

# MINUTES

## LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

June 25, 2020

Ord, Nebraska

The June meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lower Loup Natural Resources District was held at the Headquarters Office, 2620 Airport Drive, Ord, Nebraska, and via teleconference, on June 25, 2020. Chairman Citta called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

### CALL TO ORDER

#### Directors in attendance at LLNRD Headquarters:

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer  
Randy Kauk  
Dean G. Thede

Jim Eschliman, Vice Chairman  
Gerald Smith  
Rick Vlach

#### Directors in attendance via teleconference:

Darwin B. Anderson  
Beth Boesch  
John Coffey  
Gary A. Kruse  
Larry Mohrman  
Chad J. Podolak

Robert L. Bauer  
Joseph L. Citta, Chairman  
N. Richard Hadenfeldt  
Matt Lukasiewicz  
Todd Nitsch

#### Directors absent:

James C. Adams  
Alan D. Petersen

Timothy E. Bartak  
Henry J. Thoene, Secretary

#### Staff in attendance:

Russell G. Callan, General Manager  
Irene F. Kreifels, Administrative Assistant  
Larry D. Schultz, I&E Coordinator  
Cam Conrad, Water Modeling Coordinator  
Brian Kolar, Projects Technician

Tylr Naprstek, Assistant General Manager  
Kim A. Lyons, Financial Secretary  
Richard L. Woollen, District Forester  
Dell R. Harris, Water Resources Specialist

Guests in attendance:

Larry Koelling, Ord

Larry White, North Loup

ROLL CALL

Roll Call was conducted. Directors present: Amsberry, Anderson, Bauer, Boesch, Citta, Coffey, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Mohrman, Nitsch, Smith, Thede, Vlach. Directors absent: Adams, Bartak, Petersen, Podolak, Thoene.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Citta stated that Directors Adams, Bartak, and Petersen had asked to be excused.

**Boesch motioned, seconded by Vlach, to excuse absent directors. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bauer, Boesch, Citta, Coffey, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Mohrman, Nitsch, Smith, Thede, Vlach. Director not present for vote: Podolak. Directors absent: Adams, Bartak, Petersen, Thoene.**

NOTICE OF OPEN MEETING LAW POSTING

Chairman Citta referred those in attendance at the Headquarters office to the open meeting law information posted in the Board room and said that meeting material was available at the entrance to the Board room. Citta also announced that, in accordance with Governor Ricketts' policy to allow meetings to be held by teleconference and to allow for social distancing in the Board room, General Manager Callan would monitor attendees for symptoms of illness, and anyone showing symptoms would be asked to leave.

VERIFICATION OF MEETING NOTICE AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairman Citta asked for verification of the meeting notice. Callan stated that the agenda was current, and that the meeting notices were properly published in all newspapers, posted at the NRD Headquarters office in Ord, on the NRD web site, and in the eight field office locations.

MINUTES

Chairman Citta asked for corrections and/or additions to the May 28, 2020, Board meeting minutes. No corrections were heard.

**Kruse motioned, seconded by Coffey, to approve the May 28, 2020, Board meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bauer, Boesch, Citta, Coffey, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Mohrman, Nitsch, Smith, Thede, Vlach. Director not present for vote: Podolak. Directors absent: Adams, Bartak, Petersen, Thoene.**

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Russell Callan, General Manager, highlighted expenditures of \$20,000.00 to the City of Fullerton for the NRD contribution for the Fullerton Pool Project; \$2,624.23 to Davidson Plumbing & Welding for repairs to the Davis Creek lift station; \$14,284.00 to Platinum Truck Service LLC for a new dump trailer; \$9,340.00 to Flatwater Group Inc for the DNR Application; \$1,250.00 to Central Platte NRD for Nature Conservancy/CPNRD Project contribution; and \$49,764.12 to Olsson for the City of Sargent Drainage Project.

Eschliman asked if the bill from Davidson Plumbing was a specialty deal since they were so far away. Callan stated that it was from the work Rutjens had completed. Kruse asked about the work from Olsson on the Sargent drainage and asked if there would be more bills to pay. Callan stated most likely there would be but will look into it for sure.

