

# MINUTES

## LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

March 29, 2018

Ord, Nebraska

The March 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 March 29, 2018. Chairman Citta called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

### CALL TO ORDER

#### Directors in attendance

James C. Adams  
Darwin B. Anderson  
Robert L. Bauer  
James J. Eschliman, Vice Chairman  
Randy G. Kauk  
Matt R. Lukasiewicz  
James C. Nelson  
Gerald P. Smith  
Henry J. Thoene, Secretary

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer  
Timothy E. Bartak  
Joseph L. Citta, Jr., Chairman  
Virgil W. Gellermann  
Gary A. Kruse  
Larry G. Mohrman  
Chad J. Podolak  
Dean G. Thede  
Rick D. Vlach

#### Directors absent

Elizabeth L. Boesch  
Alan D. Petersen

N. Richard Hadenfeldt

#### Staff in attendance

Russell G. Callan, General Manager  
Irene F. Kreifels, Administrative Assistant  
Brent D. Lakin, Water Resources Technician  
Jason W. Moudry, Water Programs Specialist  
V. Anne Freeman, Water Programs Secretary  
Dell R. Harris, Water Resources Specialist

Tylr Naprstek, Assistant General Manager  
Kim A. Lyons, Financial Secretary  
Cheryl K. Hornickel, Programs Assistant  
Larry D. Schultz, I&E Coordinator  
Brian D. Kolar, Projects Technician  
Richard L. Woollen, District Forester

### 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 AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairman Citta asked for verification of the meeting notice. General Manager Russ Callan 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. Callan said there were no modifications to the agenda.

## EXCUSED ABSENCES AND ROLL CALL

Callan reported that Boesch and Hadenfeldt would not be present at the meeting and had asked to be excused. Callan said he had not heard from Petersen.

Roll Call – Directors present: Adams, Amsberry, Anderson, Bartak, Bauer, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Mohrman, Nelson, Podolak, Smith, Thede, Thoene, Vlach. Directors absent: Boesch, Hadenfeldt, and Petersen.

**Smith motioned, seconded by Anderson, to approve the agenda and excuse absent directors. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

## MINUTES

Chairman Citta asked for corrections and/or additions to the February 22, 2018, Board meeting minutes. None were heard.

**Kruse motioned, seconded by Mohrman, to approve the February 22, 2018, Board meeting minutes as presented. 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.

Callan highlighted expenditures to Cornhusker State Industries for new office furniture, Dworak Paint and Body for vehicle repairs, professional services for projects, Northern Agri-Services for flowmeter repairs, HDR for the Lillian Creek Study and the Spring Buffer Strip payments, including those to Directors Nelson and Adams.

**Anderson motioned, seconded by Thede, to approve the March, 2018, Treasurer's Report and pay all bills. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bartak, Bauer, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Mohrman, Podolak, Smith, Thede, Thoene, and Vlach. Directors abstaining: Adams and Nelson. Directors absent: Boesch, Hadenfeldt, and Petersen.**

The Treasurer's Report Approval Policy states that the approved expenditures are to be published and each director who has per diem and/or reimbursement of expenses included in such financial reports, abstains from voting for the approval of his or her own per diem and/or expense reimbursement.

Chairman Citta reported that Petersen had just called, asking to be excused from the meeting. Citta said the motion had already been made but wanted to note for the record Petersen's request to be excused.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

## FORESTER'S REPORT

Rich Woollen, District Forester, reported that the NRD was scheduled to get the first round of handplant trees April 10<sup>th</sup> and machine plants would come in shortly after that. He also reported that buffer strip payments would be going out in April. He said a diverse group attended the Biochar Workshop held in Ord on March 27<sup>th</sup>.

## NRCS REPORT

Mark Sintek, RC in Ord, reported on EQIP and CSP signups. He said more points would be awarded for pasture improvement if a producer agreed to fence out dams/dugouts. He stated that new pivots were being designed in the Burwell area and that six producers in the area would be drilling CRP seed mixes.

