

UPPER NIOBRARA WHITE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

Board of Directors' Meeting
April 8, 2014

In accordance with LB 325, Eighty-fourth Legislature, First Session (1975), the Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District held a public meeting at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 8th, 2014, at the UNWNRD 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 2, 2014.

Open Meeting Law Act

Chairman Zochol pointed out the Open Meeting Law Act that is displayed on the wall.

Roll Call & Introduction of Guests

Chairman, Richard Zochol, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and roll call was taken with the following directors present:

Scott Berndt	Curt Roth
John Burke	Steve Sandberg
Larry Teahon	Dave Carlson
Tod Dorshorst	Rich Zochol
Kevin Oligmueller	Jim Lees
Dave Kadlecek	

Others present:

Pat O'Brien, NRD General Manger	Lynn Webster, NRD Assistant Manager
Kody Schwager, NRD Resources Technician	Sheri Daniels, NRD Water Resources Manager
Kylen Weingart, NRD Office Manager	Jessyca Hovendick, NRD Resource Technician
Robin Foulk, NRCS DC	Travis Nitsch, NRD Resource Coordinator
Kerri Rempp (Chadron Record)	Haley Anders, NRD Resource Technician
Don Grein	Doak Nickerson, Nebraska Forest Service
Maureen Skavdahl	Shelley Steffl, Nebraska Game & Parks
James Skavdahl	Katie Kuhnel, Nebraska Game & Parks
Laurie Norman	Shar Sapp
Andy Curd	Charlie Hamilton
Ken Frey	Fred Hagman
Dixie Lees	Al Rassmussen

Emergency Agenda Additions

None

NRCS
Robin Foulk

Robin went over each of the 2014 Agricultural Act Programs described on her report.

Nebraska Forest Service
Doak Nickerson

Doak gave a brief update on the forestry field meeting that was held at the Legion club in Chadron, NE. They discussed how to deal with all of the trees and branches knocked down after October blizzard. They discussed grinding trees as the alternative to burning trees. The City of Alliance allowed them to use their tree grinder. Doak discussed how the problem was dealt with up in Rapid City, SD.

The forest service is looking to get a grant from NDEQ to take care of the trees in Chadron, NE. They are hoping to use the tree grinder to take care of the trees which would then create high quality mulch. They also discussed the possibility of burning this mulch at Chadron State College, but this was not possible because the college is only permitted for ponderosa pine and this would be a mixture of different wood, they also do not want to infringe in the chip contractor that supplies the college, and the final reason for not using Chadron State College is because after grinding the trees there was a small amount of metal that came out in the process and this would not be good for the boilers at Chadron State College.

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
Shelley Steffl

Shelley discussed the programs that the Game and Parks had to offer. The Crop Stubble Management, Wildlife and Water Conservation Program allowed for 50,000 acres of tall stubble left for wildlife. The Nebraska Game & Parks Commission will pay the land owner \$10 per acre for tall stubble and as the allocation from last year was not met there are extra acres available this year. Shelley passed out a brochure discussing this program.

Shelley discussed was the Wildlife Friendly Fencing Incentive. This program offers land owners up to \$1000 per mile for any new fence or reconstructed fence that follows the wildlife friendly guidelines. This program has enough funding to go for up to 50 miles.

The Wild Nebraska program in which they were allocated \$75,000 that will not be split up by NRD's, it will be first come first serve as to make sure the allocation does not go to waste. Game and Parks Commission staff will sit down with the UNWNRD to discuss further plans for this program and others.

Concerned Groundwater Users
Presentation by Andy Curd

Andy Curd discussed the 2014 observation well measurements, the density of irrigation development among the ground water sub-areas, and the historical relationship between irrigation, precipitation and groundwater. Mr. Curd used information provided to him by the UNWNRD to put together his research for his presentation. After the presentation Mr. Curd asked the members of the board to reconsider the allocation, stating that precipitation recharges the aquifer and has a larger effect on the ground water supply than irrigation does. After his presentation he asked for other comment from the public group in participation at the meeting.

