

LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

October 27, 2016

Ord, Nebraska

The October 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 October 27, 2016. Due to the absence of Chairman Citta, Vice Chairman Eschliman called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Directors in attendance

James C. Adams
Darwin B. Anderson
Beth Boesch
N. Richard Hadenfeldt
James C. Nelson
Dean J. Rasmussen
Dean G. Thede

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer
Timothy E. Bartak
James J. Eschliman, Vice Chairman
Clifford P. Loseke
Alan D. Petersen
Gerald P. Smith
Henry J. Thoene, Secretary

Directors absent

Joseph L. Citta, Jr., Chairman
Michael P. Gutzmer
Gary A. Kruse

Virgil W. Gellermann
Randy Kauk
Matt Lukasiewicz

Staff in attendance

Leon "Butch" Koehlmoos, General Manager
Irene F. Kreifels, Financial Secretary
Larry D. Schultz, I&E Coordinator
Cheryl K. Hornickel, Programs Assistant

Russell G. Callan, Assistant General Manager
Rita A. Goldfish, Administrative Assistant
Anne Freeman, Water Programs Secretary
Dell R. Harris, Water Resources Specialist

Guests in attendance

Bryce Bauer, LDC, NRCS, Ord

NOTICE OF OPEN MEETING LAW POSTING

Chairman Eschliman referred those in attendance to the open meeting law information posted in the Board room.

VERIFICATION OF MEETING NOTICE AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairman Eschliman 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 were no modifications to the agenda.

Roll call was taken to verify meeting notice and adopt the agenda. Directors present: Adams, Amsberry, Anderson, Boesch, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Loseke, Nelson, Petersen, Rasmussen, Smith, Thede, and Thoene. Directors absent: Citta, Gellermann, Gutzmer, Kauk, Kruse, and Lukasiewicz. Director not present for roll call: Bartak.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Koehlmoos stated that Directors Citta, Gellermann, Gutzmer, Kauk, Kruse, and Lukasiewicz had requested to be excused from the meeting.

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

MINUTES

Chairman Eschliman asked for corrections and/or additions to the September 22, 2016, Board meeting minutes. None being heard, Chairman Eschliman ruled that the September 22, 2016, minutes would stand approved as submitted.

TREASURER’S REPORT

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

Koehlmoos highlighted bills for a pickup that had been purchased, flowmeters through the ET program, construction costs for Davis Creek, CD investments made to area banks, Psota Project expenses, and Pibel Lake maintenance costs.

Rasmussen motioned, seconded by Thoene, to approve the October, 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.

FORESTER’S REPORT

North Central District Forester Richard Woollen reported that Bessey Clients Day was held on October 12th. He said the nursery did a tree lifting demonstration and that tree orders will begin November 1st.

Woollen said that the NFS will be conducting some ponderosa pine stock-type trials next spring in hopes of finding a type that will have better initial survival. He said the stock-type trials will be put in across the state – eight in windbreak designs and eight in reforestation sites. He said one site will be at the Aagaard Farm. Woollen said three different container sizes will be used, in addition to 2-0 stock.

Woollen said that survival rates vary, but many species do well and average from 70% to 98% survival. He said NFS is hoping to find a more drought-resistant specie of ponderosa pine that could be planted in areas where water isn't readily available, and could also be used as an alternative to redcedar.

Woollen said that vegetation is starting to grow back in the areas where there have been fires in the Pine Ridge.

NRCS REPORT

Bryce Bauer, Liaison DC, reported on a letter included in the agenda from Craig Derickson, NRCS State Conservationist, and said that NRCS is appreciative of the partnership and support they've received from the NRD. Bauer highlighted the page showing the breakdown of the Farm Bill money that went to the Lower Loup NRD, which included \$8.6 million to farmers and \$3.5 million in total contract obligations, both for FY 2015.

Bauer said that a cover crop report from the planting/grazing activity at the Aagaard Farm would be presented in November.

Bauer said that Loup Basin RC&D put together a flyer for the Gabe Brown presentation and noted that, in addition to Brown, a panel of local producers would talk about their cover crop operations.

Bauer reported that the rest of the NRD will be flown for LiDar in the next couple weeks.

Koehlmoos said that, if there were no objections, the NRD would be paying for secretaries and staff to attend the Gabe Brown presentation, as a part of continuing education. Thoene felt their attendance would be a good idea since the field offices would probably be receiving several inquiries.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION REPORT

Hazard Mitigation Plan

Information & Education Coordinator Larry Schultz reported that staff met with JEO to discuss the LLNRD's portion of the Hazard Mitigation Plan. He said that the NRD was both a sponsor and a participant in the plan. He said that many counties have decided that they want to go under their emergency management director and have individual meetings with their communities. He said the next step is to put together the first draft of the plan, have it reviewed by the communities, make final touches, then send it to FEMA/NEMA for their review. Schultz said there is close to 100% participation.

State Land Judging

Schultz reported that the State Land Judging Contest was held near Pleasanton on October 26th. He said the championship team was from Alma, and other towns qualifying for the national contest were Franklin, Norris, Pender, and Red Cloud. He said Lily Pickrel of Fullerton finished 4th in individuals. He said Tanner Kauk from Alma scored highest in individuals, and Lee Schroeder from West Point was the top individual adult.

Statewide I&E Staff Quarterly Meeting

Schultz said the I&E group met in Wahoo and John Miyoshi gave a tour of the Lake Wanhoo Recreation Area.