Podolak joined via teleconference at 5:13 p.m.

**Eschliman motioned, seconded by Kauk, to approve the June 25, 2020, Treasurer's Report and pay all bills. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bauer, Boesch, Citta, Coffey, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Mohrman, Nitsch, Podolak, Smith, Thede, Vlach. Directors absent: Adams, Bartak, Petersen, Thoene.**

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

Larry Koelling and Larry White were present for discussion on the North Loup Drainage Project and offered no comments at this time.

## FORESTER'S REPORT

Richard Woollen, District Forester, reported that the Nebraska Forest Service had received a grant from the U.S. Forest Service to conduct windbreak technology shortcourses. Woollen reported that he had taken one and felt that it helped with planning and design, so getting NRD personnel to attend would be top priority. Woollen also reported that buffer strip contracts and payments had been caught up and he had been working on fall renewals. He also reported that there were forest health concerns being addressed throughout the District due to the wet conditions last year and the declines this spring, as well as tree damage. He reported that most counties in the North Central District were opened for travel now.

## NRCS REPORT

Due to the absence of anyone from NRCS, directors were directed to refer to the report provided in the agenda.

## INFORMATION & EDUCATION REPORT

### Hazard Mitigation Plan

Larry Schultz, Information & Education Coordinator, reported that the NRD had received a grant to cover 75% of the cost of the Hazard Mitigation Plan; however, Lower Loup's plan was identified for additional review. More information will be forthcoming. Schultz reported that last year's sub-grants were not obligated until last fall.

### Great Park Pursuit

Schultz reported that Davis Creek had been selected for the Great Park Pursuit program this year. He said that this year they were allowing the normal rubbings and also have an app that can be downloaded that recognized the posts. He also reported that the post was moved further into the recreation area to encourage people to go in.

### 2021 NCF Envirothon

Eschliman reported that the NARD Board had voted to sponsor the 2021 Envirothon and that everything was in place to host next year's event.

## ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

### Davis Creek

Tylr Naprstek, Assistant General Manager, reported that the car counter was put out the June 13-14 and had 1,850 crossings, divided by two for vehicles. He that it was also put out on Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup> for the June 20-21 weekend and read 1,825 crossings; however, the bulk of traffic came in Thursday afternoon for a fishing tournament, so was not included in the count. Naprstek stated that the summer crew was keeping the area very well kept. He informed the Board of an incident on June 21<sup>st</sup>, where a kayaker had capsized and Scotia and North Loup Fire Departments responded. The gentleman involved in the accident was revived and doing okay. Naprstek informed the Board that the departments had a mule on site for emergencies that is stored in the NRD building.

Vlach suggested a fire lane near the boat ramp to keep a lane open for access when needed, but stated it was very convenient to have the mule on site for such instances.

### Pibel Lake

Naprstek reported that there was a fish kill caused by bacterial infection at Pibel Lake. He stated that it was mostly bluegill impacted and it was determined that it was common due to the heat. Naprstek also reported that Pibel Lake was featured in NebraskaLand magazine for being a trophy bass fishing area. He informed the Board that staff would be sampling the water for NDEE every two weeks for the remainder of the summer and that the water quality sensor is online. Callan showed a video he had taken the previous weekend showing use of the lake.

### Columbus Area Water Resources Assessment Study

Naprstek reported that the Columbus Project would be discussed in Water Resources Committee reporting.

### Buffalo County – Aerial Electromagnetic Survey (AEM)

Naprstek reported that work was completed with AEM.

### Cover Crop Study

Naprstek reported that new nodes had been installed and landowners were using the information provided.

## WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Columbus Recharge Project

Callan reported that the NRD was working with U.S. Fish and Wildlife on concerns regarding water being pumped into Christopher's Cove and that we received the contract from the Bureau to be signed for the grant. Callan also reported that the NRD was working with the City to have the existing easements put under the NRD.

