

LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

June 23, 2016

Ord, Nebraska

The June 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 June 23, 2016. Chairman Citta called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Directors in attendance

James C. Adams
Darwin B. Anderson
Joseph L. Citta, Jr., Chairman
Virgil W. Gellermann
N. Richard Hadenfeldt
Gary A. Kruse
Matt Lukasiewicz
Alan D. Petersen
Gerald P. Smith
Henry J. Thoene, Secretary

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer
Beth Boesch
James J. Eschliman, Vice Chairman
Michael P. Gutzmer
Randy Kauk
Clifford P. Loseke
James C. Nelson
Dean J. Rasmussen
Dean G. Thede

Director absent

Timothy Bartak

Staff in attendance

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

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

Mark Sintek, RC, NRCS, Ord
Pat Engelbert, HDR, Omaha

Donna Anderson, Columbus

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, and there were no modifications to the agenda

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

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Koehlmoos stated that Director Bartak had requested to be excused from the meeting and that Director Gutzmer had called and would be arriving to the meeting late but was on his way.

Adams motioned, seconded by Anderson, 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 May 26, 2016, Board meeting minutes. Lukasiewicz mentioned that Vice Chairman Eschliman presided at the May meeting. Hadenfeldt said that the NRC meeting would be held on June 27th and not on the 28th.

Smith motioned, seconded by Gellermann, to approve the minutes as corrected. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

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 regarding the forester’s salary, manager’s meeting expenses that will be reimbursed, professional fees, tree seedlings purchased, computer servers, and consultant and contractor expenses.

Kruse motioned, seconded by Eschliman, to approve the June, 2016, Treasurer's Report and pay all bills. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Adams, Amsberry, Anderson, Boesch, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Loseke, Lukasiewicz, Petersen, Rasmussen, Smith, Thede, and Thoene. Director abstaining: Nelson. Directors absent: Bartak and Gutzmer.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

FORESTER'S REPORT

North Central District Forester Richard Woollen reported that an NRD community forestry project, involving caliper and seeding trees and a drip irrigation system, was completed for the Arnold Golf Course Association. Koehlmoos said the project cost was around \$14,000.00, in which the NRD cost-shared \$5,000.00.

Woollen showed a video on the emerald ash borer which has been discovered in Omaha. He said there are informational resources available in printed form and on a dedicated website at: nfs.unl.edu/Nebraska-eab.

Woollen said the emerald ash borer is usually transported in firewood and it takes the borers 10-15 years to kill an ash tree. He said the larvae dig the holes in the bark and the adults eat the foliage. He said treatment options include injections which cost \$100/tree/year. He said, in time, the injections can be damaging to the tree. Woollen said that Lower Loup NRD has not offered green ash seedlings in their inventory for 3 years.

NRCS REPORT

Mark Sintek, RC in Ord, showed a video of Gabe Brown, a North Dakota farmer who has seen many benefits of planting cover crops to help regenerate the soil. Sintek said he had attended a presentation by Brown in Columbus in February and found it to be very informative. Sintek said that Brown will be speaking in Omaha on November 29 through December 2, and said that Brown had accepted his invitation to speak in Ord on December 5th at the Trotter Event Center. Sintek said he will have more details when he meets with the Programs/Projects Committee in July. Sintek encouraged directors to attend the presentation in December.

Gellermann said he also attended Brown's presentation in Columbus and said it was very interesting.

Sintek said there will be a couple demonstration plots in Lower Loup NRD, so field days will be planned.

COLUMBUS WATER ASSESSMENT FINAL REPORTING

Pat Engelbert of HDR presented a report on the Columbus Water Assessment. He gave a project overview which included an inventory of floodplain and storm water data; development of an overall water budget; description of hydrogeology; development of a three-dimensional subsurface model; identification and ranking of recharge projects; development of local scale groundwater model; and identification of potential funding and technical resources.

Engelbert said that a lot of water goes by Columbus from the Loup Power District's tailrace canal, the Loup River, and the Platte River. Regarding hydrogeology, he said that there is sand/gravel underneath Columbus which allows for good infiltration to recharge the aquifer. But, he noted, there has been a decline in the water table in and around Columbus. He reported that the Lost Creek Channel and Christopher's Cove would be possible aquifer recharge locations, and that water sources for these areas could be the BD plant, Columbus Wastewater Treatment Plant and ADM.

Engelbert showed graphics that illustrated a couple monitoring wells that are located within the groundwater monitoring area. He said the measurements taken and what the groundwater model was predicting were within 1½ feet. He said that they had confidence that their groundwater model was calibrated because it was modeling the trends well.

