

LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

July 21, 2016

Ord, Nebraska

The July 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 July 21, 2016. Chairman Citta called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Directors in attendance

James C. Adams
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

Darwin B. Anderson
James J. Eschliman, Vice Chairman
Michael P. Gutzmer
Randy Kauk
Clifford P. Loseke
James C. Nelson
Dean J. Rasmussen
Dean G. Thede

Director absent

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer
Beth Boesch

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
Ann Freeman, Water Programs Secretary

Guest in attendance

Bryce Bauer, LDC, NRCS, Ord
Eugene Bredthauer, Ord

Janet Sanders, Loup Basin RC&D, Burwell

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, Anderson, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Gutzmer, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Loseke, Lukaszewicz, Nelson, Petersen, Rasmussen, Smith, Thede, and Thoene. Directors absent: Amsberry, Bartak, and Boesch.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Koehlmoos stated that Directors Amsberry, Bartak, and Boesch had requested to be excused from the meeting.

Adams motioned, seconded by Gutzmer, 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 June 23, 2016, Board meeting minutes. None being heard, Chairman Citta ruled that the minutes would stand approved as circulated.

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 LLNRD’s yearly insurance premium, the UNL-sponsored SENSE program, NARD membership dues, and Aqua Geo Frameworks consulting fees.

Koehlmoos said there would be a Project SENSE Demonstration Day in Duncan on August 3rd in which UNL will be giving the results of the SENSE program. Koehlmoos said a sprayer machine was revamped, sensors were put on to measure the greenness of the crop, and then variable rates of fertilizer were administered.

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Janet Sanders of the Loup Basin RC&D in Burwell gave a presentation on the quadcopter that the RC&D recently purchased. She said an FAA number had been obtained and they have been in close contact with airport authorities regarding flying times. She showed a video of the quadcopter filming around the camping area at Davis Creek. Sanders said they have filmed at Pibel Lake, the North Loup River Public Power & Irrigation District canal breach, Fort Hartsuff, and some tree damage and an overturned pivot at Elyria. She said she would be filming the fish ladder at Spalding. She said the quadcopter cost \$1399.00, plus batteries and accessories. She said the Loup Basin RC&D would provide videos and still photos as a service for the public.

FORESTER'S REPORT

North Central District Forester Richard Woollen reported that information on the Nebraska Buffer Strip Program was in the agenda. He said the program was administered by the Nebraska Department of Ag and cooperating NRDs. He said the program is funded through fees assessed on registered pesticides and landowners are compensated for setting aside land along streams, ponds, and wetlands. He said the buffer strips that are eligible are filter strips containing grass and riparian forest buffer strips containing trees and grass.

Woollen directed the Board's attention to the buffer strip program summary in the agenda. He said that the Lower Loup NRD had 673 irrigated acres of buffer strips enrolled, the highest in the state.

Woollen reported that he presented information on the Community Forestry Program to interested residents of Petersburg to help spark interest in planting trees and managing their existing tree resource.

NRCS REPORT

Bryce Bauer, Liaison DC, reported that NRCS had been busy establishing EQIP cover crop demonstration farms in cooperation with local landowners. He said there were nine interested landowners in the Lower Loup NRD, but only two sites could be funded. One is in Sherman County and one in Custer County. He said the contracts are for five years and the landowners would conduct tests on the land and host a field day.

Bauer said that Mark Sintek was working on fundraising for the Gabe Brown presentation scheduled for December.

Koehlmoos said that Sintek had been to the Programs/Projects Committee meeting on the 19th and informed them that the cost for the presentation would be nearly \$10,000.00. Sintek had said funds would be solicited and asked that the remainder be provided by the Lower Loup NRD. Koehlmoos said this was the first hearing by the Committee and would be considered again in August.

Koehlmoos said that Sintek had recently informed him that NRCS could not sign the letters and wondered if the NRD would. Koehlmoos expressed concern about using NRD letterhead to solicit funds and running them through the NRD, even though he felt the program was worthwhile.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to have NRCS ask Loup Basin RC&D to sign the letters.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION REPORT

Hazard Mitigation Plan

Information & Education Coordinator Larry Schultz reported that 39 entities are participating in the NRD's Hazard Mitigation Plan update and are working on gathering information to submit to JEO to get the initial segments of the plan put into place. He said a few smaller towns/villages that didn't take part in the meetings will be contacted to see if they are interested in participating in the plan. He said the next round of meetings would be October 5-7 to take a look at the information JEO has compiled.