### City of Sargent Flood Mitigation Project

Naprstek reported that options were being reviewed to switch from surface water to groundwater irrigation. He stated that six sites had been identified to switch over. There was feedback taken until the 19<sup>th</sup> on the project and the majority of the comments received were positive. Naprstek stated that most people felt that groundwater was a major concern and they did not realize that there was also a drainage issue.

Lukasiewicz reported that there was initially 1,200 acres to transfer in the circumference around the outside of the City of Sargent; however, they looked at half and felt it would be just as effective since there would be less wells put in. They were uncertain how many acres would need transferred but stated the irrigation district would help wherever they could. Naprstek stated the mayor had given good feedback and that Olsson should have a draft report in July.

### 2019 New Acres Certifications

It was reported that last year's new applications were being reviewed and producers have until July 1<sup>st</sup> to certify the acres through the NRD process. Naprstek reported that Cam Conrad, Water Modeling Coordinator, would rerun the acre-feet impact numbers and further reporting would be given in July.

## LLNRD Industrial/Commercial/Livestock High-Capacity Wells

Naprstek reported that Moudry had been working on gathering information on industrial, commercial, and livestock wells. He said he had about a 72% response rate and the rest had de minimis use. Work was being done to develop a reporting system so the NRD would have better access to the information.

## SubAreas 29 & 30 Flowmeter Installation Report

Naprstek reported that staff had received four flowmeter applications in SubArea 29 and 24 applications in SubArea 30, which is about ¼ of what was anticipated. Boesch asked what the cost-share amounts were and Naprstek replied that it provided up to \$2,000 for the flowmeter and equipment including the check valve, which is about 75-80 percent of the cost.

## PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE

### Ericson Dam Request

Kruse reported that the Committee was informed by Callan that Joe Wadas from the Ericson Lake Corporation had contacted the NRD and asked if the NRD would be interested in taking over the dam maintenance and operation. Callan stated he had been in contact with Wadas, and the lake corporation would work on putting together a proposal on what they want the NRD to do. Further information will be shared with the Board as it becomes available.

### North Loup Flood Mitigation

It was reported that the NRD received a report from JEO on the North Loup Flood Mitigation options. Callan stated that JEO had collected correspondence that Kolar gathered and put them in their report. The report was reviewed onscreen for those in attendance. JEO's final recommendation was to clean out the channel and put in a bigger berm around the town and add some kind of dam structure on the north end of Mira Creek drainage. Kruse reported that the Committee recommended to accept the report. Callan stated that after acceptance, the NRD would further decide what should be done.

**Kruse motioned, seconded by Boesch, to accept JEO's North Loup Flood Mitigation report.**

Hadenfeldt asked if the public present had any comments on the matter. Citta asked if they were present to comment on the report or if they had general comments on the project.

Larry Koelling, Ord, addressed the Board and asked if a large dam was in the report. Callan replied that it was one of the recommendations. Koelling informed the Board that he lived under where the proposed dam would be located. Koelling asked if the project would be primarily for flood control or if it would be used as a recreation project. It was expressed that flood control was the concern right now. Koelling stated that he thought a dry dam would be better than a wet dam because it takes less property and less money to build initially, and thought

there would be damage caused from having a body of water in the area, he stated that they already had a significant amount of water pressure and felt that adding a dam would cause increased pressure and increased groundwater levels. Koelling stated that he thought the cost of a dry dam vs. a wet dam would be considerably less costly, it would take less land out of production and affected tax dollars would be less. Also, a dry dam would take what the berm stops and would not flood because the water would be released out over several days. Koelling stated he felt there could be rental agreements made with the landowners that would take on the flood waters.

Larry White, North Loup, address the Board and stated that he felt a dam was a big concern because it would set on his property. He stated that his dad owned the land back in the 60's where Davis Creek is currently located. He stated that the railroad already acts as a dam and causes some flooding. White expressed that he thought that it was an issue that needed to be taken care of but was concerned about losing land. He said he trusted the Board to do what was right in the matter.

