

MINUTES

LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

April 26, 2018

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 26, 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
Joseph L. Citta, Jr., Chairman
Virgil W. Gellermann
Randy G. Kauk
Larry G. Mohrman
Chad J. Podolak
Dean G. Thede
Rick D. Vlach

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer
Timothy E. Bartak
Elizabeth L. Boesch
James J. Eschliman, Vice Chairman
N. Richard Hadenfeldt
Gary A. Kruse
James C. Nelson
Gerald P. Smith
Henry J. Thoene, Secretary

Directors absent

Matt R. Lukasiewicz

Alan D. Petersen

Staff in attendance

Russell G. Callan, General Manager
Irene F. Kreifels, Administrative Assistant
Cheryl K. Hornickel, Programs Assistant
V. Anne Freeman, Water Programs Secretary
Dell R. Harris, Water Resources Specialist

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

Guests

Bryce Bauer, LDC, NRCS, Ord
Kim Myers, Broken Bow
John Engel, HDR, Lincoln

Dustin Myers, Broken Bow
Steve Beck, Broken Bow
Pat Engelbert, HDR, Lincoln

Clifford Hanna, Milburn
Ben Griebel, Sargent
Mac Fox, Sargent

Troy Smith, Sargent
John Cox, Sargent
Lori Cox, Sargent

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 said the meeting was posted in the Ord office, on the NRD website, and local newspapers. Callan said the agenda was current.

EXCUSED ABSENCES AND ROLL CALL

Callan reported that Lukasiewicz and Petersen would not be present at the meeting and had asked to be excused.

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

Thede motioned, seconded by Adams, 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 March 29, 2018, Board meeting minutes. None were heard.

Kauk motioned, seconded by Smith, to approve the March 29, 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 Yanda's Music & Pro Audio for equipment upgrades, Gateway Motors, Inc for new vehicle purchases, WISH Nebraska for drip irrigation supplies, HDR for Lillian Creek services, USGS for the South Loup River bacteria study, and Sterling West for playground equipment for Davis Creek. On the supplemental agenda, Lincoln Winpump for a sampling pump and Northern Agri-Services for Area 28 flowmeter parts.

Eschliman motioned, seconded by Kruse, to approve the April, 2018, Treasurer's Report and pay all bills. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

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.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Citta asked if there were any public comments. Members of the public expressed that they would wait and perhaps comment during the Lillian Creek Feasibility Study discussion later in the meeting.

FORESTER'S REPORT

Rich Woollen, District Forester, reported that he and Callan had attended the Eastern redcedar seminar in Halsey. He stated there were several representatives from various organizations including the Sandhills Task Force, Nebraska Cattleman and persons interested in cedar management. He said short presentations were given. He reported that LR387 was discussed and explained that it proposed restrictions on planting Eastern redcedar due to their rapid spread. He said the NRD would continue to monitor the redcedar population and make a restriction determination later.

NRCS REPORT

Bryce Bauer reported that offices were writing EQIP contracts and that 47 had been funded locally and 22 funded with state money. He also reported that letters were being sent out for compliance reviews. He said that NRCS will be conducting studies on cover crops to determine water usage and yield standpoint of cover crop vs. non-cover crop areas.

LILLIAN CREEK FEASIBILITY REPORT PRESENTATION – HDR

Pat Engelbert, HDR Project Manager, and John Engel, HDR, were present to discuss the Lillian Creek Feasibility Report and answer questions. Engelbert presented a series of slides highlighting the purpose of the Lillian Creek Project and showed where the dam location and proposed lake area would be. He also informed the Board of the expected surface area and depth.

Engelbert highlighted different alternatives for water supply including watershed runoff, and the Middle Loup River via the Lillian Canal, as well as the Middle Loup via alluvial well field and groundwater augmentation. Engelbert explained the seepage factors they took into consideration and how they calculated their figures. He explained the process of preparation and permitting for the project. After reviewing the overall project, Engelbert explained the anticipated total project cost would range from \$25,669,000 to \$48,159,000 depending on the size of pumping station being used. Overall, he said that the project would be feasible.

Adams read a letter he had received from Darwin L. Holcomb expressing concern of the project being detrimental to the surrounding land.

Chairman Citta explained that this was just a preliminary report and more reviews and public meetings would be held before any official action would be taken to continue with the Lillian Creek Project.

Adams motioned, seconded by Boesch, to accept the report on the Lillian Creek Feasibility Study presented by HDR. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Callan stated that staff would continue to review the report and answer questions.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION REPORT

State Envirothon

Larry Schultz, Information and Education Coordinator, reported that four teams from the District participated in the State Envirothon held April 25th at Niobrara State Park. He reported that Concordia High School from Omaha won the event.

CPNRD Mini Groundwater Festival

Schultz reported that he and Moudry would be helping at a mini Groundwater Festival in Grand Island on May 1st. Schultz said he would be conducting the *Water Drop Relay*.

Quarterly Statewide I&E Report

Schultz reported that Lower Loup hosted the quarterly meeting of the statewide I&E staff in Columbus. He said Callan was present to provide information on the Columbus recharge project, the levee project, and other NRD projects. He said the group got a tour of the Loup Power District.

NRD Staff Priorities

Schultz directed the Board's attention to the Supplemental Agenda showing the NRD staff's rating of the NRD priorities they had voted on during the recent staff meeting. He explained that the priorities listed were the same ones the Directors had discussed during the Board Retreat. Schultz said that monitoring water quantity/quality ranked first with both the Directors and staff.

Schultz informed Directors that the NRD had received a certificate of appreciation at the Ord FFA Banquet. He said that he and Woollen had visited the kids at the elementary school to educate them on Arbor Day and handed out trees for them to plant.

