

LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

April 28, 2016

Ord, Nebraska

The April 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 April 28, 2016. Chairman Citta called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Directors in attendance

James C. Adams
Darwin B. Anderson
Beth Boesch
James J. Eschliman, Vice Chairman
Michael P. Gutzmer
Gary A. Kruse
James C. Nelson
Dean J. Rasmussen
Dean G. Thede

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer
Timothy E. Bartak
Joseph L. Citta, Jr., Chairman
Virgil W. Gellermann
N. Richard Hadenfeldt
Clifford P. Loseke
Alan D. Petersen
Gerald P. Smith
Henry J. Thoene, Secretary

Directors absent

Randy Kauk

Matt Lukasiewicz

Staff in attendance

Leon "Butch" Koehlmoos, General Manager
Irene F. Kreifels, Financial Secretary
Larry D. Schultz, I&E Coordinator
Anne Freeman, Water Programs Secretary
Richard L. Woollen, North Cent. Dist. Forester
Jason Moudry, Water Programs Specialist

Russell G. Callan, Assistant General Manager
Rita A. Goldfish, Administrative Assistant
Tylr D. Naprstek, Water Modeling Coordinator
Cheryl K. Hornickel, Programs Assistant
Dell R. Harris, Water Resources Specialist

Guest 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.

VERIFICATION OF MEETING NOTICE, ADOPTION OF AGENDA, AND ROLL CALL

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 “LLNRD Aquifer Mapping – Aerial Electromagnetic Survey” was added to the agenda under Manager’s Report. He said that item would add a projected bill to the Treasurer’s Report so the project can be started.

Chairman Citta said that roll call would be taken, then excused absences would be addressed.

Roll call was taken to verify meeting notice and adopt modified agenda. Directors present: Adams, Amsberry, Anderson, Bartak, Boesch, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Gutzmer, Hadenfeldt, Kruse, Loseke, Nelson, Petersen, Rasmussen, Smith, Thede, and Thoene. Directors absent: Kauk and Lukasiewicz.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Koehlmoos stated that Directors Kauk and Lukasiewicz had requested to be excused from the meeting.

Boesch motioned, seconded by Adams, to excuse absent directors. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

MINUTES

Chairman Citta asked for corrections and/or additions to the March 24, 2016, Board meeting minutes. None being heard, Chairman Citta ruled that the March 24, 2016, 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 work being done on the South Loup Watershed Management Plan, thermal imaging in the Loup River Basin, Davis Creek maintenance including another dumpster, and Pibel Lake maintenance.

Callan said a Bobcat forestry cutter/grinder had been purchased for cedar tree control at Davis Creek and the Aagaard Farm. He said Woollen would be using it for demonstrations.

Eschliman motioned, seconded by Smith, to approve the April, 2016, Treasurer’s Report and pay all bills. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Adams, Amsberry, Anderson, Bartak, Boesch, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Gutzmer, Hadenfeldt, Kruse, Loseke,

Nelson, Petersen, Rasmussen, Smith, and Thede. Director abstaining: Thoene. Directors absent: Kauk and Lukasiewicz.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

FORESTER'S REPORT

North Central District Forester Richard Woollen showed slides of the Conservation Tree Program, including the process of growing/lifting/grading trees at the nursery, distribution to NRDs, taking orders/planting design, site prep, tree planting, and drip irrigation.

Woollen said that Bessey Nursery was one of the first nurseries in the nation and has been an asset to the state and area. He said the sandy loam soil is good for growing trees. He said some trees are lifted in the fall and freezer-stored during the winter, then thawed and planted in the spring.

NRCS REPORT

Bryce Bauer, Liaison DC, explained the EQIP process and the four set fund codes that NRCS works with in ranking applications –

- 1) pivot fund code (insufficient water)
- 2) soil erosion fund code (cover crop)
- 3) livestock production fund code (pipelines, tanks)
- 4) degraded plant condition fund code (brush management)

Bauer said that some native grass reestablishment restoration projects have been done. He said there have not been many applications for restoring wetlands for wildlife and mitigation purposes.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION REPORT

Hazard Mitigation Plan

Information & Education Coordinator Larry Schultz reported that staff had met with JEO to get the plan update process underway. He said a kick-off meeting with all the representatives from communities, special districts, and other organizations involved with hazard mitigation will be held June 9th at the LLNRD Headquarters. He said invitations would be sent. There will also be planning meetings held across the District. Schultz said that JEO has established a project web site at <http://jeo.com/llhmp> which provides general information about the project, contacts, and the ability for the public to offer input.

Schultz said the planning process would continue through the end of the year, the review period for the plan would then take three to six months, with the final plan being ready to go by December, 2017. The plan covers a period of five years.