NWRA/NSIA Convention and GMDA Conference

Schultz reported that the NWRA/NSIA Convention and the GMDA Conference were coming up and directed the Board's attention to the information provided in the agenda. The NWRA/NSIA Convention will meet in Kearney on November 20-22, 2016; and the GMDA Convention will be held in Fort Worth, Texas, on January 9-11, 2017.

ASSISTANT MANAGER'S REPORT

Water Resources Committee

Assistant Manager Russell Callan reported that the Water Resources Committee met on October 18th.

New Irrigated Acres

Callan referred the Board to the sheets showing the final tally of the new irrigated acres applications that were received for the North Loup River and Beaver Creek basins. He said staff used the same ranking system that was used for the LB-483 acres and it worked well. He said staff visited most of the sites and the Committee recommended the approval of 1,227.3 acres in the North Loup River Basin and 768.98 acres in the Beaver Creek Basin.

Smith motioned, seconded by Adams, to approve the new irrigated acres which ranked "230" points or above, which includes 20 new irrigated acres applications in the North Loup River Basin (totaling 1,227.3 acres) and 11 new irrigated acres applications in the Beaver Creek Basin (totaling 768.98 acres), for a combined total of 1,996.28 new irrigated acres. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Callan said that each applicant will be mailed back all of their application paperwork, and also included will be either an approval or denial letter.

Callan said that the NRD's Integrated Management Plan allows DNR to develop one-third the number of acres in surface water that the Lower Loup NRD developed in groundwater. He said that staff would like to send DNR a letter recommending that any new surface water acres they might want to develop be developed in only the North Loup River and/or Beaver Creek basins since other basins

are deficient in water. Callan said he would also like the letter to promote a couple surface water rights in the Twin Loups Reclamation District, which would be for off-season storage and wouldn't adversely affect flows in the growing season.

Callan said the integrated management plan doesn't contain a time limit in which DNR can develop surface water projects after the NRD has approved new irrigated acres. Koehlmoos said the water that DNR would have to work with is banked. Koehlmoos said he thought DNR would have to consider the best science available for projects.

Callan said that 44% of the water at the Louisville gage comes from the Loup River. Koehlmoos said the recent Coalition meeting set up the recommendations to fill out the final draft report and said that John Engel will visit each district Board and give a presentation on the draft before the districts are asked to give a final approval. Adams said that the Lower Loup and Upper Loup NRDs have done quite a bit of work to secure their percentage of the water out of the entire flow.

Boesch motioned, seconded by Smith, to direct staff to draft a letter of support to DNR for water projects in areas where there is excess water, but withholding support when the project impacts an area with no excess water. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Smith said that the new acres approved are treated differently under the new rules. He said if there was a shortage of water, the new acres would be dealt with accordingly. Callan said that it would be stated in the letter going out to the applicants getting new irrigated acres.

South Loup Static Water Levels

Callan said that readings were being taken.

Long-Range Implementation Plan Review

Callan said that the plan was being reviewed, and a draft of the plan would be completed by the November Board meeting.

Callan said that he and Koehlmoos met with Director Jeff Fassett of DNR after the Coalition meeting regarding DNR's hesitancy to approve the NRD's new rules and regulations. Director Fassett stated during the meeting that he would forward comments to the District when time allowed, but he felt more comfortable with the Lower Loup NRD rule changes after discussions with staff.

PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Davis Creek Recreation Area Expansion Project

Koehlmoos said the project plans are put together and the Committee recommended that staff proceed with the bidding process for Phase 2.

Loseke motioned, seconded by Petersen, that staff proceed with the bidding process based off the 90% plans for Phase 2 of the Davis Creek Recreation Area Expansion Project. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Other

Koehlmoos said that there would be no Committee meetings on November 8th. Callan said there might be a Variance Committee meeting before the Board meeting on November 17th.

MANAGER'S REPORTLitigation Update

Koehlmoos said that litigation is still pending regarding the Open Meetings Act.

No other reports.

NARD REPORTDirector's Report

Rasmussen reported that NARD met in Kearney. He said the auditor gave a presentation. He said \$23,000 was raised in the auction and trap shooting. He said he presided over one session on watershed and basin plans. He said the finances were good in the NARD, but there is concern with the health insurance regarding increasing premiums. Rasmussen said he has heard good comments about the Pibel Lake renovations.

NARD Annual Conference

Koehlmoos said the Lower Loup NRD's licensing resolution passed.

NRC REPORTCommissioner's Report

Hadenfeldt thanked the Board for his nomination as Director of the Year. He said the scoring committee will begin going through applications for dollars from the Water Sustainability Fund. He said persons on the scoring committee have to be on for two years. He said a hearing would have to be held to change the rules.

RC&D REPORTSLoup Basin RC&D

Rasmussen said the budget was set and election of officers was held at Miletta Vista near St. Paul on September 29th. He said the RC&D met at the Fire Hall in Ord on October 18th. He said the RC&D hosted the State Association and discussed the upcoming no-till conference to be held in December.

PrairieLand RC&D

No report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Koehlmoos reminded the Board that the November and December meetings would be held a week earlier – November 17th and December 15th. He said the Water Resources and Programs/Projects Committees would probably not be meeting in November. Callan said there may be a Variance Committee meeting.

Smith mentioned that there are more western art bronze sculptures in Bartlett and that each one has a story behind it.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Eschliman declared the meeting adjourned at 6:07 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 November 17, 2016, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

Henry J. Thoene
Secretary