

LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

January 28, 2016

Ord, Nebraska

The January 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 January 28, 2016. Chairman Citta called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Roll call was taken.

CALL TO ORDER

Directors in attendance

James C. Adams
Darwin B. Anderson
Joseph L. Citta, Jr., Chairman
N. Richard Hadenfeldt
Clifford P. Loseke
James C. Nelson
Dean J. Rasmussen
Dean G. Thede

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer
Beth Boesch
Virgil W. Gellermann
Gary A. Kruse
Matt Lukasiewicz
Alan D. Petersen
Gerald P. Smith
Henry J. Thoene, Secretary

Directors absent

Timothy E. Bartak
Michael P. Gutzmer
Darwin R. Sieh

James J. Eschliman, Vice Chairman
Randy Kauk

Staff in attendance

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

Russell G. Callan, Assistant General Manager
Rita A. Goldfish, Administrative Assistant
Tylr D. Naprstek, Water Modeling Coordinator
Cheryl K. Hornickel, Programs Assistant
Richard L. Woollen, NC District Forester
Brian Kolar, Water Programs Specialist

Guests in attendance

Bryce Bauer, LDC, NRCS, Ord

NOTICE OF OPEN MEETING LAW POSTING

Chairman Citta 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 Citta 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 the agenda was modified to include a letter of resignation.

Smith motioned, seconded by Boesch, 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 Citta asked for corrections and/or additions to the December 17, 2015, Board meeting minutes. None being heard, Chairman Citta ruled that the December 17, 2015, minutes would stand approved as submitted.

TREASURER’S REPORT

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

Koehlmoos highlighted bills for the new NRD HQ signs, the groundwater flow model, flowmeter cost-share, Pibel Lake renovation work, and other ongoing projects.

Rasmussen motioned, seconded by Petersen, to approve the January, 2016, Treasurer’s Report and pay all bills. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION

Chairman Citta directed the Board’s attention to the letter of resignation from Darwin Sieh in the Supplemental Agenda.

Smith motioned, seconded by Kruse, to accept the resignation of Darwin Sieh of Columbus from the Board of Directors and approve a resolution commending his service to the District and its constituents. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Koehlmoos said that Sieh's resignation vacancy will be posted in the newspapers and notification sent to the Secretary of State. He said Sieh's seat is up for election this year and the consensus of the Board was to allow the election process to move forward before considering appointment of a new Director.

FORESTER'S REPORT

North Central District Forester Richard Woollen said that the 2015 Nebraska Forest Service Annual Report was available online and passed around a hard copy for Board members to view.

Woollen said that there will be several tree care workshops around the state in 2016 and said that one will be held at the NRD Headquarters on March 3rd. He said that tree care inventory, emerald ash borer, and selection of trees would be some of the topics discussed.

NRCS REPORT

Bryce Bauer, Liaison DC, reported that he had attended a DC meeting in Lincoln recently. He said that the CSP deadline was the end of March. Bauer reported that four new pickups had been purchased for use in the District and that NRCS has mandated that 30% of the vehicle fleet be leased from dealers. He said two new leased vehicles will be arriving in April. He said the biologist was conducting CRP meetings around the District and attendance has been good. One meeting was held in Ord.

Bauer reported that the ranking deadline for CRP was January 29th. He said they would have around \$1.3 million to work with.

Bauer said that several NRCS staff would be attending a presentation by Gay Brown in Columbus on the 29th. Brown is a soil health/cover crop/no-till producer from North Dakota.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION REPORT

Election Filing Deadlines

Information & Education Coordinator Larry Schultz reported that incumbent candidates must file for re-election by February 16th and non-incumbents need to file by March 1st. Schultz directed the Board to the list of incumbents in the agenda and said that several have already filed for re-election. He said that since Beth Boesch was appointed prior to the election, she would be filing for a 2-year term.

NARD Washington, DC Conference

Schultz said that the conference would be held March 12-17. He passed around a sign-up sheet for directors who were planning to attend.

