

LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

May 28, 2015

Ord, Nebraska

The May 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 May 28, 2015. Chairman Kruse called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Directors in attendance

James C. Adams
Darwin B. Anderson, Secretary
Beth Boesch
Virgil W. Gellermann
Clifford P. Loseke
James C. Nelson
Dean J. Rasmussen
Dean G. Thede

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

Directors absent

Joseph L. Citta, Jr., Vice Chairman
N. Richard Hadenfeldt
Darwin R. Sieh

Michael P. Gutzmer
Randy Kauk
Henry J. Thoene

Staff in attendance

Leon "Butch" Koehlmoos, General Manager
Irene F. Kreifels, Financial Secretary
Rita A. Goldfish, Administrative Assistant
Larry D. Schultz, I&E Coordinator
Dell Harris, Water Resources Specialist
LeeAnn Smith, Water Programs Assistant

Russell G. Callan, Assistant General Manager
Cheryl K. Hornickel, Programs Assistant
Tylr Naprstek, Water Modeling Coordinator
Richard L. Woollen, District Forester
Ann Freeman, Water Programs Secretary

Guests in attendance

Bryce Bauer, LDC, NRCS, Ord
Joe Mangiamelli, Columbus City Admin.

Mike Winter, Downey Drilling, Lexington
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 was a modification to the agenda for Manager’s Report, with the addition of Picnic Shelter Bids and Pickup Bids.

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

MINUTES

Chairman Kruse asked for corrections and/or additions to the April 23, 2015, Board meeting minutes. None being heard, Chairman Kruse ruled the April 23, 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 that UNL School of Natural Resources will be increasing their maintenance/operation fees for the Merna weather station -- \$1,500 in 2015; \$2,000 in 2016; and \$2,600 in 2017. Koehlmoos said the station provides a lot of information for the Custer County area and the information can be downloaded from the High Plains Regional Climate Center.

Other expenditures highlighted were Olsson Associates (Pibel Lake geotech work); Upper Big Blue NRD (hydrological review of Abengoa Plant); and Ericson Lake Corporation (gate controller).

Boesch motioned, seconded by Loseke, to approve the May, 2015, 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 reported that tree planting was finished on May 13th and that drip irrigation systems are being installed. He said seedlings from Bessey Nursery and NRCS plant materials centers were planted at the Aagaard Farm as demonstration plantings.

NRCS REPORT

Bryce Bauer reported that the first round of 20-30 CSP applications were pre-approved. He said acres around the country have dropped from 12 million to about 8 million. He said NRCS has advertised for positions in Broken Bow, Albion and Fullerton. Bauer reported that compliance reviews have started and said there were only 50, having dropped 1/3.

Bauer said he met with NRD staff to work on a plan for the Clear Creek Watershed. He said items discussed were nutrient management, waste utilization, utilizing manure, cover crops, no-till, filter strips and other standard management practices. He is hoping to eartag some EQIP money and direct it toward the watershed. He said a proposal could be submitted as an NRD for Ogallala Aquifer money.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION REPORT

Hazard Mitigation Plan

Information & Education Coordinator Larry Schultz reported that the Hazard Mitigation Plan needs to be updated every five years. He said the present plan will expire in December, 2017.

Koehlmoos said that Kirkham Michael worked with the Lower Loup, Twin Platte, and Central Platte NRDs on the original plan. He said a particular consulting group is interested in working with the second plan. He said that possible federal funding opportunities for the cost of the update will be available.

Schultz said a tentative timeline for the plan was in the agenda.

State Envirothon

Schultz said the State Envirothon was held on April 29th at Camp Comeca near Cozad. He said a team from Boone Central finished third. He said the first place team from Concordia High School in Omaha will travel to Missouri State University in Springfield for the national contest to be held July 27th to August 2nd.

Children's Groundwater Festival

Schultz said the Groundwater Festival was held on May 12th at Central Community College and College Park in Grand Island, with several schools from surrounding towns attending. Schultz did the Water Drop Relay, an activity that teaches students the water cycle.

Schultz passed around copies of a noxious weed brochure.

CITY OF COLUMBUS-COLUMBUS LEVEE

Koehlmoos mentioned that perhaps the Columbus levee project, which is a preventive, protective process, might possibly fit under the hazard mitigation guidelines, and could maybe be included in the Lower Loup NRD's hazardous mitigation plan.

Chairman Kruse said the Columbus Levee project was discussed in detail at the Programs/Projects Committee meeting.

Eschliman motioned, seconded by Boesch to provide 30% of the local costs of the Columbus Levee project, not to exceed \$1.38 million.

City Administrator Joe Mangiamelli said the plans for the project have been sent from the Omaha District office to Washington, DC for review. They hope to have the review done by the end of May. He said the timeline for completion of the project would most likely be one year. He said the project would cost the City of Columbus \$4.6 million. He said the city is approaching \$1 million in engineering fees.

Koehlmoos said the NRD contribution could be spread over one or two fiscal years.

Smith mentioned that if the project isn't completed in two years, it will need to be modified and brought back to the Board for consideration.

Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

ASSISTANT MANAGER'S REPORT

Water Resources Committee

Water Quantity Analysis

Assistant Manager Russell Callan told the Board that Naprstek had put some maps together and staff was compiling data on high water level areas where potential irrigation could be allowed. He said staff was discussing the water budget – static water levels, stream flows – to help in making a decision on whether or not to allow new irrigated acres.