## INFORMATION AND EDUCATION REPORT

### Central Region Envirothon

Larry Schultz, Information and Education Coordinator, reported that the Lower Loup and Central Platte NRDs hosted the Central Region Envirothon in February. He reported that four teams from Lower Loup NRD qualified for state competition at Niobrara State Park, including one from St. Paul, one from Burwell and two from Ord. He also stated that the quarterly newsletter *In the Loup* had been mailed.

### Media Campaign

Schultz informed the Directors on the locations of the new NRD billboards in Columbus and along Hwy 281 near St. Paul. He stated that Red Thread's efforts have really boosted attention to the NRD and there had been lots of activity on social media. The videos produced by Red Thread have been featured on TV channels 10/11, 13, and Fox 17. He stated that the radio ads will start later in the month.

Callan said that staff had been in contact with Red Thread to produce a video during tree planting season.

## ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

### Davis Creek – Phase II Update

Tylr Naprstek, Assistant General Manager, stated that marking and removal of trees had begun for access to the new maintenance building. He informed the Board of a construction deadline of May 15<sup>th</sup> due to various species migration patterns. He said there would be an environmental review of Davis Creek in April.

### Pibel Lake Update

Naprstek stated Pibel Lake Updates would be reviewed during the Programs/Projects Committee report.

### Buffalo County, Ravenna Lake Report

Naprstek reported that a boat had been purchased for sampling at Ravenna Lake. He stated that in initial testing, the chlorophyll levels were typical in most areas, but that the reading from the south area of the lake was four times the normal amount. He said the Quality Assurance Plan had been accepted by DEQ.

### Columbus Areas Water Resources Assessment Study Update

Naprstek stated that he and Callan would be meeting with the city and county next week. The county is tentatively planning to participate in the project.

### ELM Update

Naprstek said the NRD is still waiting on USGS internal reviews.

## WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Psota Recharge Project

Naprstek reported that allocation had been backed off to match recharge and that there was still premature data on the project. Only three years of data is available, part of the time collected with no probe. He said the Committee recommended to continue on with the project for at least a couple more years.

### Lower Platte River Basin Coalition

Naprstek discussed a report prepared by staff for the Lower Platte River Basin Coalition. The report detailed the District's water management activities, as well as municipal and industrial groundwater uses and flowmeter information, water banking, expedited variances, and depletions from new groundwater uses. Callan reported that the next LPRBC meeting would be held in Ord on April 20<sup>th</sup>.

### Chemigation Report 2017

Naprstek reported that 310 new applications and 2,652 renewals were received in 2017. He stated that 1,060 chemigation inspections were conducted by NRD staff and that the top application was nitrogen. He also stated that other NRDs are raising permit fees and that Lower Loup may consider and increase its fees.

### South Loup River Special Study Results

Naprstek said that Tom Heatherly had reported on the eDNA study results from DEQ and said that the most common DNA found in the water was field mouse, followed by human, pig, cow, and beaver. He reported that more studies would be conducted to determine where the contamination was coming from. Naprstek also reported that Dave Rus of USGS had been present at the Committee meeting and told the members that E. coli bacteria will continue to be monitored at the St. Michael gauge in Howard County.

### Cover Crop Study

Naprstek stated that the study did not get funded through Nebraska Environmental Trust but said staff would pursue grants from the Water Sustainability Fund and from the NRCS.

Lukasiewicz reported that action appears to be stalled regarding the NRD letter of support sent to DNR for the application for additional surface water rights by irrigation districts on the Middle Loup River.

Podolak asked if the NRD had any water restrictions for municipalities in Lower Loup. Callan said there were no restrictions because Lower Loup is not fully- or over-appropriated. Naprstek said that the NRD is in the process of collecting data on municipal water use for possible offsets if the NRD becomes fully-appropriated.

## PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE

### Redcedar/Pasture Management

Kruse reported that Rich Woollen had given the Committee a presentation on cedar tree thinning/chipping in a pasture in Wheeler County.

### Project Participation Policy

Kruse reported that the Committee reviewed the Project Participation Policy percentages and decided to leave them at the same level for the time being.