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Davis Creek – Phase II Update

Tylr Naprstek, Assistant General Manager, reported that work is still being done on the maintenance shed at Davis Creek. He said they are awaiting the arrival of the inlet latrine, before a hole can be dug for it. He reported that the primary dock is operational. He reported that the BOR environmental audit had been conducted and everything had passed. He said local law enforcement had been in contact with staff to possibly install a repeater tower by the maintenance shed.

Pibel Lake Update

Naprstek reported that HDR had been out to Pibel Lake to review the site. They hope to have a report completed by end of May/beginning of June on their recommendation of which outlet tube repair option would be most beneficial.

Buffalo County, Ravenna Lake Report

No report.

Columbus Areas Water Resources Assessment Study Update

Naprstek reported that Platte County had sent a letter indicating they would contribute \$55,000 to the project. He said the City would be meeting soon to make their decision on participation. Naprstek said that he and Callan would also be meeting with Christopher's Cove residents to hear their decision. There had been some concern of biological contamination in the lake by various species. Callan said he would be working with HDR to determine issues that may need to be resolved.

ELM Update

No report.

WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Stand on Platte-Republican Basin Water Transfers

Naprstek reported that there had been a lot of Committee discussion on the action by the state to allow transfers of water between the Platte and Republican River Basins. The Committee made a recommendation to oppose the basin-to-basin transfer, fearing it might set a dangerous precedent and could lead to transfers being sought for Loup River water. Callan stated that if the vote was to oppose, he would have attorneys draft a letter to DNR in opposition.

Smith motioned, seconded by Gellermann, directing staff to have a letter drafted to DNR in opposition of the water right for the Platte-Republican Basin water transfer. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Aerial Infrared Photography Budget Increase

Smith reported that the Committee had discussed increasing the budget for the aerial infrared photography. It was presented to the Committee that with the upgrade, the picture would be clearer, and a color version of photographs would be provided instead of the standard red photos. Callan said he wasn't sure that the upgrade would be able to differentiate between irrigation and rain water. Additional cost would be approximately \$11,500.

Smith motioned, seconded by Eschliman, to upgrade the Aerial Infrared Photography. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

Area 18 Flowmeter Maintenance & Billing

Naprstek reported that a shop in Aurora would be servicing Great Plains flowmeters, so hopefully the meters wouldn't need to be sent to California for recalibration. He said that any maintenance/repair parts greater than \$25 per flowmeter would be billed back to the landowner. He said that every well in Area 28 had a meter.

2017 Water Quality Report

Naprstek reported that an area of concern where high nitrate readings had been found was near the border with the Upper Elkhorn NRD in Wheeler County. There is sandy soil and a shallow depth-to-aquifer.

Final Lower Platte River Basin Coalition Numbers

Callan reported that the plan was done and interlocal agreements signed. He said some database work would have to be done to combine all the information from DNR and seven NRDs on a site accessible to all agencies.

PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Funds for Davis Creek

Kruse reported that the Committee had discussed BOR funds of \$42,000 matching funds that are available for further projects. He said staff had recommended an electrical upgrade to the 25 old campsites and construction of a new tent camping area. He said the estimated total cost would be \$100,000.

Kruse motioned, seconded by Vlach, to proceed with electrical upgrades at the old campgrounds and construct a tent campground at Davis Creek using matching funding of approximately \$42,000 available from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Adams, Amsberry, Anderson, Bartak, Bauer, Boesch, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Kauk, Kruse, Mohrman, Nelson, Podolak, Smith, Thede, Thoene, and Vlach. Director abstaining: Hadenfeldt. Directors absent: Lukasiewicz and Petersen.

Purchase Outdoor Fitness Equipment for Arboretum

Kruse reported there had been requests for adult outdoor fitness equipment for the Arboretum. Naprstek explained different types of equipment that could be used.

Kruse motioned, seconded by Eschliman, to approve the purchase and installation of adult outdoor fitness equipment for the Arboretum, not to exceed \$10,000. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Litigation Update

Callan reported that Koch's non-access suit had been sent to trial and a new trial date would be set and the Koch Open Meetings Act Violation case had been granted an extended brief date by the Court of Appeals. Callan also reported that Prokop is trying to get his case sent to the Supreme Court.

New Hires

Callan reported that Cam Conrad had been hired as the new Water Modeling Coordinator and would start in the position on June 11th.

Non-Action Reports

Callan reported on the District's excess equipment that had been sold by sealed bids and presented Directors with a spreadsheet outlining top bids. He informed the Board that he was planning to sell the old tractors and four-wheelers close to when the new ones would arrive.

NARD REPORT

Director's Report

Eschliman reported on Legislative/Natural Resources Committee studies on the spread of Eastern redcedar and an interim study to review public power. He stated there would be a Benefits Committee meeting in North Platte on April 30th and that Callan would be attending.

NRC REPORT

Hadenfeldt reported that there was a Commission Rules Committee meeting April 5th to review comments on rules being proposed and to address a project timeline. He reported that the next Commission meeting would be May 17th.

RC&D REPORTS

Loup Basin

Tohne stated that he did not attend the meeting as it was the same day as Committee meetings; however, the RC&D had been concentrating on the local business showcase for the 9-county area. He said the RC&D had drone videos of Pibel Lake, Davis Creek and Bowman Lake that they would like to put on social media.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/FUTURE MEETING TOPICS

Kauk discussed the feeder canal at Sherman Dam.

Eschliman mentioned an editorial in the *Norfolk Daily News* about NRDs having a state mandate. Schultz said the article had been sent to directors.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Citta declared the meeting adjourned at 7:37 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 local newspapers within the District. The next Board of Directors meeting will be held Thursday, May 24, 2018, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

Henry J. Thoene
Secretary