Koehlmoos said that when a community submits an application for funding, they don't have to go through the NRD; they just submit the plan to FEMA. Koehlmoos said he has requested a list of all the projects funded under the Lower Loup NRD's Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Koehlmoos said that the NRD can, if needed, apply for hazard mitigation funding on projects where a potential hazard may exist, such as flooding issues. He said the cost-share could be up to 75% of the total project.

Quarterly I & E Meeting

Schultz said that the statewide I&E group met recently in the new NRD office in York and toured a pivot irrigation system manufacturing business in Hastings.

Annual NARD Conference

Schultz said the Annual NARD Conference would be held in Kearney on September 25-27. He passed around a sign-up sheet for directors interested in attending.

Schultz said that he, Koehlmoos, and Callan are working on a historical marker for Pibel Lake. Schultz showed some of the information that had been gathered.

ASSISTANT MANAGER'S REPORT

Water Resources Committee

Assistant General Manager Russell Callan reported that the Water Resources Committee met on July 19th.

New Irrigated Acres

Callan said new irrigated acres were discussed and the Committee recommended that 2,000 new irrigated acres be allowed in 2017 in the North Loup River and Beaver Creek basins. He said that DNR would be able to grant new surface water acres in those sub-basins, up to one-third of the total of new groundwater acres. Callan said a minimum score, like the one utilized in the LB483 process, will be used to keep undesirable ground from being developed.

Callan said the fee to apply for new irrigated acres would be \$500 per field.

Smith motioned, seconded by Hadenfeldt, that the Lower Loup NRD allow a total of nearly 2,000 new irrigated acres for 2017 in the North Loup River and Beaver Creek sub-basins, depended on DNR allowing new surface water acres to be developed in the same basins, a minimum score to qualify, and that the acres be divided two-thirds and one-third.

Thoene commented that the basins recommended for new irrigated acres have a high water table which has created some problems for landowners.

Callan said that a map of the designated area for new irrigated acres would be drawn up and distributed to directors and will be posted on Lower Loup's website.

Lukasiewicz expressed concern about downstream landowners on the Loup River who are short of water and how issuing acres above them would further affect the water supply downstream. Koehlmoos responded that staff is looking at making modifications to the rules and regulations to treat those wells differently.

Directors voting yes: Adams, Anderson, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Gutzmer, Hadenfeldt, Kruse, Loseke, Nelson, Peterson, Rasmussen, Smith, Thede, and Thoene. Director voting no: Kauk. Director abstaining: Lukasiewicz. Directors absent: Amsberry, Bartak, and Boesch.

Columbus Area Water Assessment

Callan said the project was basically completed as far as what the modeling looked like and what some of the potential fixes might be. He said the Committee discussed whether to shelf the project or look for partners to go forward. He said the Committee's recommendation was to move ahead, and Callan said the project would be dependent on a partnership involving the Lower Loup NRD, the City of Columbus, ADM, and others, including a Water Sustainability Fund grant application.

Callan said he would be meeting with Pat Engelbert of HDR to set up some meetings. He said change orders would need to be added to the contract so Engelbert could come to the meetings.

Smith motioned, seconded by Thoene, to create a partnership for the Columbus Recharge Project utilizing check dams on Lost Creek, dependent on participation from ADM and the City of Columbus; and an HDR Change Order.

Loseke voiced concern about the Lost Creek Drainage Project having been done to drain water away from Columbus, and the Columbus Recharge Project would bring water back, possibly flooding basements. Koehlmoos said that part of the engineering done was to look very carefully at third-party impacts, and this project provided the least amount of third-party impacts.

Citta mentioned that before the project moved ahead, there would be additional focus on third-party impacts. He said interested parties would have to be found first in order to move the project forward; if not enough are found, and funding is not available, the project will be shelved.

Motion carried by roll call vote: Directors voting yes: Adams, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Gutzmer, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Nelson, Peterson, Rasmussen, Smith, Thede, and Thoene. Director voting no: Anderson. Director abstaining: Loseke. Directors absent: Amsberry, Bartak, and Boesch.

Water Well Professionals Resolution

Callan said he formulated a resolution to present at the NARD Annual Conference that would allow water well professionals to be licensed under one category, rather than require multiple licenses. He said being licensed under many categories costs the well driller thousands of dollars. He said the Well Drillers Licensing Board and the Department of Health need someone to sponsor the resolution.