Citta said that the Water Resources Committee had discussed the policy, also, and felt the percentages were working well. He said they are guidelines.

### Building Expansion

Kruse reported that there was discussion on building expansion. Callan said there was no available office space for the growing staff and had presented the Committee with some preliminary drawings of expansion ideas.

### Pibel Lake Auxiliary Spillway Engineering Bids

Naprstek reported that four bids were received and ranked by staff. He said HDR's bid was ranked as the top proposal. Pibel Lake options had been discussed. He stated that HDR would evaluate both options -- complete replacement vs. sliplining -- and would recommend what they felt would be the best option. Naprstek presented directors with a spreadsheet comparison of the bids that were received.

**Kruse motioned, seconded by Adams, to accept the bid from HDR for the Pibel Lake Auxiliary Spillway. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

### Davis Creek Playground Equipment

Naprstek presented the directors with a spreadsheet outlining the ranking of the different proposed playground approaches and the staff rankings of each. He stated bids were received from four companies and Sterling West received the most points in the ranking process. Naprstek stated that some of the Bureau of Reclamation money from Title 28 could be used for playground equipment. He reported that all of the companies proposed to be ready by approximately May 1<sup>st</sup> for construction.

**Kruse motioned, seconded by Smith, to approve the quote received by Sterling West for the playground equipment at both the electrical and non-electrical sites at Davis Creek. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

### Security Cameras

Kruse said that, due to current litigation, the Committee determined there was a need for a security camera in the lobby and Board rooms of the Headquarters office. He said Callan was currently looking into options.

## GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

### Resolution to Remove Leon Koehlmoos's Name from Bank Accounts

Callan directed the Board to a resolution in the agenda to remove Leon Koehlmoos from the list of signers on the NRD's bank accounts due to his retirement.

**Smith motioned, seconded by Anderson, to approve the resolution to remove Leon Koehlmoos from all LLNRD bank accounts. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

### Litigation Update

Callan said that a continuance was filed by Koch on his non-access suit, pointing out it had been extended until April 17<sup>th</sup>, and informed the Board of an appeal extension on Koch's Open Meetings Act violation suit until April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Callan reported that he hadn't heard anything new on the Prokop case.

### New Hires

Callan announced that Dan Ruterbories would be starting in May as a Rangeland Resources Technician and would be filling the extra office space in the shop area. He stated there will be interviews for the Water Modeling Coordinator in the next few weeks and the Shop/Maintenance position has about a week left before interviews will begin for that position.

### Non-action Reports

No report.

## NARD REPORT

### Director's Report

Eschliman reported that NARD met March 12<sup>th</sup> in Lincoln. The committee meetings were held for fiscal planning and budget, and risk pool, and the budget will be set in June. He said donations were approved for Envirothon, ACE Camp, and Nebraska Great Parks Permit. He said the group had a guided tour of Memorial Stadium. Lukasiewicz stated that Eschliman had been selected as NARD Board vice chairman.

### Washington, DC Conference Reports

Directors Eschliman, Amsberry, Kruse, and Thoene highlighted different aspects of the conference that they enjoyed. Kruse said that although the government was closed one day due to the weather, the Nebraska representatives were still able to meet with the NARD group. Thoene commented on the WOTUS presentation and discussion followed.

### Legislation Report

Callan stated that the LB98 three cent levy failed, but it only affected districts that were fully- or over-appropriated. He said that Governor Ricketts's budget bill is in final reading.

## NRC REPORT

Due to the absence of Hadenfeldt, there was no report.

## RC&D REPORTS

### Loup Basin

Thoene and Adams were unable to attend the meetings, so no report was given.

### PrairieLand

Gellermann reported that the group voted to close PrairieLand and the organization will be officially closed when the paperwork is finalized. He said the remaining money would be split between various centers for survivors organizations.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS/FUTURE MEETING TOPICS

Schultz announced that a copy of *The Groundwater Atlas of Nebraska* had been given to all new directors.

## ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Citta declared the meeting adjourned at 6:14 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 Thursday, April 26, 2018, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

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Henry J. Thoene  
Secretary