Citta mentioned that he had been approached by homeowners in the northern part of Columbus who have sump pumps that have been running nonstop, and had inquired about a dewatering project.

Callan said the Lost Creek project would have less of an impact to the people north of Christopher's Cove, than the Christopher's Cove project.

Koehlmoos asked about utilizing excess storm water runoff, in addition to water from BD and ADM for recharge potential. Engelbert said storm water runoff wouldn't make much of an impact.

Kruse asked if there would be any financial value for the City of Columbus with this project. Engelbert answered that with an increase in the water table, the municipal, commercial, and industrial wells would be pumping against less head, so there would be pumping efficiencies and economic benefit. He said the presentation had been given to city officials who viewed the project as a positive endeavor in that it will raise the water table.

Koehlmoos said that an entire water assessment was done across the city, and HDR put together the water model which will be helpful to the district, county, and city in making future water recommendations. He said a lot of good information has been compiled.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION REPORT

Hazard Mitigation Plan

Information & Education Coordinator Larry Schultz reported that 16 people attended the workshop that had been held in Ord on the 9th. He said the planning sessions will be held in Genoa on July 5th, Broken Bow on July 6th, and Ord on July 7th. He said the NRD will host the meetings, sponsor the plan, and will be a participant at one of the meetings to include hazard mitigation for the District. Schultz said that the communities of Palmer, Ravenna, and Pleasanton have requested to be moved from Lower Loup's plan to Central Platte's plan so the counties wouldn't be split by two plans.

Schultz reported that the quarterly "In The Loup" newsletter and the Area 28 "Water Matters" newsletter were mailed.

Adventure Camp about the Environment (ACE)

Schultz reported that 42 campers participated in ACE camp at Halsey earlier in June. He said there were presenters from across the state. He said he led a soils activity and one on bottle rockets, and Jason Moudry led a session on water creatures.

ASSISTANT MANAGER'S REPORT

Variance Committee

Assistant Manager Russell Callan reported that the Variance Committee met prior to the Board meeting.

Thoene reported that Gary Rasmussen was using livestock lagoon water to irrigate uncertified acres. He said the Committee felt Rasmussen already had the ability to manage his lagoon under the current rules by pumping his lagoons when critical levels were reached. Rasmussen would need to submit a plan to the NRD, and could then notify the NRD when those levels were reached and he needed to pump. Thoene said that the Committee will continue to discuss the rules and regulations and make any modifications that need to be made.

Thoene motioned, seconded by Smith, to deny the variance request from Gary Rasmussen. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Adams, Amsberry, Anderson, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Gutzmer, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Loseke, Lukasiewicz, Nelson, Petersen, Rasmussen, Smith Thede, and Thoene. Director abstaining: Boesch. Director absent: Bartak.

Water Resources Committee

Callan reported that the Water Resources Committee met on June 14th.

New Irrigated Acres

Smith said new irrigated acres were discussed and the Committee decided to table the discussion until July.

Area 28 Flowmeter Update

Smith reported that only one system remains in Area 28 that needs a flowmeter. Naprstek said that the application for that flowmeter has been received by the NRD.

Pibel Lake Update

Water Modeling Coordinator Tylr Naprstek, reported that he had received a phone call from DEQ inquiring about the status of the sedimentation basin at Pibel Lake. Naprstek showed Google Earth pictures of Pibel Lake presently and from 2009.

Naprstek reported that there was some seepage in the Pibel outlet structure that would require additional work. He said it may include replacing pipe and pushing the structure further out into the lake.

Koehlmoos said that replacing the pipe could be a \$250,000.00 project, which would include pulling the old pipe out. Koehlmoos said that staff recommends the extension on the inlet side and moving it 10-12 feet away from the road so it's not in the ditch. He said the engineer's estimate was about \$200.00 per foot for the pipe. He said another option would be to install a liner. Koehlmoos said the leaking pipe situation was not a part of the renovation project.

Naprstek said that some of the larger cottonwood trees are being removed. He pointed out the fishing piers, handicap parking, docks, and the access bridge.

PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Kevin Brown Hiking and Biking Trail

Kruse reported that the trail would be approximately 3 miles long, have a concrete width of 8 feet, and cost approximately \$264,201.00. He said the Committee looked at different trails that Lower Loup has participated in the past and reported that the NRD contributed 10% of the total project cost on a 10-foot wide trail, and 5% of the total project cost on an 8-foot wide trail. The trail would lead from Taylor north to the North Loup River along Highway 183.

