

LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

March 26, 2015

Ord, Nebraska

The March 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 March 26, 2015. Chairman Kruse called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Directors in attendance

James C. Adams
Beth Boesch
James J. Eschliman
Michael P. Gutzmer
Randy Kauk
Clifford P. Loseke
James C. Nelson
Dean J. Rasmussen
Gerald P. Smith
Henry J. Thoene

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer
Joseph L. Citta, Jr., Vice Chairman
Virgil W. Gellermann
N. Richard Hadenfeldt
Gary A. Kruse, Chairman
Matt Lukasiewicz
Alan D. Petersen
Darwin R. Sieh
Dean G. Thede

Directors absent

Darwin B. Anderson, Secretary

Timothy E. Bartak

Staff in attendance

Leon "Butch" Koehlmoos, General Manager
Irene F. Kreifels, Financial Secretary
Larry D. Schultz, I&E Coordinator
Anne Freeman, Water Programs Secretary
Dell Harris, Water Resources Specialist

Russell G. Callan, Assistant General Manager
Rita A. Goldfish, Administrative Assistant
Cheryl Hornickel, Programs Assistant
Richard L. Woollen, District Forester
Jason Moudry, Water Programs Specialist

Guests in attendance

Bryce Bauer, LDC, NRCS, Ord
Ken Steiner, Columbus
Eugene Bredthauer, Ord

Mike Winter, Downey Drilling, Lexington
Tom Bock, Columbus
Mark Koch, Sargent

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.

Eschliman motioned, seconded by Petersen, to approve the verification of the meeting notice, adopt the agenda, and excuse all absent directors. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Chairman Kruse welcomed Beth Boesch, who is representing Subdistrict 9, to the Board of Directors.

MINUTES

Chairman Kruse asked for corrections and/or additions to the February 26, 2015, Board meeting minutes. None being heard, Chairman Kruse ruled the February 26, 2015, 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 reported on expenditures for logo jackets; legal fees for ongoing court cases; isotope samples for six 319 WHP communities; flowmeter cost-share; two Chevy pickups; and IMP professional services.

Kruse said that the buffer strip payments to Adams and Nelson would be considered in a separate motion.

Rasmussen motioned, seconded by Loseke, to approve the March 2015, Treasurer’s Report and pay all bills, excluding buffer strip payments to Directors Adams and Nelson. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Smith motioned, seconded by Sieh, to approve buffer strip payments to Directors Adams and Nelson. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Boesch, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Loseke, Lukasiewicz, Petersen, Rasmussen, Sieh, Smith, Thede, and Thoene. Directors abstaining: Adams and

Nelson. Director not present during vote: Gutzmer. Directors absent: Anderson and Bartak.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mark Koch commented that he felt some of the NSWCP funds allocated to the NRD could be used to help rebuild the Bredthauer Dam under *Practice NC-3, Constructing Water Impoundment Dams*.

FORESTER'S REPORT

District Forester Rich Woollen highlighted parts of the *2014 Annual Report for the Nebraska Forest Service* that was passed around at the meeting. He mentioned an article that he wrote on stewardship of Nebraska's trees and that inventory data that had been done on windbreaks. He said that old windbreaks need to be renovated and new windbreaks planted. He said he also contributed to the "Forest Treasures" article, detailing information about the pine resource in Pine Canyon and Jones Canyon. He said to insure that the Pine Canyon seed source be protected from possible damaging agents, a seed source was collected from Pine Canyon and given to Bessey Nursery, then planted at the Aagaard Farm. Woollen also mentioned an article featuring Dianna Rodocker who retired from Bessey Nursery and was honored at the NARD Conference for her many years of service working with conservation tree seedlings. She was also recognized by the NRDs at Clients Day and received the State Forester's Award. He said Constance Miller also received an award for her years of service to Bessey Nursery.

Woollen reported that seedlings were being lifted at Bessey Nursery. He said tree sales are down across the state.

NRCS REPORT

Bryce Bauer reported that 65 EQIP contracts had been funded and that some forestry funds have been distributed. He said there was a huge CSP signup, with 900 applications across the state and the 11,000,000 acres nationwide was cut to 8,000,000. He thought Nebraska would probably receive 800,000 acres to work with.