Adventure Camp about the Environment (ACE)

Schultz reported that ACE Camp would be held at Halsey on June 12-15. He said the camp is open to anyone who has completed the 6th, 7th, or 8th grades and \$100 scholarships would be provided to help with the cost.

Contests

Schultz reported that Lower Loup NRD would be hosting the State Land Judging Contest in 2016 and Upper Loup NRD is hosting the North Central Contest. He said Lower Loup NRD co-hosts the Central Region Envirothon at CCC in Columbus in March.

ASSISTANT MANAGER'S REPORT

Variance Committee

Assistant General Manager Russell Callan said the Variance Committee did not meet in January.

Water Resources Committee

Callan reported that the Water Resources Committee was cancelled in January due to snowfall.

Voluntary Integrated Management Plan Draft

Callan said that a rough draft of the plan has been received and will be given to both the Water Resources and Programs/Projects Committees to review in February. He said it would be part of the February Board meeting, and then the plan will be made public. He said there would not be another stakeholders meeting. Callan said that the hearing would be at the March Board meeting.

Pibel Lake Update

Tylr Naprstek, Water Modeling Coordinator, said he has made weekly visits to Pibel Lake and Frahm Construction had made a lot of progress. He gave a slide presentation on the work that has been done at the site. He showed photos of areas before work began, and then recent photo of the same locations. Photos included the sediment basin, dredge area, breakwater/bridge, the north and south fishing piers, spoilage area, boat dock, and auxiliary spillway.

Naprstek said that a bridge would eventually be installed, a trail developed, and playground equipment installed by the picnic shelter. He said an entrance kiosk/information center was being designed. Naprstek showed photos of a boat dock project that Hill and the field techs worked on at Pibel Lake.

Naprstek said fish kill had been minimal. Koehlmoos said oxygen levels had been checked frequently with good readings.

Hadenfeldt asked if the dredged material posed any type of nitrogen or phosphorus problems. Naprstek said a soil analysis was conducted during the watershed management plan phase and the levels found weren't a concern. He said the material was mainly organic and a sandy/silt consistency.

Columbus Area Water Resources Assessment Study Update

Tylr Naprstek gave a powerpoint presentation on the breakdown of the "draft" assessment study. He said there have been groundwater declines in the southeast part of Columbus, and some small groundwater gains in the northeast part of Columbus. He said the graphs were done with the use of the HDR model. He said they also put in a UNL Conservation & Survey Division's test hole to figure out the base of aquifer and the lithologic readings inside and outside the boundaries, and translated it in to a 3D model. He said it shows layering of the different types of substrates through the soil. Naprstek said the average well depth in southeast Columbus is about 70 feet.

Callan said the model should be completed by the end of April and will be very detailed. He said HDR sent a draft on feasibility of seven potential recharge projects and/or diversions for the area.

Naprstek said the 2014 static water level sites were plotted into the model.

Aerial AEM Data Grant

Naprstek said the AEM (Airborne Electromagnetics) Grant Project the LLNRD is participating with the ENWRA group has been preliminarily approved for funding through the state's water sustainability fund. This is a coalition of six eastern Nebraska NRDs utilizing AEM to determine aquifer depths, variability and composition of overlying materials. The primary area targeted will be Platte County in the Columbus vicinity, west to the Nance County line and will include the eastern portion of Area 28.

Thermal Imaging Study in South Loup River Basin

Naprstek presented a powerpoint program updating the Board on the thermal imaging study being conducted in the South Loup River Basin. He said the area of the South Loup River from St. Michael up to the headwaters was flown by Cornerstone Mapping the first part of November. A temperature analysis was done and groundwater/stream water gauges were installed at high-intensity sites to monitor head differences. The goal is to locate places where the groundwater head is higher than the streambank, indicating a major influx of groundwater into the river. He said areas where there isn't a major influx of groundwater into the river may be areas to target for recharge projects to return water to the river.

Koehlmoos said this study and the Wood River Study with Central Platte NRD were part of the watershed management process.

Naprstek said the next South Loup Watershed stakeholders meeting for the watershed area would be in Pleasanton on February 4th. He said the plan is about 53% complete. He said DEQ and EPA would be involved later.

PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Duncan East IPA

Callan reported that Water Programs Specialist Brian Kolar had surveyed the entire Duncan East IPA project. Callan said the project looked good overall, with only minor issues. He said there were places where pivots have crossed the laterals, and sedimentation was seen in some culverts.

Callan said that the preferred time to work on the project is during the winter. He said staff was looking at mowing equipment. He said most of the work could probably be done by NRD personnel, but any major dirt work would be contracted out.

Ruby's Slough

Koehlmoos said that Lee Blaser wanted to address the Programs/Projects Committee regarding some issues about Ruby's Slough. Koehlmoos said staff and some directors have visited the site.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Litigation Update (Prokop & Koch)

Koehlmoos said he had nothing to report to the Board.

New Hires

Koehlmoos said there were 16 applications for the secretary position in Columbus and 3 candidates were interviewed. Sandi Beiermann of Columbus has been hired and will begin work on January 29th. She had previously worked for the Loup Public Power District.

Lower Platte River Basin Water Conveyance Study

Koehlmoos reported that Lower Platte South NRD is sending out requests for proposal to look at waters outside their district per their IMP. He said one of the objectives was to look internally and externally to see if excess waters could be picked up for future water use within their basin. Koehlmoos highlighted the following potential water supplies:

- Streamflows generated by retiming canal recharges in the Middle Loup Subbasin;
- Streamflows generated by reduced alluvial groundwater pumping;
- Streamflows generated by groundwater augmentation pumping
- Alluvial aquifer recharge by sandpit storage

Koehlmoos said that Lower Loup's IMP draft also says that Lower Loup NRD will be looking for outside sources of excess flows, perhaps from the Platte or the upper portion of the upper Loup, or other places.

Koehlmoos said that he would like to talk with attorney Dave Cookson to have him review our Groundwater Management Area Rules and Regulations regarding water use outside our District.

Adams motioned, seconded by Anderson, to contract with attorney Dave Cookson to review the NRD's rules and regulations and discuss legal representation on matters regarding future water issues. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Non-Action Reports

Koehlmoos said the Executive Committee met before the Board meeting and discussed committees. He said if any Director wanted to switch committees to write their selection down and give it to Goldfish. He said there are 10 members on both the Water Resources and Programs/Projects Committees. Koehlmoos said he would contact directors of any committee changes. Citta said if anyone did not want to be on a committee, they should let staff know.

NARD REPORT

Director's Report

Rasmussen reported that the NARD Board met in Lincoln at the Legislative Conference. He said health insurance premiums may need to be raised. He said they will meet in Lincoln on March 6th to finalized the budget. Rasmussen said he attended a forum on the open meeting law and narrated a forum on telephones.

Recap from Participants of the NARD Legislative Conference

Koehlmoos said there wasn't much controversy on legislation. He said action was taken on the Paid Family Medical Leave Insurance Act and the Nebraska Tree Recovery Program.

Koehlmoos said the conference was very good. He said the Attorney General, the DNR Director, the DEQ Director, Dept. of Ag Director, NRCS personnel, and Senators Sullivan, Gloor, Williams, and Friesen attended the Central Platte and Lower Loup dinner.

Citta said the major themes the senators commented on were water issues and property tax relief.

NRC REPORT

Commissioner's Report

Hadenfeldt reported that NRC got a list of 27 project applications. He said the projects would be scored individually by each member of the scoring committee. The committee will meet three

times in March and then make a recommendation to the Commission. A final ranking will be made in April.

Hadenfeldt said there was \$33 million to utilize, but Omaha would be getting 10% of that. He said there would be around \$2.8 million available for small projects, leaving around \$26 million for major projects.

RC&D REPORTS

Loup Basin RC&D

Rasmussen reported that the RC&D meeting was snowed out. He said the executive board had met in Ord.

PrairieLand RC&D

Gellermann said there was no business to report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Koehlmoos announced that excused absences will be discussed next month.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Citta declared the meeting adjourned at 6:40 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 February 25, 2016, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

Henry J. Thoene
Secretary