Lukasiewicz stated he was curious if there was mention of a dry dam or mention of installing a culvert under the tracks. Callan stated that the tracks are after North Loup, so the water goes through town and then hits the tracks. He stated that a dry dam was mentioned in the report but was not JEO's final recommendation. Naprstek highlighted where the dam option was mentioned in the report.

Hadenfeldt stated that right now the Board was just accepting the report and could further evaluate. Podolak stated he thought it would be good to learn more about dry dams and see why it was not higher on the list. Citta asked if the staff could approach JEO with more questions and Callan stated staff would. Citta asked if the report was very detailed or took a high-level look at the issues. Callan stated the report was not detailed by means of construction; however, a good job was done of modeling the flooding situation. Citta stated it might be beneficial for the Board to review the report and asked for the vote to be held on the motion on the floor.

**Motion was carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bauer, Boesch, Citta, Coffey, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Mohrman, Nitsch, Podolak, Smith, Thede, Vlach. Directors absent: Adams, Bartak, Petersen, Thoene.**

Citta asked if a copy of the report could be emailed for the Board to review. Callan stated that it was online but could also be sent to directors

#### City of Sargent Area Drainage Issues

Callan said there were no updates. He said a YouTube video that was sent out and hopefully everyone had a chance to view it.

### Sargent East Drainage

It was reported that there was a meeting held with participants based on NRCS's design plans. Callan stated that landowners came to the NRD on two different occasions and went through the NRCS plans. Callan stated that some were not necessarily happy because they did not get everything they wanted drained, but for the most part realized that it should help. He stated there was some conversation on culvert placement and thought they liked the plan so far. Kruse stated that the next thing step was to do a design and feasibility study and figure benefit ratios. Kruse reported that the Committee recommended that the Board send out RFPs for design feasibility and benefit.

**Kruse motioned, seconded by Hadenfeldt, to send out RFPs on the Sargent East Drainage Project for design feasibility and benefit ratio figures.**

Podolak asked if all the landowners were still on board. Callan stated they have had lots of questions, but none have protested; however, they do not get to make that decision until the next step in the process. Kauk asked if wetlands would be affected. Citta stated the wetland issues should be addressed in the design phase and also when permitting was reviewed. Citta thought that permitting issues may have caused issues in the past. Callan stated that staff was putting together a skeleton idea of what it would look like and also had been looking at what landowners could do instead of wetlands, but stated that permitting would be a big part of the project.

**Motion was carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bauer, Boesch, Citta, Coffey, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Mohrman, Nitsch, Podolak, Smith, Thede, Vlach. Director not present for vote: Lukasiwicz. Directors absent: Adams, Bartak, Petersen, Thoene.**

### Building Addition

Callan said that he had received projected cost estimates of \$567,000 for additional offices and \$842,000 for the tree cooler addition. Callan was asked to find out what the cost would be to draw up blueprints on the proposed additions and found it would be about \$128,000.

Kruse asked if other groups would be providing estimates. Callan stated that he started with CMBA Architects because they had the blueprints of the current NRD building.

### Platte County Flood Zone Buyout

Callan stated there was no additional information on the buyout program. He said he had talked to someone about activities happening on the property the NRD may be interested in and it looked like logging was taking place. Coffey stated the crews had pulled out and land had been reseeded. Boesch asked if the tree removal would have any effect on future flooding. Callan stated he had been in contact with Mary Baker and would watch for more information. Podolak expressed concern with trees being removed and causing blowouts in the future and that it should be discussed with Baker. Coffey said he knew people that farmed the ground and would see if he

could find out any information about it. Mohrman stated that he had been contacted by Baker and the grant application was submitted to NEMA. She had said she would get ahold of him if there was any information needed, otherwise she would get back to him after July 1<sup>st</sup> with updates.

#### Potential Platte County Flooding Study

Callan stated there was no new information available, but it should be included in the next hazard mitigation plan.

#### Future Project Discussion

Smith asked about future project discussion on a property that was discussed at the last meeting. Callan stated it would be discussed later.