Callan said that the trail won't be 10 feet wide due to right-of-way issues.

Kruse motioned, seconded by Rasmussen, to provide funding of the Kevin Brown Hiking and Biking Trail up to 5% of the total project cost, not to exceed \$15,000.00. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Koehlmoos emphasized that the NRD's contribution to this project would be subject to the trail group acquiring the other financing.

Riparian Invasive Weed Management Project

Callan said the NRD was approached to allow the Sandhills Weed Management Area to be on the NRD's list of participating weed management areas which may request available funding assistance from the Lower Loup NRD, totaling \$10,000.00 per year. He said if the weed management area received a grant, they could come to the NRD for a matching portion. If they had a project that exceeded that portion, they could bring it to the Programs/Project Committee for consideration. Callan said that the Sandhills WMA has the largest area in the Lower Loup NRD.

Kruse motioned, seconded by Boesch, to add Sandhills Weed Management Area to the fiscal budget to allow that weed management area to request funding for projects. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Duncan East Drainage IPA Maintenance

Callan said staff has been in contact with the Corps of Engineers for a meeting to discuss what the effects would be to pull the sheet piling on the old Ruby's Slough project. He said more updates will be coming.

Davis Creek Recreation Area Expansion

Callan reported that the expansion project would include the construction of a boat ramp, a fish cleaning station, and an RV dump station.

Lillian Creek Dam Project

Callan said that three bid proposals for the Lillian Creek Dam Project Feasibility Study were received and ranked. He said that HDR had modeling and water budgeting background. Kruse said that the feasibility study would be the only way to get an idea of what the project would entail and what could be provided by the project.

Callan said that the feasibility study would begin in July/August and the results would be in June, 2017.

Citta questioned the \$50,000 bid difference. Callan responded that past work HDR has done played a big part in staff's recommendation. He said Lower Loup NRD has been working with HDR on the Lower Platte Basin water availability, and Jesse Bradley who is with the Platte Water Group has been arguing for the State of Nebraska for the past several years on water transfers. Callan said the modeling was an important factor in the final ranking.

Nelson asked about the flow in Lillian Creek. Callan answered that Lillian Creek is an intermittent stream as it consists of storm water. So if there's a storm, the creek will flow.

Eschliman motioned, seconded by Gutzmer, to select HDR to conduct the feasibility study for the Lillian Creek Dam Project at a cost of \$249,967.00. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Boesch, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Loseke, Lukasiewicz, Nelson, Petersen, Rasmussen, Thede, & Thoene. Directors voting no: Adams, Anderson, and Smith. Director absent: Bartak.

Erosion & Sediment Control Plan

Callan said a template is being developed to redo the Erosion and Sediment Control Plan rules. He said that when the template is finished, the rules will need to be reviewed and adopted.

MANAGER'S REPORT

NET Platte River Time Lapse Video Project – NARD

Koehlmoos reported that Dean Edson of NARD is working on an educational project on the lower Platte River. Koehlmoos said that about 13 NRDs that have expressed an interest in the effort that will place time-lapse cameras throughout the Platte River Basin to capture the changes in the river over time. He said 6 packages have already been developed, and there are 6 more to do.

Koehlmoos said the NARD Board approved up to \$2,000.00 per year for the next 3 years to share with local districts that are willing to participate in the project. He said the contribution from each of the 13 interested districts would be around \$1,800.00 per district per year for the next three years to participate in the development of the educational materials.

Koehlmoos said the funding request was a total of \$25,000 this budget year from the NARD and participating NRDs. He wondered if Lower Loup was interested in participating.

Gutzmer motioned, seconded by Adams, that the Lower Loup NRD contribute \$1,800.00 for the next three years for the NET Platte River Time Lapse Educational Project. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Adams, Amsberry, Anderson, Boesch, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Gutzmer, Kauk, Kruse, Loseke, Lukasiewicz, Petersen, Rasmussen, Smith, Thede, and Thoene. Directors voting no: Hadenfeldt and Nelson. Director absent: Bartak.

Electronic Voting

Item tabled.

Litigation Update

Item tabled.

New Hires

Koehlmoos said that Mitchell Glause had been hired to collect water samples in the Fullerton area.

FY 2017 BUDGET WORKSHOP #1

Koehlmoos directed the Board to the budget information included in the agenda. He said he met with the Executive Committee for salary negotiations on June 17th and said the Committee had a recommendation. Citta suggested that since personnel and salaries would be discussed, he would like the Board to meet in Executive Session to discuss salaries with the Executive Committee and answer questions, then make the recommendation.

