

# MINUTES

## LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

October 25, 2018

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 25, 2018. Due to the absence of Chairman Citta, Vice Chairman Eschliman called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

### CALL TO ORDER

#### Directors in attendance

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer  
Timothy E. Bartak  
Beth Boesch  
Virgil W. Gellermann  
Randy Kauk  
Larry Mohrman  
Alan D. Petersen  
Gerald Smith  
Henry J. Thoene, Secretary

Darwin B. Anderson  
Robert L. Bauer  
Jim Eschliman, Vice Chairman  
N. Richard Hadenfeldt  
Gary A. Kruse  
James C. Nelson  
Chad J. Podolak  
Dean G. Thede  
Rick Vlach

#### Directors absent

James C. Adams  
Matt Lukasiewicz

Joseph L. Citta, Chairman

#### Staff in attendance

Russell G. Callan, General Manager  
Irene F. Kreifels, Administrative Assistant  
Larry D. Schultz, I&E Coordinator  
V. Anne Freeman, Water Programs Secretary  
Cam Conrad, Water Modeling Coordinator  
Jane Klanecky, Receptionist  
Dan Ruterbories, Rangeland Mgt. Tech

Tylr Naprstek, Assistant General Manager  
Kim A. Lyons, Financial Secretary  
Cheryl Hornickel, Programs Assistant  
Dell R. Harris, Water Resources Specialist  
Richard L. Woollen, District Forester  
LeeAnn Smith, Water Programs Assistant  
Brian Kolar, Projects Technician

#### Guests in attendance

Clifford Hanna, Milburn  
Tom Klanecky, DNR, Ord

Randy Treptow, Comstock  
John Engel, HDR, Omaha

## NOTICE OF OPEN MEETING LAW POSTING

Chairman Eschliman referred those in attendance to the open meeting law information posted in the Board room and that meeting material was available at the entrance to the Board room.

## VERIFICATION OF MEETING NOTICE AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairman Eschliman asked for verification of the meeting notice. General Manager, Russell Callan, stated 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. He said the agenda was current.

## ROLL CALL AND EXCUSED ABSENCES

Chairman Eschliman reported that Directors Citta and Lukasiewicz would not be present at the meeting and had asked to be excused. Thoene reported that Adams had contacted him and would not be present at the meeting and had asked to be excused.

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

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

## MINUTES

Chairman Eschliman asked for corrections and/or additions to the September 27, 2018, Board meeting minutes. None were heard.

**Boesch motioned, seconded by Anderson, to approve the September 27, 2018, Board meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Russell Callan, General Manager, highlighted expenditures of \$6,049.20 to Red Thread for media campaign video; \$11,650.77 to HDR for the Columbus project and \$15,103.94 for Pibel Lake services; \$89,198.02 to Rutjens Construction for completion of Davis Creek Phase II contract; and \$5,000 to Platte Valley Weed Management.

**Kruse motioned, seconded by Kauk, to approve the October 25, 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 Eschliman asked for public comments, Clifford Hanna stated he had come to hear about the decision on the irrigated acres applications and discuss Lillian Creek later in the meeting.

## FORESTER'S REPORT

Richard Woollen, District Forester, reported that the planning phase on shelterbelt and tree planting had begun. He informed the Board that the NRD would begin taking tree orders on November 1<sup>st</sup> for the 2019 season.

Woollen reported that last year was the first year of reforestation of ponderosa pine in the Niobrara Valley and Pine Ridge areas of Nebraska and that reforestation efforts would take place again this year.

## NRCS REPORT

Callan reported that NRCS personnel were unable to attend.

## INFORMATION & EDUCATION REPORT

### LLNRD Conservation Tree Media Campaign

Larry Schultz, Information and Education Coordinator, showed the completed tree planting video, produced by Red Thread, that will begin airing on TV and radio, as well as newspaper, billboards, and social media networks within a few months.

### Land Judging

Schultz reported that the North Central Land Judging contest was held in Valley County on October 10<sup>th</sup>. He said that Fullerton had the highest scoring team, went on to the state contest, and qualified for nationals. Other teams that qualified for State were Palmer and Newman Grove.

