquarters Office, 2620 Airport Drive, Ord, Nebraska, on December 18, 2014. Chairman Kruse called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Directors in attendance

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer
Timothy E. Bartak
James Eschlimann
Randy Kauk
Gary A. Kruse, Chairman
Matt Lukasiewicz
Alan D. Petersen
Gerald P. Smith

Darwin B. Anderson, Secretary
Joseph L. Citta, Jr., Vice Chairman
N. Richard Hadenfeldt
Thomas Knutson
Clifford P. Loseke
James C. Nelson
Darwin R. Sieh
Henry J. Thoene

Directors absent

James C. Adams
Michael P. Gutzmer

Virgil Gellermann
Dean J. Rasmussen

Staff in attendance

Leon "Butch" Koehlmoos, General Manager
Cheryl Hornickel, Programs Assistant
Larry D. Schultz, I&E Coordinator
Anne Freeman, Water Programs Secretary
Dell Harris, Water Resources Specialist
LeeAnn Smith, Water Programs Assistant

Irene F. Kreifels, Financial Secretary
Rita A. Goldfish, Administrative Assistant
Tylr D. Naprstek, Water Modeling Coordinator
Richard L. Woollen, District Forester
Jason Moudry, Water Programs Specialist

Guests in attendance

Bryce Bauer, LDC, NRCS, Ord

Eugene Bredthauer, Ord

NOTICE OF OPEN MEETING LAW POSTING

Chairman Kruse referred those in attendance to the open meeting law information posted in the Board room.

APPROVAL OF VERIFICATION OF MEETING NOTICE, ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND EXCUSED ABSENCES

Chairman Kruse asked for verification of the meeting notice. General Manager Leon “Butch” Koehlmoos verified that the meeting notices were properly published in all newspapers and that the meeting notice was also posted at the NRD Headquarters office in Ord, the NRD web site, and the eight field office locations. Koehlmoos said there were no modifications to the agenda.

Knutson motioned, seconded by Sieh, to approve the verification of the meeting notice, adopt the agenda, and excuse all absent directors. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Citta, Eschliman, Kauk, Knutson, Kruse, Loseke, Nelson, Petersen, Sieh, Smith and Thoene. Director abstaining: Lukasiewicz. Directors not present during vote: Bartak and Hadenfeldt. Directors absent: Adams, Gellermann, Gutzmer, and Rasmussen.

Kruse asked directors who ran in the November election to read and sign their Oath of Office. Koehlmoos said this would allow them to vote at the upcoming caucus meetings. He said there were some Lower Loup NRD directors who would represent the Lower Platte Basin.

MINUTES

Chairman Kruse asked for corrections and/or additions to the November 20, 2014, Board meeting minutes. None being heard, Chairman Kruse ruled the November 20, 2014, minutes stand approved as submitted.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Chairman Kruse directed the Board’s attention to the Treasurer’s Report as published in the regular and supplemental agendas.

Koehlmoos commented on expenditures to Downey Drilling for observation wells in Buffalo and Custer counties; and Gene’s Electric for final work done on the restrooms and water project at Davis Creek. Koehlmoos said the Area 28 flowmeter cost-share program is going well.

Thoene motioned, seconded by Smith, to approve the December, 2014, Treasurer’s Report and pay all bills. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

FORESTER'S REPORT

District Forester Rich Woollen said tree orders were getting started and around 6,000 seedlings have been sold, mainly for shrub blocks and windbreaks. He said most tree orders are received between January and March. He said *Conservation Trees* booklets and tree brochures were available to hand out.

Woollen said that the Nebraska Forest Service has several financial assistance programs available to cooperators to help them manage their tree resource. He explained that many of the grants deal with hazardous fuels reduction and thinning dense forests to help prevent wildfires. He said firewise defensible space grants can be used for the removal of flammable trees and shrubs around homes and other buildings. He said, as thinnings take place, NFS is always looking for markets for woody biomass to try to help offset some of the cost of the tree management.

Woollen said a study is being initiated to see if compost will help some of the sandy knobs on farm ground. Woollen said he works with communities on landscaping projects and grants for planting and managing trees in communities.

Woollen said states around Nebraska have reported cases of emerald ash borer, but there have been none in Nebraska.

NRCS REPORT

Bryce Bauer reported that year-end payments are being made to producers. He said the recent quality assurance reviews of Ord, St. Paul, and Broken Bow went well. He said a new deadline has not been announced for CSP, and they are waiting for rankings on EQIP.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION REPORT

NARD Calendars

Information & Education Coordinator Larry Schultz reported that the NARD wall calendars were printed and each director had one at their place. Schultz said several pictures from Lower Loup were included in the calendar, most coming from the game camera at the Aagaard Farm. Schultz mentioned that pocket calendars were also handed out.

NRD Apparel

Schultz said the NRD apparel selections for 2015 were a nylon jacket or a fleece vest. He said order forms were at each place for directors to make their selection.

In the Loup Newsletter

Schultz said an issue of the newly-designed *In the Loup* was mailed recently. Directors said they have received good comments about the publication.

Washington, DC Conference

Schultz passed around a sign-up sheet for the Washington, DC, conference.