Bauer said the resource conservationist position in Fullerton has closed and applications will be reviewed. He said the budget looks good to advertise for a soil conservationist in Albion and a resource conservationist in Broken Bow, both full-time positions. The civil rights reviews in Broken Bow and Albion went well.

Bauer said that Client Gateway, a mobile access program for farm records, was in operation. He said producers can apply online for programs.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION REPORT

Central Region Envirothon

Information & Education Coordinator Larry Schultz reported that Lower Loup and Central Platte NRDs host the Central Region Envirothon which was held March 3rd at the Central Community College-Platte Campus. He said Boone Central was the top team, Aurora was second, Ord placed third, and Palmer was fourth. He said four teams scored over 100 points. He said the State Envirothon would be held April 29th at Camp Comeca in Cozad.

Schultz said that the quarterly newsletter, *In the Loup*, was at the printers and would be mailed out next week.

Schultz said he would be doing the Water Drop Relay at the Groundwater Festival in May in Grand Island.

ASSISTANT MANAGER'S REPORT

Variance Committee

Assistant General Manager Russell Callan reported that the Variance Committee met prior to the Board meeting and heard two first-time requests. He said the first case involved a transfer and the irrigated history of the acres. Callan said the second request involved adding acres and spreading the consumptive use of the water over the additional acres.

Water Resources Committee

Callan said the Water Resources Committee met on March 17th.

Columbus Area/Christopher's Cove Water Augmentation Project

Callan said that four proposals were received for the project. Staff reviewed the proposals and made a recommendation to the Committee to hire HDR. The project involves compiling water data in the Columbus area, inventory floodplain and storm water data, prepare a water budget, make a 3-D aquifer model that will map the geology in the area, and look at potential recharge projects and funding options.

Callan said the project would be done around June, 2016. He stated that the funding options at the present time would be from the NRD, the Christopher's Cove group, and the City of Columbus. He said requests have not been made to those entities yet, but they have indicated they would want to become partners with the NRD on the project. Koehlmoos said he anticipated that most of the participation from the city and the Christopher's Cove group would be providing information to the project and monitoring the project.

Thoene motioned, seconded by Adams, to accept the proposal from HDR for the Columbus Area/Christopher's Cove Project for \$158,000. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Sargent Irrigation District Recharge Project

Callan said he met with Sargent Irrigation District and City of Sargent officials recently to discuss the project and get input. Callan went over the numbers with them and losses from the canal that the NRD interprets as recharge. He said staff is now waiting for feedback from the groups regarding potential impacts to their facilities and costs involved. Lukasiewicz said the project was well received by the board members of the irrigation district.

Voluntary IMP Stakeholders Update

Callan said that the next stakeholders meeting is scheduled for April 9th at 5:00 p.m.

Area 28 Water Meter Update

Callan reported that 266 flowmeters were in place and \$441,011 had been expended in cost-share. He said that just a few producers had not signed up.

South Loup Watershed Plan

Callan said that Naprstek is working with JEO and cooperating NRDs to put together a list of stakeholders. He said the first stakeholders meeting will be in Callaway.

PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Batenhorst Structure

General Manager Leon Koehlmoos reported that this project was an NRCS/County project in Boone County near Cedar Rapids. He said it is a bank stabilization structure that is affecting a county road and utilities. He said the project will cost around \$174,000. He said NRCS will be paying the major portion of the bill and the county will be doing the dirt work. Koehlmoos said NRCS contacted staff for financial assistance of \$15,000 for riprap for the project.

Esch motioned, seconded by Petersen, to provide financial assistance, not to exceed \$15,000, for the Batenhorst Structure project. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

City of St. Paul Flooding Problem

Koehlmoos reported that Olsson Associates was working with the city on a flooding problem in the northwest part of the city. He said a berm will be replaced, and the city was seeking financial assistance to help with their costs.

Village of Wolbach Park Project

Koehlmoos said the village was seeking financial assistance to repair the concrete steps to the walking trail around the lake in the community park.

Spalding Fish Ladder

Koehlmoos said Game and Parks funded this project 100% and no NRD participation had been sought. Staff thought the Board would be interested in seeing the plans for the fish ladder, so Dan Ray, technician for the NRD at Spalding, was able to obtain a set of plans.

Davis Creek Picnic Shelters

Koehlmoos said the picnic shelters have been funded as part of the ET grant. He said the Davis Creek shelters would be built similar to those at Lake Wanahoo, but would be double bay. He said the engineer's estimate for two picnic shelters was \$96,000. Koehlmoos said the Bureau of Reclamation had contacted staff about some special funds they had available for recreation sites and said they would fund 50% of the cost, including the concrete.