### Statewide I&E Quarterly Meeting

Schultz reported that the quarterly I&E meeting was held in Norfolk. During the gathering, the new Lower Elkhorn NRD building was toured and they also visited the riverfront development.

### NWRA/NSIA Convention & GMDA Conference

Schultz announced that November 18-20, 2018, was the date for the NWRA/NSIA

convention in Kearney and the GMDA Conference in Phoenix would be held January 7-9, 2019. He passed around a signup sheet for directors wishing to attend.

#### Annual Awards Dinner/December Meeting Time

Schultz announced that the December Board of Directors meeting and annual awards dinner would be held December 27<sup>th</sup>. Meeting start time was discussed.

**Smith motioned, seconded by Amsberry, to set the start time for the December 27<sup>th</sup> Board meeting at 4:00 p.m. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

Schultz reported that upcoming events included the Legislative Conference in January and the Washington, DC Conference, with possible White House tour, in March/April.

### ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

#### Davis Creek – Phase II Update

Tylr Naprstek, Assistant General Manager, reported that Phase II construction was complete at Davis Creek. He said the lake was currently at its wintering elevation of 2056, which is an 8-foot difference from the usual wintering elevation. He said that studies of higher wintering levels will be done over 5 years. Naprstek reported that all winterization of campground facilities had been completed.

#### Pibel Lake Update

Naprstek reported that once the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 permits have been acquired, work can commence at Pibel Lake on the auxiliary spillway.

#### Buffalo County, Ravenna Lake Report

Naprstek reported that Ravenna Lake would be discussed during Committee updates.

#### Columbus Area Water Resources Assessment Study Update

Naprstek reported that the Columbus Project would be discussed during Committee updates.

#### ELM Update

Naprstek reported that the final ELM report was completed October 2<sup>nd</sup> and the final phase was available to the public. He said the final phase would be forwarded to DNR and Olsson's.

## WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Buffalo County, Ravenna Lake

Naprstek said that Rick Wilson of JEO had made a report to the Water Resources Committee. Naprstek reported that Ravenna Lake had been determined to have a low recharge potential due to lack of available storage area, having direct contact with groundwater, and its ties to the South Loup River. However, testing would still take place to ensure water quality.

**Tohne motioned, seconded by Vlach, to discontinue the Ravenna Lake Recharge Project Study, but continue water quality sampling. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

### Applications for New Irrigated Acres

Naprstek presented a PowerPoint which showed a breakdown of the new irrigated acres applications received and staff recommendations for approval. He reported that there were 67 total applications. Different score averages were discussed for each area. Naprstek reported that the NRD techs had done site visits on each site that had been tentatively approved by staff. Staff recommendations were to approve 1,317.92 acres in the North Loup, 764.7 in the Beaver and 540.7 in the Middle Loup basins. The tentative timeline was reviewed and, upon Board approval, denial and approval letters would be mailed to all applicants.

**Smith motioned, seconded by Boesch, to approve applications for new irrigated acres, up to and including, the last application that meets or exceeds the limit initially approved for the North Loup, Middle Loup, and Beaver basins, totaling 2,623.32 across the three basins.**

Further discussion was held on the process timeline. It was reported that the certification deadline would be July 1, 2019.

**Motion carried by roll call vote all present voting yes.**

### 2018 Long-Range Implementation Plan-Water Resources Section

Naprstek reported that the five-year average quality and quantity portion of the Long-Range Implementation Plan was complete and the Committee had recommended approval. Action will be taken during Programs and Projects Committee portion of meeting.

### Columbus Recharge Project

Naprstek reported that an open house was held in Columbus to review the Columbus Recharge Project with affected constituents. He said NRD and HDR personnel were present to answer questions. Naprstek said that he and Pat Engelbert of HDR met with landowners who could not attend the meeting to answer their questions. Naprstek also reported that installation of three monitoring wells would begin shortly.

Schultz passed around a thank-you note that was received for the NRD's contribution to the Columbus Area Recreation Trails.

## PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE

### Lillian Creek Dam Project Study

Callan reported that the Programs/Projects Committee had discussed the project the past three months. Callan presented a power point and discussed some of the questions that had been addressed at previous meetings. It was discussed that the next step, if the project is to continue, would be to complete the seepage study. It had been discussed with HDR that if the project were to continue, the NRD would request it be broken down into several smaller steps so, if some of the assessment findings prove the unfeasibility of the project, the NRD would have the option to abandon the project. The next seepage study to be completed would be an onsite seepage study conducted on undisturbed soil. Callan presented an estimated fee schedule. It was explained that after the seepage study is completed, if the project still seems to be feasible, further steps would be taken to evaluate the project. The complete project would be estimated to take 4+ years on a best-case scenario. Directors questioned numbers on depletion figures, maximum irrigation value vs. maximum recreation value, and minimal recreation value due to irrigation.

Petersen asked Clifford Hanna what his general impression was of the project. Hanna responded that he personally questioned that there could be many irrigation benefits. Callan explained that the whole basin has water that can be depleted, and this project would help to allow for more irrigation acres. Callan explained that they wouldn't all be around Lillian Creek, but would be beneficial downstream. Hanna expressed concern with the seepage rate. Hanna also stated that he is concerned it is a detriment due to too much recharge. Hanna questioned why the project was up for discussion when it was voted down to do the additional \$50,000 study previously presented. Callan explained that the NRD is looking into doing the seepage study portion only to determine if the project is worth further study. Callan stated that the studies conducted so far had produced a wide range of information that needed to be narrowed down to make a better educated determination of feasibility. Dell Harris stated that the project may be able to offset additional irrigated acres. It was explained that if this phase of the study is completed and Lillian Creek shows an acceptable seepage rate, a dam seepage study would be completed. Amsberry stated that a lining could be installed to prevent seepage if need be.

Callan stated he would get further information and answers to the questions asked and have discussion at the next Board meeting. No action was taken at this time.

### 2018 Long-Range Implementation Plan-Programs/Projects Section

Kruse reported that the Programs/Projects Committee had recommended approval of their portion of the 2018 Long-Range Implementation Plan.

**Kruse motioned, seconded by Smith, to approve the entire 2018 Long-Range Implementation Plan as presented, including both the Water Resources section and the Programs/Projects section. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Anderson,**

**Amsberry, Bartak, Bauer, Boesch, Eschliman, Gellermann, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Mohrman, Nelson, Petersen, Podolak, Smith, Thede, and Thoene. Director not present for vote: Vlach. Directors absent: Adams, Citta, and Lukasiewicz.**

#### Platte County Weed Control

Kruse reported that a recommendation of approval had been made to contribute \$5,000 to Platte County Weed Control. Anderson stated there was a flower, unique to the area, that should not be sprayed and asked if that could be relayed on before spraying began.

**Anderson motioned, seconded by Boesch, to approve a \$5,000 contribution to Platte County Weed Control. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

#### Albion Trail Dedication

It was reported that Kolar, Eschliman, and Smith had attended the Albion Trail Dedication and received several statements of appreciation for the NRD's contribution to the trail.

### MANAGER'S REPORT

#### Litigation Update

Callan stated that the Prokop case would be Wednesday in the Supreme Court and the Koch case had been set for November 20<sup>th</sup>.

#### New Hires

No new hires.

#### Non-Action Reports

No non-action reports. Callan announced that the November Committee meetings would be held on the 13<sup>th</sup> and the regular Board meeting would be on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

### NARD REPORT

#### Director's Report

Eschliman reported that the committee meeting was held in Norfolk with discussion on employee benefits and risk pool.

## NRC REPORT

### Commissioner's Report

Hadenfeldt reported that he had been put on the scoring committee and that 15 projects would be scored. He said that once the Commission had officially approved the projects, further reports would be made. Hadenfeldt reported that there was enough money to fund all projects and thought that close to \$17M would be spent if all projects are approved. Hadenfeldt stated there would be a full Commission meeting in December and perhaps a couple more Rules Committee meetings. He said any changes made would take time because of due process.

## RC&D REPORT

### Loup Basin RC&D

Thoene reported that the RC&D meeting was held at the Ord Fire Hall. He said the Junk Jaunt was discussed, along with several grants they are working on.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS/FUTURE MEETING TOPICS

Schultz stated that the dates of the Legislative Conference would be January 29-30, 2019.

## ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Eschliman declared the meeting adjourned at 6:40 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 29, 2018, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

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Henry J. Thoene  
Secretary