



UPPER NIOBRARA WHITE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

**Board of Directors' Meeting
April 9, 2015**

In accordance with LB 325, Eighty-fourth Legislature, First Session (1975), the Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District held a public meeting at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 9th, 2015, at the Upper Niobrara White NRD Office in Chadron, NE. An agenda for this meeting to be considered at such date, time and place was kept continually current and was available in the NRD office. Seven days prior to the meeting, the agenda was mailed to each member of the Board of Directors and other interested and affected persons. Notice of the meeting was given to the public by publishing a legal notice on the UNWNRD website and The Chadron Record on April 1st, 2015.

Open Meeting Law Act

Chairman Richard Zochol pointed out the Open Meeting Law Act that was displayed at the entrance of the meeting room.

Roll Call & Introduction of Guests

Chairman Zochol called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and roll call was taken with the following Directors present:

Scott Berndt	David Carlson
Dave Kadlecak	Rich Zochol
John Burke 9:03a.m.	Tod Dorshorst
Nancy Fisher	Allen Rasmussen
Kevin Oligmueller	

Absent: Steve Sandberg, Mike Strasburger

Others Present:

Pat O'Brien, NRD General Manger	Lynn Webster, NRD Assistant Manager
Sheri Daniels, Conservation Programs Coordinator	Haley Anders, NRD Water Resources Mngr
Kylen Weingart, NRD Office Manager	Nevin Price, NRD Resources Technician
Fred McCartney, NFS	Robin Foulk, NRCS Conservationist
Steve Edwards, Aqua Spy	Del Penlerick, Aqua Spy
Don Grien	Andy Curd

Emergency Agenda Additions

None.

NRCS Robin Foulk

Dave George, Rangeland Management Specialist, for the Sheridan County NRCS office in Rushville will be leaving his position and moving to Montana to work for the NRCS in that area. Robin briefly discussed some of the work that Dave has been able to do for Sheridan County over the years.

Robin discussed the vacancies in the district and within NRCS statewide. Not only will Dave's position need to be filled but the NRCS in Box Butte County is in need of a new technician and the Dawes County office is in need of a Soil Conservation Technician. These job openings will hopefully be posted soon.

NRCS staff has been working to get the tree belts flagged for machine planting that will begin in the next couple weeks.

**Nebraska Forest Service
Fred McCartney**

Fred discussed the wood grinding project that will begin on May 1st in Chadron and Crawford to clean up several tree branches still in the area from the October 2013 snow storm. A contractor from Sidney, Nebraska will be in charge of the project. The mulch created will be free to members of the community.

A grant was awarded to complete an engineering and feasibility study done at Chadron State College to determine the need to expand the boiler system at the college that would provide heating and cooling to several other entities including the Chadron Public Schools, Chadron Hospital and the new swimming pool.

Fred also discussed the saw log market in the Pine Ridge area and entertained questions from several Directors.

Finally, Fred explained the Bio Char market and mentioned that this is a growing market being utilized by both Great Brittan and China.

**Midwest Farm Services
Steve Edwards/Del Penlerick**

Steve Edwards gave a presentation on the Soil Moisture equipment offered by Aqua Spy. He explained how the sensors work and what they can be used for. Del Penlerick discussed a request for the NRD to provide cost share funding to land owners interested in using this technology in their farming operations.

**General Manager
Pat O'Brien**

Pat added the following to his written report:

- Pat and Robin Foulk discussed the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative Grant and the funding they are requesting to be used to update irrigation pivot sprinklers and nozzles. There are six other proposals from Nebraska that have been sent in to the national office, and hope to find out in late 2015 whether or not the proposal has been approved.
- NRD staff will pick up the fist load of trees on April 10th from Bessey Nursery.
- Pat provided the Directors with an update on the Waters of the US Rule. The EPA received over one million comments regarding this rule. EPA has also decided to rename the rule: Clean Water Rule.
- Pat asked the Directors to be thinking about several upcoming meetings including the Managers Retreat and the Niobrara Basin Planning Meeting.

**Assistant Manager
Lynn Webster**

Lynn added the following to his written report:

- NRD staff has completed Static Water Levels and a preliminary report was provided to the Directors. Lynn indicated that there shouldn't be many changes from the preliminary report to the final report.
- Lynn attended the Oil & Gas Commission Hearing regarding the water waste disposal well in southern Sioux County and then provided the Directors with a brief report on the hearing.