Lukasiewicz asked if Lower Loup NRD has ever had a water conservation meeting with other districts and farmers. He thought it might be a good way to promote new technology and ways to conserve water. Koehlmoos responded that, although the NRD has had workshops and/or open meetings on different topics, and has assisted in numerous farm shows and fairs, the NRD has not specifically hosted a water conservation meeting. He said if there is something the directors would like to see, staff would take a look at it and try to put it together.

TRACTOR BIDS

Koehlmoos said that tractor bids had been sent to nine dealers and six bids were received. He said the Case tractor that the NRD presently has will be used as a tree planting tractor and the new tractor will probably be stationed at the Aagaard Farm. It was staff's recommendation to purchase the 2014 MTX135 tractor from Thoene Farm Service for \$71,000; and to also purchase the loader which would be an additional cost of around \$12,000. Koehlmoos said the NRD would receive a government discount.

Koehlmoos said that the tractor comes with a standard warranty, so an extended warranty probably wouldn't be purchased. He said as few hours as the NRD would put on the tractor in a year, he felt leasing wouldn't save any money.

Sieh motioned, seconded by Bartak, to approve the tractor bid from Thoene Farm Service for a 2014 McCormick MTX135 tractor at \$71,000 and an addition of a loader for \$12,000. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bartak, Citta, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Knutson, Kruse, Loseke, Lukasiewicz, Nelson, Petersen, Sieh, and Smith. Director abstaining: Thoene. Directors absent: Adams, Gellermann, Gutzmer, and Rasmussen.

ASSISTANT MANAGER'S REPORT

Water Resources Committee

There was no meeting in December.

Area 28 Activities

Water Modeling Coordinator Tylr Naprstek reported that Mike Lorenz had sent a letter to Area 28 producers stating that the 100% cost-share for flowmeters would expire at the end of the year. He said there were 400-420 sites in Area 28, 360 applications have been submitted, and 242 are completed. He said that \$393,744 has been spent on flowmeter cost-share and estimates that 30-50 more applications will be received. Naprstek said that Ed Drozd has been inspecting the systems to make sure the flowmeters are installed correctly.

South Loup Watershed Plan

Naprstek said that three outstanding proposals were received for the South Loup Quality/Quantity Watershed Management Plan. LLNRD staff and partners reviewed proposals from EA Engineering, Olsson Associates, and JEO/HDR. The consensus was to hire JEO/HDR. Naprstek said JEO/HDR had the most direct approach to addressing the issues in the South Loup, including quantity issues; has the most experience in completed watershed management plans; and HDR is the consultant working on the lower Platte Basin. He said it was staff's recommendation to hire JEO/HDR, whose bid was \$210,451. Naprstek said that part of the project would be paid through a \$150,000 non-point source grant.

Anderson motioned, seconded by Citta, to accept a proposal from JEO/HDR to serve as consultant for the South Loup Watershed Plan at a cost of \$210,451.00, and to authorize the General Manager's signature on the contract. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bartak, Citta, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Loseke, Lukasiewicz, Nelson, Petersen, Sieh, Smith, and Thoene. Director abstaining: Knutson. Directors absent: Adams, Gellermann, Gutzmer, and Rasmussen.

Integrated Management Plan

a. Stakeholders Group

Koehlmoos said that the Executive Committee met before the Board meeting to look over the list of 30 applicants for the stakeholders group. The Committee recommended approval of all 30 applicants. Koehlmoos said the Committee also recommended continuing with the plan to meet with personnel/directors from irrigation districts and public power and irrigation districts, prior to setting up the stakeholders group, to go over the project.

b. Facilitator

The Executive Committee discussed hiring a facilitator for the stakeholders group and recommend hiring Karen Griffin with Olsson Associates. He said NRD and DNR staff would put together a plan, sequence, and scope for her so as to get an indication of cost.

Koehlmoos said there was no cut-off date for applications for the stakeholders group.

Kruse said there should be Board representation at the stakeholder meetings and encouraged directors to attend. Several directors expressed interest in attending the meetings.

Loseke motioned, seconded by Kauk, to approve the recommendations from the Executive Committee to have staff consult with irrigation and public power district staff and directors to review the voluntary integrated management plan development; to set the scope and sequence for the Stakeholders Group and put together a plan; to hire Karen Griffin of Olsson Associates to serve as the facilitator for the process; and to invite all 30 applicants to the Stakeholders Group. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

There was no meeting in December.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Lower Platte River Basin Coalition Activities Update

Koehlmoos said the Coalition met in O'Neill and went over goals and objectives. He said the Technical Committee is getting data put together.

NRC Caucus – Loup Basin and Lower Platte Basin

Koehlmoos reported that all the directors were in the Loup Basin except Anderson, Citta, Gellermann, Loseke, and Sieh, who represent the lower Platte Basin. Their caucus will be in Lincoln. He said the Loup Basin Caucus will be at noon on January 13th, the same day as the Water Resources Committee and Programs/Projects Committee meetings. Koehlmoos said that Director Hadenfeldt has agreed to serve another term on the NRC Board.

New Hires

There were no new hires.