Smith motioned, seconded by Eschliman, to sponsor a resolution that would allow water well professional to be licensed under one category, rather than require multiple licenses. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Director Kruse, Chairman of the Programs/Projects Committee, said that there were no recommendations from the Board this month.

NRCS – Gabe Brown No-Till Presentation

Item was discussed previously.

Brent Nyffeler – Drainage Issue

Koehlmoos said the drainage issue and Nyffeler's request for culverts would be discussed again next month.

Pibel Lake Emergency Outlet Tubes Replacement

Koehlmoos said that staff would keep an eye on the leaking tubes at Pibel Lake.

North Loup River Public Power & Irrigation District – Hardenbrook Dam

Koehlmoos reported that he had recently talked with Jim Wurtz of the North Loup River Public Power & Irrigation District about the funding that had been set aside by the LLNRD as assistance in repairs to Hardenbrook dam. The funding agreed upon was contingent on the North Loup River Public Power & Irrigation District going through a map evaluation of their district with DNR. Wurtz explained that the process with DNR was to begin this fall and could take approximately a year.

Duncan East Drainage IPA Maintenance – Lee Blaser, etal

Callan reported that the Corps of Engineers had contacted staff, and a meeting to discuss what the effects would be to pull the sheet piling on the old Ruby's Slough project will be held in mid-August.

MANAGER'S REPORTLitigation Update

Koehlmoos said that the Mark Koch case is still in the appeal process.

New Hires

Koehlmoos said there were no new hires.

FY 2017 BUDGET WORKSHOP #2

Koehlmoos directed the Board to the budget information included in the agenda.

Code 438 – Special Projects - \$1,117,983

Code 473 & 301 – Water Quality Fund (formerly Enhancement Fund) - \$95,000

Code 301 & 303 (Income Side) – State and Federal Grant Funds - \$1,070,757

Code 422 – Scrap Tire Collection - \$56,858

Code 471 – Water Well Decommissioning Fund - \$55,000

Code 470 & 440 – Land Treatment - \$262,209

Code 478 – Watershed Plans - \$110,000

Code 441 – Project Construction - \$3,500,000

Code 443 – Project Land Rights - \$ 300,000

Code 445 – Project Legal Costs - \$40,000

Code 447-448 – Assessment Projects – Duncan East IPA - \$9,601.93 balance on 6/30/16

Lost Creek IPA - \$133.13 balance on 6/30/16

Code 466 – FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan – \$110,628
 Codes 449 & 309 – Stock and Stock Purchases - \$160,000
 Code 165 – Machinery & Equipment - \$58,000
 Code 476 – Community Forestry Program - \$35,000
 Code 477 – Prescribed Burn Program - \$30,000
 Code 163 & 161 – Capital Improvements & Land - \$0?

Koehlmoos directed the Board's attention to the summary sheet in the Supplemental Agenda and went over some budget figures. He said that the Lower Loup NRD's budget will probably increase \$1.6 million. He said a lot of that will be used for Davis Creek.

Anderson motioned, seconded by Gutzmer, to tentatively approve the second half of the FY 2017 Budget. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Adams motioned, seconded by Anderson, that the budget hearing be held August 25th at 5:15 p.m. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

NARD REPORT

Director's Report

Rasmussen reported that the NARD Board Secretary/Treasurer, Dave Potter, resigned and will be the new Assistant Manager at Lower Platte South NRD.

NRC REPORT

Commissioner's Report

Hadenfeldt reported that Sustainability Fund projects are coming into the DNR. He said he expects there to be a lot of applications.

RC&D REPORTS

Loup Basin RC&D

Rasmussen reported that 200 tons of tires were collected both at Ord and Loup City. The Loup Basin RC&D members met at the Calamus to see a demonstration of the drone. The fish ladder is complete in Spalding.

PrairieLand RC&D

Gellermann said there was no report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Schultz announced that Nebraska may be hosting the National Envirothon in 2020. Callan said that the meeting with the Corps of Engineers to look at Ruby's Slough will be on August 18th. Citta reminded the Board that the next Board of Directors meeting will be on August 25th and will include the Budget Hearing.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Citta declared the meeting adjourned at 7:00 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 August 25, 2016, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

Henry J. Thoene
Secretary