Voluntary Integrated Management Plan

Callan said that staff had met with DNR to discuss the integrated management plan. They will meet again to draft a plan with the goals and objectives that Olsson Associates received from the stakeholders meeting.

Columbus Area Water Assessment

Callan said that he and HDR met with the Christopher Cove group to talk about information that HDR needs for the water assessment.

South Loup Plan Update

Naprstek reported that EPA has approved Lower Loup's Project Implementation Plan for \$150,000. He said the agreement from DEQ will be coming in.

Clear Creek Update

Callan said he thought the Clear Creek plan was a good plan that would benefit both the producers in the area and Pibel Lake.

Long-Range Plan Budget

Callan said he talked with both the Water Resources and Program/Projects committees about moving forward with the Long-Range Plan.

Area 28 Activities

Callan reported that Mike Lorenz was working with producers to get reports in. He said that violators will probably be notified soon.

ELM Update

Callan said the ELM report would probably be available the first of the year.

PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

City of St. Paul - Northwest Drainage Ditch

Eschliman said the Committee discussed the flooding problem in northwest St. Paul and how funding could be provided in line with the Project Participation Policy.

Eschliman motioned, seconded by Rasmussen, to approve financial assistance at 35% of the total project, not to exceed \$3,500, to St. Paul for a drainage issue in the northwest section of the town.

Koehlmoos said that the city had replaced the berm and seeded the area. Callan said the project budget was \$10,000 and that \$2,000 of that would be used to clean out the ditches.

Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Village of Wolbach – Park Steps Replacement

Eschliman said that the Village of Wolbach is seeking financial assistance to replace the park steps. He said representatives of the village would be back with more information.

Village of Taylor – Flooding and Drainage Project to Loup River

Eschliman reported that the Village of Taylor is requesting assistance in clearing out drainage ways around the village to prevent flooding. He said that the areas had become silted in and blocked by vegetation. He said this was the first hearing on the request.

Arnold Golf Course Tree Project

Eschliman said that the NRD had been contacted about assistance for planting trees and irrigation on the Arnold golf course. He said the golf course is non-profit.

Koehlmoos said that Arnold was requesting trees and a golf course sprinkling system.

Fullerton Golf Course Tree Project

Eschliman said that the NRD had been approached by representatives from Fullerton asking for assistance with trees and irrigation. He said that questions about the course's public/private and profit/non-profit status need to be answered.

Koehlmoos said that Fullerton's request could be a Community Forestry project and they were working with Woollen on tree materials and drip irrigation.

Rasmussen asked if the NRD contributes trees for town memorials. Koehlmoos answered that it has been done on several occasions.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Merna Weather Station

Discussed earlier.

Pickup Accident

Koehlmoos reported that one of the recently purchased pickups was involved in an accident, denting a quarter-panel and the bumper.

Litigation Update

Koehlmoos said there was no new information on the Koch case. Regarding the Prokop case, Koehlmoos said that there was a judgment on the attorney's fees. There was a fine of \$1,000

on the case. Koehlmoos said that Prokop had signed a *Schedule of Compliance* that wasn't approved by the NRD.

Callan said that the wells in this case were gone. Koehlmoos said that this process started in 2010/2011 when Prokop was in violation. Koehlmoos said that reports for 2012, 2013, and 2014 are still not complete.

Koehlmoos said he will invite the NRD's attorney to the June meeting to give an update to the Board.

2015 Legislation

Koehlmoos said that the Legislature is tentatively scheduled to adjourn on June 5th.

New Hires

Koehlmoos said that summer help has been hired – Ryan Callan, Nolan Clausen, Trevor Farenholz, Tony Smith, and Justin Pryce.

Non-action Reports

There were no reports.

Pickup Bids

Koehlmoos told the Board that bids were received at or above Bluebook pricing for each of the vehicles listed for sale by the Lower Loup NRD.

Loseke motioned, seconded by Adams, to accept the high bids for the 2002 Dodge, 2004 Dodge and 1994 Ford. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Picnic Shelter Bids

Koehlmoos reported that the engineer's estimate for the three picnic shelters was \$48,000 each. He said that the Bureau of Reclamation has committed to one of the shelters at Davis Creek. He said bid letting was held and the only bid received was from BD Construction in Columbus for \$196,000. Koehlmoos said potential bidders felt the construction time was too short, and they were booked up until winter.

Anderson motioned, seconded by Boesch, to reject the bid submitted from BD Construction and authorize staff to negotiate with contractors to come up with a less expensive option, nearer to the engineer's estimate. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

NARD REPORT

Director's Report

Rasmussen said the NARD Board would meet June 15th in Gothenburg for the Basin Tour. He said he saw a lot of boats at Davis Creek over the weekend.

NRC REPORT

Commissioner's Report

No report.

RC&D REPORTS

Loup Basin RC&D

Rasmussen reported that the group met in North Loup at the Main Street Gallery. He said there will be a scrap tire collection on June 27th in Burwell. He said Game & Parks is tagging bats in the Chalk Mine near Scotia.

PrairieLand RC&D

No report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Koehlmoos announced that the NARD Basin Tour will be June 15-16, 2015, in Gothenburg.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Kruse declared the meeting adjourned at 6:27 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, June 25, 2015, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

Darwin B. Anderson
Secretary