### MANAGER'S REPORT

#### Litigation Update

Citta stated he was still waiting on DNR for the Platte Republican Diversion and Instream flow work is still being done. He stated the DNR asked for additional information and Blankenau was working on it.

#### New Hires

Callan reported that there were no new hires.

#### Non-Action Reports

Callan stated that hopefully next month there would be more freedom with the COVID-19 situation. Citta asked if the NRD had a plan put together for reentry. Callan stated he had been thinking about it and there had been discussion in-office. He stated he thought for the Board meetings, everyone could be in one room. He reported that currently there was still one staff member working from home and there hadn't been an outcry to let the public back in. He said he thought the doors would be opened back up in the next month or two. Callan stated he was following NRCS's guidelines and that we would do whatever the Governor Ricketts allowed for future meetings.

### FY 2021 BUDGET WORK SESSION

Callan went over the following budget codes and the suggested amounts for budget.

- Code 475 – Buffer Strip Program - \$173,000
- Code 462 – Arboretum Budget - \$10,000
- Code 438 – Special Projects – \$1,250,040
- Code 473 & 301 – Water Quality Fund - \$105,000

Code 301&303 – State and Federal Grant Funds - \$5,000,000  
Code 422 – Scrap Tire Collection - \$86,000  
Code 471 – Water Well Decommissioning Fund - \$30,000  
Code 470 & 440 – Land Treatment - \$434,100  
Code 441 – Project Construction - \$6,500,000  
Code 443 – Project Land Rights - \$600,000  
Code 445 – Project Legal Costs - \$70,000  
Code 447 – Assessment Projects - \$2,500 (Duncan East IPA)  
Code 448 – Assessment Projects - \$350 (Lost Creek IPA)  
Code 466 – FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan - \$140,000  
Code 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 441.01 – Park and Recreation Financial Assistance Program - \$12,000  
Code 163 & 161 – Capital Improvements & Land - \$1,000,000

**Smith motioned, seconded by Amsberry, to tentatively approve the second half of the FY 2021 budget as presented.**

Citta clarified that the motion was for the corrections noted during discussion.

**Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bauer, Boesch, Citta, Coffey, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Mohrman, Nitsch, Podolak, Smith, Thede, Vlach. Directors absent: Adams, Bartak, Petersen, Thoene.**

### NARD REPORT

Eschliman read a statement expressing support for peaceful legal protest and explaining that the NARD does not support destruction of property. He reported that staff was assessing damage at the NARD building after damage caused by protestors and they have been working with a salvage company. In the meantime, they were creating a committee to work through relocation. Eschliman reported that so far, they had found that most of the desks cannot be restored; however, most things would be covered by insurance. He stated the annual meeting is scheduled for September 27-29 in Kearney but would keep an eye on the current COVID situation. Eschliman reported that the deadline for resolutions was August 14<sup>th</sup>. He said that NARD had contracted with NET to do a television spot. Callan stated that Dean Edson was working to keep all fall events scheduled if possible. Eschliman reported that a risk pool meeting was scheduled for July 31<sup>st</sup> at the NRD and anyone interested was welcome to attend.

### NRC REPORT

Hadenfeldt reported that there had not been any correspondence and that the next meeting was still scheduled for August.

## RC&D REPORT

Adams and Thoene were not present to provide a report.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS / FUTURE MEETING TOPICS

There were no announcements or future meeting topics.

**Eschliman motioned, seconded by Kruse, to enter Executive Session at 6:48 p.m. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bauer, Boesch, Citta, Coffey, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Mohrman, Nitsch, Podolak, Smith, Thede, Vlach. Directors absent: Adams, Bartak, Petersen, Thoene.**

**Lukasiewicz motioned, seconded by Smith, to exit Executive Session at 7:01 p.m. with no action taken. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bauer, Boesch, Citta, Coffey, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Mohrman, Nitsch, Podolak, Smith, Thede, Vlach. Directors absent: Adams, Bartak, Petersen, Thoene.**

## ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Citta declared the meeting adjourned at 7:03 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 July 23, 2020, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

---

Henry J. Thoene  
Secretary