Non-action Reports

Koehlmoos reported that the appeals court kicked out Prokop's appeal. He said the court case for damages will be around January 9th.

Koehlmoos also reported that the Koch motion was dismissed by the attorney general's office since Koch also filed in district court.

Naprstek reported that staff met with Pibel Lake consultants, Olsson Associates. He said the design phase of the renovation project is on hold for now, due to a seepage issue with the primary spillway. Staff said that Olsson Associates will proceed with the other items. Naprstek said plans are to lower the lake in July/August, proceed with construction in the fall, and fill the lake again in 2016. Naprstek said that he and Callan would be meeting with the fisheries department.

NARD REPORT

Director's Report

Koehlmoos said that Rasmussen's back surgery went well.

Koehlmoos said that Director Tom Knutson would be leaving the Board, but would continue to work with the NRD on the stakeholders group. Kruse read a resolution recognizing Knutson's service to the Board.

Citta motioned, seconded by Lukasiewicz, to approve the Resolution recognizing the service of Tom Knutson to the Board of Directors of the Lower Loup NRD. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bartak, Citta, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Loseke, Lukasiewicz, Nelson, Petersen, Sieh, Smith, and Thoene. Director abstaining: Knutson. Directors absent: Adams, Gellermann, Gutzmer, and Rasmussen.

Kruse thanked Knutson for his service and presented him with the Resolution. Koehlmoos then presented him with a weather forecast station and a desktop emergency alert radio.

NRC REPORT

Commissioner's Report

Hadenfeldt said there would be a meeting on January 21st.

RC&D REPORTS

Loup Basin RC&D

No report.

PrairieLand RC&D

No report.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS, NARD REPRESENTATIVE/ALTERNATE, RC&D DELEGATES/ALTERNATES, LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE VOTING DELEGATE/ ALTERNATE, AND NARD ANNUAL CONFERENCE VOTING DELEGATE/ALTERNATE

Koehlmoos said that current Board officers were Gary Kruse, Chairman; Joe Citta, Vice Chairman; Darwin Anderson, Secretary; and Rollie Amsberry, Treasurer. He said nominations could be taken for the individual offices or as a whole.

Nelson made a nomination to retain the current officers.

Knutson nominated Matt Lukasiewicz for Secretary.

Eschliman motioned, seconded by Thoene, that nominations cease and an unanimous vote be cast to elect Kruse, Chairman; Citta, Vice Chairman; and Amsberry, Treasurer. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Knutson motioned, seconded by Smith, that nominations cease and that a ballot be cast for either Anderson or Lukasiewicz for Secretary. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Ballots were passed to the directors for their vote.

Citta motioned, seconded by Eschliman, that nominations cease and an unanimous vote be cast to name Rasmussen as NARD Representative and Gellermann as alternate. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Petersen motioned, seconded by Bartak, that nominations cease and an unanimous vote be cast to name Rasmussen as Loup Basin RC&D delegate and Thoene as alternate. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Loseke motioned, seconded by Eschliman, that nominations cease and an unanimous vote be cast to name Gellermann as PrairieLand RC&D delegate and Sieh as alternate. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Eschliman motioned, seconded by Thoene, that nominations cease and an unanimous vote be cast to name Rasmussen as voting delegate and Gellermann as alternate for the 2015 NARD Legislative Conference and the 2015 NARD Annual Conference. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Kruse announced ballot results for Secretary: Anderson - 11; Lukasiewicz - 5.

Bartak motioned, seconded by Knutson, to declare Anderson as Secretary. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

APPROVAL OF 2015 BOARD MEETING CALENDAR, DESIGNATION OF OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS & BANKS, SET MAXIMUM COST LIMIT PER PLATE FOR AWARDS DINNER AND MAXIMUM FOR 2015 AWARDS

Knutson motioned, seconded by Smith, to approve the proposed 2015 Board Meeting calendar; name the Grand Island Independent as the District-wide newspaper with use of The Albion News, The Burwell Tribune, The Custer County Chief, The Columbus Telegram, The Greeley Citizen, The Nance County Journal, The Ord Quiz, The Phonograph-Herald, The Ravenna News, and The Sherman County Times for meeting announcements and legal notices; and name Great Western Bank in Ord as the main repository for the Lower Loup NRD's funds and First National Bank in Ord as the secondary repository. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Sieh motioned, seconded by Loseke, to set the Annual Awards Dinner maximum at \$50 per plate for the meal and \$125 maximum for awards. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Knutson thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve. Knutson gave a copy of a letter from the Dept. of the Interior to each Board member regarding the water situation in the Republican Basin. Koehlmoos said the Waters of the U.S. has been rescinded by the Omnibus bill and said the EPA and Corps would have to start over.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Kruse declared the meeting adjourned at 5:29 p.m.

Roster for attendance of this meeting and tally of votes cast on motions at this meeting are being filed with the official minutes of this meeting at the Lower Loup Natural Resources District's Headquarters Office, 2620 Airport Drive, Ord, Nebraska. Publication notification of this meeting was made via a newspaper in each county within the District. The next Board of Directors meeting will be held Thursday, January 22, 2015, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

Darwin B. Anderson
Secretary