Smith motioned, seconded by Amsberry, to go into Executive Session to discuss the staff salaries. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

The Board went into executive session at 7:06 p.m.

Eschliman motioned, seconded by Gutzmer, to come out of Executive Session. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:35 p.m.

Smith motioned, seconded by Adams, to increase base salary by 2.5% and provide an additional \$51,892.86 for the General Manager's discretion. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Eschliman motioned, seconded by Boesch, to increase the General Manager's salary by 3%. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Koehlmoos continued with the budget and said the figures listed in the agenda were estimates since the numbers weren't in for June yet. He said the books will be closed next month.

Code 405 – Auto & Truck Expense - \$75,000

Code 167 – Auto, Trucks, and Other Equipment - \$190,000

Koehlmoos said staff is hoping to sell the 2008 Ford pickup, the 2003 Ford quad cab pickup, 1980 JD gas tractor, 1969 JD diesel tractor, 4000 Ford tractor, and the 2002 Arctic Cat. Staff is recommending the following purchases: two pickups to replace the ones being sold, a front-assist Case tractor or equivalent, and look for a backhoe.

Code 407 – Directors Expenses - \$52,000

Code 409 – Directors Per Diem - \$32,500

Code 413 – Dues & Memberships - \$75,000

Code 417 – Personnel Expenses - \$45,000

Code 419 – Fees & Licenses - \$52,000

Code 421 – Public Information, Education, and Promotion - \$75,000

Code 421 – Bonds - \$500

Code 425 – Insurance - \$45,000

Koehlmoos said that new group insurance was added for directors, and insurance for 2 new vehicles. He said a shop/rec assistant position will be added.

Code 426 – Chemigation - \$7,000

Code 431 – Legal Notices - \$12,000

Code 432 – Miscellaneous Expenses - \$15,000

Code 433 – Office Supplies and Expenses - \$28,000

Code 169 – Office Equipment - \$45,000

Code 436 – Employment Security - \$5,500

Code 437 – Postage - \$35,000

Code 439 – Professional Services - \$50,000

Code 452 – Telephone - \$12,000

Code 453 – Utilities - \$31,000

Code 463 – Building Maintenance - \$20,500

Code 213 – Loan Repayment - \$1,000,000

Code 464 – Farm Account - \$15,000

Code 467 & 454 – Davis Creek Recreation Area & Maintenance - \$1,551,035

Code 479 & 454 – Pibel Lake Recreation Area & Maintenance - \$212,500

It was the consensus of the Board to add \$100,000 for the replacement of the tubes.

Code 468 – Corners for Wildlife - \$0

Code 469 – Wildlife Habitat Program - \$35,000

Code 475 – Buffer Strip Program - \$170,002

Code 462 – Arboretum Budget - \$9,500

Koehlmoos said there's a part of the arboretum that could be used for a dog park. He also mentioned the possibility of developing a better parking area near the arboretum.

Eschliman motioned, seconded by Smith, to tentatively approve the first half of the FY 2017 Budget. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

NARD REPORT

Director's Report

Rasmussen announced that Dick Hadenfeldt had been chosen Director of the Year. Rasmussen reported that Dean Edson had gone to Pierre South Dakota to explain NRDs to their legislators. He said insurance rates will increase 6.5% and dental rates will increase 3.2%.

Annual Basin Tour

Gellermann reported that the Basin Tour was very good and the group saw many storm water retention facilities that they turned in to recreation areas, saw a lot of conservation work and wetlands reconstruction. He said they visited Lazy Horse Vineyard in the Tobias area and that it has nice camping facilities. He said some projects were completed through the hazard mitigation program.

Loseke said there are a lot of problems with groundwater contamination in the area toured.

NRC REPORT

Commissioner's Report

Hadenfeldt reported that the Rules Committee is still meeting to go over the rules for the Water Sustainability Fund, but any changes made won't apply to this year's applications. He said there were ten people on the Committee – five are from NRDs and five are not.

RC&D REPORTS

Loup Basin RC&D

Rasmussen reported that there will be tire collections Friday in Ord and Saturday in Loup City. He said the RC&D is working on a grant for \$41,000. He said there was discussion at the meeting about jetties on the Cedar River.

PrairieLand RC&D

Gellermann said there was no report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Koehlmoos said that the Committee meetings will be July 19th at Pibel Lake.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Citta declared the meeting adjourned at 8:21 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 July 28, 2016, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

Henry J. Thoene
Secretary