Koehlmoos said that the Lower Loup NRD had not received any requests or sponsored any projects since the first mitigation plan process began in 2011. He said JEO would be working with the communities and contacts to educate them about the process and how to get projects started.

State Envirothon

Schultz said that Ord and St. Paul High Schools each had teams that qualified for the State Envirothon Contest held in Nebraska City on April 27th. He said he helped in the scoring room. He said the school qualifying for the North American Contest in Ontario, Canada, is Omaha Concordia.

Water Explore & Children's Groundwater Festival

Schultz said he presented the "Water Drop Relay" at the Water Explore event in Columbus. He said the Children's Groundwater Festival would be held in Grand Island on May 10th where he would again lead the "Water Drop Relay" session.

ASSISTANT MANAGER'S REPORT

Variance Committee

Assistant Manager Russell Callan reported that the Variance Committee met prior to the Board meeting. Thoene said that the Central Community College in Columbus was seeking to drill a well for fire protection and to irrigate a soccer field on the campus. Thoene said the Committee thought it was a good project and suspended the two-meeting requirement.

Thoene motioned, seconded by Boesch, to suspend the Committee's two hearings rule and approve the request of the Central Community College for a 500 gpm well for public safety and to irrigate the 6.5 acre soccer field with the condition that only the soccer field would be irrigated and the well would not be used for crop production. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Water Resources Committee

Callan reported that the Water Resources Committee met on April 19th.

Columbus Area Water Resources Assessment Study Update

Callan showed a powerpoint presentation of the assessment study that is being conducted around Columbus and the groundwater declines they are experiencing. He said that he and Pat Engelbert of HDR will be giving the presentation to the Christopher's Cove Association meeting on May 1st.

Callan said the study consists of looking at the area's hydrology, groundwater, potential recharge projects, water budget, and development of a detailed groundwater model. He said an inventory of the floodplain and storm water data was entered into the project.

Callan said that the Lost Creek Channel and Christopher's Cove may be good sites for potential recharge projects in the future due to infiltration rates.

Citta felt that there were some projects that could be done that would influence the groundwater declines in the Columbus area

Lillian Creek Dam

Callan said that the RFP for the design and feasibility of the Lillian Creek Dam was sent out last week. Callan said he has received phone calls from consultants wanting to set up meetings to discuss the project.

Voluntary Integrated Management Plan

Koehlmoos said that the Voluntary IMP had been signed by Director Jeff Fassett of DNR, with a couple minor changes.

Pibel Lake Update

Water Modeling Coordinator Tylr Naprstek reported that all in-lake construction had been completed at Pibel Lake. He said the contractor was working on landscaping and a few finishing tasks. He said recent rains have filled the lake to 17 cfs, with the average cfs prior to construction being 3 cfs. Naprstek showed a few photos of the completed project.

Naprstek said Moudry and Hill had installed water quality monitoring equipment on one of the fishing piers. He said that a number of readings will be available on a website.

ELM Update

Naprstek said the computer is still running the model.

PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Section 14 Project South of Monroe Request

Kruse said the chairman of the Platte County Board of Supervisors had approached the Committee a second time for financial assistance on a bank erosion problem that threatens a portion of an oiled road south of Monroe. The total project cost is nearly \$320,000.00. Kruse said the Corps of Engineers would finance 65% of the project and the county would be responsible for the remaining costs. The county is seeking 15% financial assistance from the NRD, amounting to \$48,000.00. Kruse said construction would begin in the fall.

Kruse motioned, seconded by Rasmussen, that the Lower Loup NRD contribute 15% of the total estimated cost of the Section 14 Project South of Monroe, not to exceed \$48,000.00, contingent upon Platte County's commitment to provide funding support of the project. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Powerhouse Trail – City of Columbus & CART Group

Kruse reported that representatives of CART met with the Committee to share their proposal for a two-mile portion of the walking trail to connect with an existing trail in Columbus. He said the cost would be approximately \$1.5 million and the trail probably wouldn't be built until 2017-2019.

Kruse said the Committee tabled this item and asked the group to return at a later time because, according to NRD guidelines for funding projects, any approval for participation in the project would be good for only a two-year period of time.

Duncan East Drainage IPA Maintenance

Kruse said that a part of the Duncan East Drainage Project known as Ruby Slough has silted and filled in over time. He said Lee Blaser and Jason Mueller have visited with the Committee on two occasions requesting help to dig out the slough. Kruse said the Committee voted to table this topic until the NRD could contact NRCS in Wahoo to see what could be done to assist in this project.

Callan said he had recently talked with NRCS personnel in Wahoo and they thought that the Blaser portion could be dug out and the sediment distributed on his ground. They said it couldn't be done with the Mueller portion, though. Also, Callan said the project would have to be discussed with the Corps of Engineers.