Koehlmoos said staff would like to install a picnic shelter of the same type at Pibel Lake. He said he would like to bid all three shelters. Callan said the money has already been approved.

Citta motioned, seconded by Amsberry, that staff proceed with bids for two picnic shelters at Davis Creek Recreation Area and one picnic shelter at Pibel Lake Recreation Area. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Stakeholders Group Report

Koehlmoos said the stakeholders group met and had a good meeting. The next meeting will be April 9th at 5:00 p.m. at the NRD Headquarters office.

Koehlmoos reported that the Water Resources Committee will meet on Thursday, April 16th at 10:00 a.m., and the Programs/Projects Committee will meet on Thursday, April 16th at 1:00 p.m.

MANAGER'S REPORT

LiDAR Request from the Conservation & Survey Division

Koehlmoos reported that he and Hadenfeldt had recently attended the Upper Loup NRD Board meeting. He said that he had been contacted by Doug Hallum with the Conservation & Survey Division to see if Lower Loup NRD was interested in participating in the program. Koehlmoos said the NRD would be interested in any additional information gathered regarding the District, especially in the South Loup Basin.

Koehlmoos said he is not trying to bypass the Programs/Projects Committee, but was unsure of the time frame involved in responding to Conservation & Survey.

Koehlmoos directed the Board's attention to maps that were provided in the supplemental agenda showing where LiDAR work has already been done in the District and where proposals were in development. A budget sheet was also provided which showed the estimated total project cost to be \$427,635 of which the estimated cost in Custer and Sherman Counties is \$277,695 for 1,089 square miles. Koehlmoos said Conservation & Survey Division is requesting \$11,108 from Lower Loup NRD.

Gutzmer motioned, seconded by Adams, to approve a fee of \$11,108 for LiDAR coverage of the South Loup River in Custer and Sherman Counties. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Litigation Update

Koehlmoos said the Bredthauer Dam case went before the court in Valley County and was discussed. Because of counter motions, the judge postponed it until April 21st. Koehlmoos said the Prokop illegal wells have been abandoned and one well was converted to livestock use. Staff is waiting for annual reports from Mr. Prokop for previous years, and, according to the judge, fines may begin at the end of the third deadline which was three weeks ago.

New Hires

There were no new hires.

Non-action Reports

Koehlmoos gave a report on sessions attended at the Washington, DC, conference.

NARD REPORT

Director's Report

Rasmussen said NARD had met in Lincoln and will meet in Gothenburg in June. He said there might be a problem with the insurance due to a couple of large claims. He said the same officers were elected for another year, LBs 9, 95, and 142 have been signed. Koehlmoos said the chemigation bill passed which will stiffen penalties for violations of chemigation rules and regs. He said the biennial budget also passed.

NRC REPORT

Commissioner's Report

Hadenfeldt said they met on March 5th regarding the rules for the water sustainability fund, then again on March 16th and passed a draft of the rules. He said public information meetings have been scheduled by DNR across the state, then a public hearing in Kearney in April. He said it is possible that DNR may start accepting applications in February, 2016. Hadenfeldt said the scoring

guidelines are laid out in the rules. He said an entity needs to have an integrated management plan to apply for financial assistance.

RC&D REPORTS

Loup Basin RC&D

Rasmussen reported that he wasn't able to attend the last meeting, but heard that there was discussion about Loup Basin RC&D adding Boone and Nance Counties. He said it will probably be decided at the next RC&D meeting whether Platte County will be joining Loup Basin RC&D.

PrairieLand RC&D

Gellermann reported that PrairieLand would like to keep Platte County; otherwise, they're isolated. He said the Shell Creek Watershed kids test the water in the creek from north of Lindsay/Newman Grove down to Schuyler. He said the project is interesting and improvements are being made in the watershed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nelson volunteered to give interested persons who want an introduction to the South Loup River a boat ride. He said Schultz offered to set up the schedule for Saturday afternoon trips, beginning after Easter.

Callan reported that chemigation renewal permits were mailed out today with the new fees listed.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Kruse declared the meeting adjourned at 6:14 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, April 23, 2015, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

Darwin B. Anderson
Secretary