**Conservation Programs Coordinator
Sheri Daniels**

Sheri added the following to her written report:

Regular Board of Directors' Meeting
April 9, 2015

- Chadron High School received the wild card for the State Envirothon contest and the NRD will provide funding from the More Kids in the Woods grant to help with travel expenses.
- Gordon Rushville Public Schools have also requested funding to replace the woodchips underneath their playground equipment which the NRD has also agreed to provide out of the More Kids in the Wood grant.

**Office Manager
Kylen Weingart**

Kylen gave a brief update on tree sales, and her recent administrative meeting and payroll seminar.

**Water Resources Manager
Haley Anders**

Haley added the following to her written report:

- She will be going with Nevin to pick up the remaining trees from Bessey Nursery April 14th.
- She gave a presentation at the Chemigation training that went well.

**Resources Technician
Nevin Price**

Nevin added the following to his written report:

- There will be two field days for soil moisture probes technology and use in June. The first will be June 8th at Mark Burskrk's and June 15th at Mike Van Buskrik's.

Approval of Consent Agenda

John Burke moved to approve the consent agenda, Tod Dorshorst seconded the motion. Roll call: (9) ayes, (0) nays. Absent: Steve Sandberg, Mike Strasburger.

Agency Reports

**Nebraska Association of Resources Districts
Tod Dorshorst**

Director Dorshorst reported on the following:

- The Directors will need to make a decision on whether or not to participate in the NET television special that the Nebraska NRD's have been asked to participate in. The Board will vote at the next meeting.

**Nebraska Natural Resources Commission
Dave Kadlecek**

Director Kadlecek reported on the following:

- The NRC Rules and Regulations meeting was held in Scottsbluff on March 26th. Director Kadlecek and Lynn Webster were in attendance. Director Kadlecek gave a brief report on the happenings at the meeting and noted that there will be a public hearing held to discuss the draft of the rules and regulations.

**Niobrara River Basin Alliance
Dave Carlson**

Director Carlson had nothing to report.

**Water Committee Report
Tod Dorshorst**

Director Dorshorst reported on the following:

Regular Board of Directors' Meeting
April 9, 2015

- Pat discussed the process for developing the watershed management plan for the White River-Hat Creek basin and the draft budget as requested by the Directors.
- As part of the watershed management planning process, NRCS and others prioritize the collection of Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data and information. The NRD's contribution to the project can be used as non-federal match for the Section 319 grant. The data and information would be used in the future for project planning and implementation.

Director Rasmussen moved to participate in the proposed Watershed Management Plan, Dave Carlson seconded the motion. Roll Call: (9) ayes, (0) nays. Absent: Steve Sandberg, Mike Strasburger.

Operating, Personnel, and Safety Policy Committee
Dave Kadleck

Director Kadleck reported on the following:

- The Personnel Policy currently states that only full time employees are eligible for retirement benefits. The committee is proposing an amendment the policy for full time employees who move to regular part time and are 100% vested in the retirement program.

Dave Kadleck moved to amend the Personnel Policy to provide retirement benefits to regular part time employees who are 100% vested, Scott Berndt seconded the motion. Roll Call: (9) ayes, (0) nays. Absent: Steve Sandberg, Mike Strasburger.

- The NRD no till drill is not currently in working order. It is being evaluated on out at Butler Ag Equipment and a decision will be made whether or not the repairs will be made. The Directors discussed applying for an NET grant next year to replace this drill.

Old or New Business

None

Excused Absences

Dave Carlson moved to excuse Steve Sandberg and Mike Strasburger from the meeting, Dave Kadleck seconded the motion. Roll Call: (9) ayes, (0) nays. Absent: Steve Sandberg, Mike Strasburger.


Public Comment

Andy Curd discussed a meeting he had with the Department of Natural Resources regarding the data and information on the INSIGHT web site. Mr. Curd request that Department staff re-evaluate the basin water supply and demand without the hydropower component.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.


Rich Zochol, Chairman of the Board


Patrick O'Brien, General Manager

Date Signed 5-14-15