Kevin Brown Hike & Bike Trail

Kruse mentioned that the Committee heard a proposal for this project near Taylor and referred the Board to the minutes of the Committee meeting in the agenda.

Village of Taylor – Creek Clearing, Snagging & Renovation

Kruse said that the Committee heard a proposal for this drainage project, also near Taylor, and referred the Board to the minutes of the Committee meeting in the agenda.

Variable Rate Irrigation Project – Elgin, Nebraska

Kruse reported on a possible UNL project involving variable rate irrigation on a pivot near Elgin. Initially, four NRDs would be involved in the project. Koehlmoos said, though, that Upper Elkhorn NRD will not be participating in the project because it's a windshield wiper pivot and there would be no nitrogen monitoring. He said Lower Elkhorn would support the project, but only if the other three NRDs participated. Koehlmoos said it was unlikely that Lower Loup NRD would participate if the Elkhorn NRDs were out. Koehlmoos thought that UNL would probably pull their request.

Chief Standing Bear Trail

Koehlmoos reported that Senator Deb Fischer was wanting input on the Chief Standing Bear Trail. Callan had visited with Senator Fischer's staff about the project while in Washington, DC, in

March. Koehlmoos said the Committee supports a 'virtual trail', but would need more information before the NRD would support the National Parks Service acquiring land for the project. Koehlmoos referred the Board to a letter in the supplemental agenda that he sent to Senator Fischer.

Davis Creek Recreation Area Expansion

Callan reported that advertisements would be put in papers next week for design and bids on the expansion project. Naprstek said that a formal walk-through would be held May 16th for potential contractors. He said bid opening would be at 3:00 p.m. on May 24th. Koehlmoos said the consultant would confirm the bids and they would be presented to the Board on May 26th.

Koehlmoos said that access signs to Davis Creek would be put up along the road.

Callan said that the interlocal agreement for maintenance of the Davis Creek road had been signed by the county board.

Lillian Creek Dam Project

Koehlmoos reported that the RFPs have been sent and are due back by May 24th.

Pibel Lake Renovation Update

Koehlmoos reported that some large trees needed to be removed from the Pibel Lake area that posed hazardous issues. He said the location and size of the trees would make removal more difficult.

Kruse motioned, seconded by Smith, to approve the removal of large trees from the Pibel Lake Recreation Area at a cost of \$39,000.00, and that Loup Valley Tree Service in Arcadia, Nebraska, undertake the project. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Erosion & Sediment Control Plan

Koehlmoos said that a template of the plan had been done to add "gully erosion" and that the plan will be sent to DNR for their review. A public hearing would be held in a couple of months to adopt the rules.

Voluntary Integrated Management Plan Update

This item was discussed previously.

Columbus Public School Pond

A pre-application for possible funding of a landscaping/pond project had been received.

Village of Wolbach

Koehlmoos reported that the Village of Wolbach had requested a review of the proposed step replacement project in their community park. He said that the Committee had declined assistance for the project in 2015 and he wrote a letter to the Village stating that the Committee hadn't changed its standing.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Lower Loup Aquifer Mapping – Aerial Electromagnetic Survey

Koehlmoos stated that the \$250,000.00 grant was approved for the study in the Platte County area. He said contracts need to be signed and \$130,000.00 sent to Aqua Geo Frameworks, LLC to get the mapping started. Koehlmoos explained that the mapping involves flying a helicopter with a large “dream catcher” type structure that maps the aquifer by sending electromagnetic pulses into the ground.

Boesch motioned, seconded by Gutzmer, to proceed with the contracts for the Lower Loup NRD aquifer mapping/aerial electromagnetic survey, authorize the General Manager's signature on the contract and other paperwork, and submit \$130,000.00 to Aqua Geo Frameworks, LLC. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Litigation Update

Koehlmoos reported that there might be another possible complaint against Prokop for non-reporting in Area 28. He said that Callan and Lorenz will review the discrepancies.

New Hires

Koehlmoos said that Zach Wilson and Christy Berghorst were hired as tree planters. He said that possibly six high school/college students would be hired to help in the field and office during the summer.

NARD REPORT

Director's Report

Rasmussen reported that NRDs had 50 bills in the Legislature this year, and 37 of them are indefinitely postponed. Koehlmoos said the electronic voting can now be an option at Board meetings.

NRC REPORT

Commissioner's Report

Hadenfeldt reported that three of the eight major projects were approved for Water Sustainability Funds. He said all the small projects were approved and there was money to approve the

big projects, also. He explained the scoring process and some projects. Hadenfeldt said the next Commission meeting would be in June.

RC&D REPORTS

Loup Basin RC&D

Rasmussen reported that there will be tire collections in Loup City and Ord in June.

PrairieLand RC&D

Gellermann said there was no report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Citta declared the meeting adjourned at 7:17 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 May 26, 2016, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

Henry J. Thoene
Secretary