

MINUTES

LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING SPECIAL SESSION

January 19, 2021

Ord, Nebraska

The January special session 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 January 19, 2021. Chairman Citta called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Directors in attendance:

N. Richard Hadenfeldt
Todd Nitsch
Gerald Smith
Rick Vlach

Larry Mohrman
Alan D. Petersen
Dean G. Thede

Directors in attendance via teleconference (voting):

James C. Adams
Darwin B. Anderson
Joseph L. Citta, Chairman
Jim Eschliman, Vice Chairman
Gary A. Kruse
Chad J. Podolak

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer
Beth Boesch
John Coffey
Randy Kauk
Matt Lukasiewicz
Henry J. Thoene, Secretary

Directors absent:

Timothy E. Bartak

Robert L. Bauer

Staff in attendance:

Russell G. Callan, General Manager
Irene F. Kreifels, Administrative Assistant
Dell R. Harris, Water Resources Specialist

Tylr Naprstek, Assistant General Manager
Kim A. Lyions, Financial Secretary
Cam Conrad, Water Modeling Coordinator

Guests in attendance:

Micheal Kozeal, Sargent
Gerry Sheets, Sargent

Reece Jensen, Sargent
Tim Clayton, Sargent

Guests in attendance via teleconference:

Karen Griffin, Olsson, Lincoln

Carrie Romero, Olsson, Lincoln

NOTICE OF OPEN MEETING LAW POSTING

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

Citta announced that due to Executive Order No. 21-02: Coronavirus – Continued Limited Waiver of Public Meetings Requirements, Board members were able to attend and vote via teleconference.

VERIFICATION OF MEETING NOTICE AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairman Citta asked for verification of the meeting notice. General Manager Russell 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 website, and in the eight field office locations.

ROLL CALL

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

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Chairman Citta stated that Director Bauer had asked to be excused.

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments.

SARGENT FLOOD RESILIENCY PROJECT

Karen Griffin, Olsson, gave an update on the Sargent Flood and Drainage Project. Griffin reviewed the issues in Sargent and the drainage analysis which showed that the water capacity is exceeding what the city drainage can handle. She explained that they had been looking at various alternatives to solve the flooding issues in town. During the analysis they identified culverts that needed to be replaced as well as construction of a diversion channel to divert excess water flows to the Middle Loup River.

Carrie Romero, Olsson, explained that too small of storm drains had caused issues over the years resulting in inundation of roadways, leading to icy conditions in winter as well as issues with residents' basements flooding. She stressed that the priority was to improve the drainage to prevent frequent flooding of streets and basements. A map was shown highlighting where flooding occurs and locations of the proposed culvert replacements and diversion channel.

It was explained that the estimated cost for the project, including engineering, design, and permitting would total a little over \$5 million and that the City of Sargent was applying for FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant that would help with the project. Olsson had recommended that the City apply for the BRIC grant as well as a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to cover most of the funds needed. They are requesting that the NRD commit to funding the project.

Boesch asked what the estimate was for land acquisition if the land would have easements or would be purchased from the current landowner. Romero explained that the land would most likely be purchased because after the diversion was in place the land would not be useful for anything else.

Podolak asked about the culvert locations and how the diversion channel would be fed. Romero highlighted areas on the map and showed the locations of the proposed culvert replacements and discussed the various areas in town where flooding was occurring on a regular basis, in both residential and commercial areas. She explained that the new channel would be lower than the existing channel to properly divert the water. Griffin stated there would also be a siphon installed to get the water back to the river.

Callan stated that, so far, the NRD had contributed roughly \$77,000 for the study and that what Olsson had come up with would help resolve ongoing flooding issues.

Kruse stated that the Programs/Projects Committee had met with representatives from Sargent and discussed the project during the Committee meeting held earlier in the day. He stated that the City had expressed their commitment to the project and had requested NRD participation. Kruse stated the Committee recommended that the NRD participate in the project.

Kruse motioned, seconded by Eschliman, to approve contributions to the Sargent Flood Resiliency Project up to \$250,000 or half of the local match.

Citta stated he supported the project; however, he wanted to know which categories under the NRD's funding policy the project would be listed. Kruse stated the Committee was looking at a combination of different categories and rounded up to 50%. Callan stated that the project fit under Flood Control as well as others and does not exceed the 60% total the NRD can go up to. Citta stated he just wanted to be sure that directors were aware the NRD was going over the usual participation percentage.

Eschliman stated he seconded the motion because flooding had been an ongoing problem and the NRD had the flexibility to assist with the project. He stated he felt that the total may not add up to the \$250,000 due to other grant applications that could be submitted for the project.

Thoene asked if the \$77,000 already contributed was included in these numbers. Callan stated that this was extra and the \$150,000 he had given in the Committee meeting was for both the Sargent and North Loup projects. Kruse clarified that the \$5 million only included work in the City of Sargent and any well work outside of the city would be additional.

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

CITY OF COLUMBUS FLOOD MITIGATION SCOPING PROJECT

Kruse stated that City of Columbus representatives had discussed their project with the Programs/Projects Committee. He said the project had an estimated cost of \$100,000 for their share and that they had a FEMA grant application that was due and that they needed a letter of financial commitment. Callan stated that the City's contribution was different than what was stated in the agenda and they would need \$62,500 for the local match on the project. Kruse stated their portion was a little over 25%.

Kruse motioned to approve contributions to the project, not to exceed \$16,000.

Podolak asked what issues the City was facing. Callan stated they were looking at ways to prevent future flooding along the stream up to the railroad bridge and that there was not a specific project, they were studying ways to mitigate what happened with the recent flooding.

Coffey stated he did not understand what the City wanted to do. He stated the City did not have any damage from the flooding and had some concerns with what they were planning along the river outside of the City. Callan stated that the City did have damage to the levee and drains during the flooding and that they wanted to mitigate future effects.

Kruse stated they were looking to go outside of the City to the railroad bridge and to the west and that they were looking at the east boundary as well. He said they felt they needed to see what changes could be made to help in the future.

Podolak asked if the property the NRD was looking at is included in this area and if tree removal on that property would help. Callan stated he had discussed it with them. Citta stated that the portion of the land with the trees narrowed the stream and he hoped that the study would

look at options with tree removal. Callan stated that this would be for future discussions with the project.

Boesch seconded the motion. Motion was carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Adams, Amsberry, Anderson, Boesch, Citta, Eschliman, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Mohrman, Nitsch, Petersen, Podolak, Smith, Thede, Thoene, Vlach. Director voting no: Coffey. Directors absent: Bartak, Bauer.

Citta stated there was nothing else on the agenda to discuss and asked if there was anything else the Board needed to discuss.

Podolak stated that the NRD Legislative Conference would be next week and wanted to know the status. Callan stated he would be reaching out to everyone and that the plans had changed for the conference. He said there would be no breakout sessions or meals; however, there would be committee meetings on Monday and a business session on Tuesday, but everything else had been cancelled. Eschliman stated he thought the meetings would be set up via Zoom for those who wanted to attend online. Callan stated that anyone who wanted to go could, and that rooms were reserved, but they could be cancelled if need be.

Kauk asked if there was anyone present from Sargent. Callan introduced Micheal Kozeal, Reece Jensen, Gerry Sheets and Tim Clayton and thanked them for their attendance.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Citta declared the meeting adjourned at 6:15 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 January 28, 2021, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

Henry J. Thoene
Secretary