Other concerned groundwater users then added their comments including the need for more accurate water measurements by means of electronic water measurement tools. Sheri Daniels mentioned that the NRD uses two electronic measurement tools to take measurements of the groundwater supply. Other comments regarding the supply of ground water included the existence of wells that are more than 100 years old that are still being used today.

Ken Frey, who lives in the sand hills south of Hay Springs, NE, mentioned that farmers cannot raise higher quality crops on the allocation limit of 15 inches. He also mentioned that there was no waste of water in irrigation because all the water used would then return to groundwater. There was also mention that not all of the sub areas would need to be regulated the same.

Fred Hagman mentioned that this allocation proposal has already made groundwater users more conscious of how they use water and to do a better job of conserving it but that he still didn't believe the allocation was necessary.

After all public comments had concluded Tod Dorshorst mentioned that Ken Frey who had stood up against the allocation was originally on board with the allocation in the sub areas of 4 and 6 but now that the allocation was going to affect his sub area he was against it. Tod stated that this allocation was being done as a preventative measure for the other sub areas.

**General Manager
Pat O'Brien**

Pat added the following to his written report:

- Pat introduced the new Office Manager, Kylan Weingart. Kylan gave a brief introduction.
- Ann Cotton, the NRSC Secretary will be leaving so the NRD is working to fill this position. Pat mentioned that there were 14 applicants for this position and he will be working with Robin Foulk to fill this position shortly.
- Pat recapped the most recent legislative activity.

**Assistant Manager
Lynn Webster**

Lynn added the following to his written report:

- Lynn gave an update to the water level measurements in each sub area.

**Water Resources Manager
Sheri Daniels**

Sheri added the following to her written report:

- Sheri wanted to let everyone know about a few press releases coming out soon regarding the educational meetings the NRD has going on as well as whether or not the Water Meeting will be rescheduled.

**Resources Coordinator
Travis Nitsch**

Travis added the following to his report:

- The NRD has currently sold more than 120,000 trees to date and 460,000 linear feet of weed barrier.
- Travis noted that last year the NRD sold 148,000 trees by the end of the season and he hoped we would be right in that area after tree season was over.
- Travis notes that there would be some trees available for sale to accommodate walk in customers.

**Resources Technician
Haley Anders**

Haley had nothing to add to her written report.

**Resources Technician
Kody Schwager**

Kody added the following to his report:

- Kody will be working on the soil moisture sensing program so if anyone is interested in soil moisture sensing to give him a call and he would get everything lined up for that.

**Resources Technician
Jessyca Hovendick**

Jessyca had nothing to add to her report.

Approval of Consent Agenda

John Burke moved to approve the consent agenda with the correction of previous minutes to state that John Burke was absent, Tod Dorshorst seconded the motion. Roll call: (11) ayes, (0) nays.

Agency Reports

**Nebraska Association of Resources Districts
Curtis Roth**

Director Roth had nothing to report.

**Nebraska Natural Resources Commission
Dave Kadlecek**

Director Kadlecek reported on the following:

- Dave added to the discussion about LB1098 regarding the water use within the State of Nebraska.

**Niobrara River Basin Alliance
Dave Carlson**

Director Carlson reported on the following:

- Dave discussed the committee meeting held on March 19th, 2014 regarding some other State Legislation.
- There will be another meeting held sometime this month, date has not been set.

**Water Committee Report
Tod Dorshorst**

Director Dorshorst reported on the following:

- There was a request for a transfer of allocation. Barbara Marcy Trust has applied to transfer a portion of the remaining allocation from one tract of land to another, there is allocation remaining for the transfer and the request meets the District's rules and regulations
The Water Committee recommended approval.

John Burke moved to approve the Marcy request, Dave Carlson seconded the motion. Roll call: (11) ayes, (0) nays.

The water committee will be recommending going ahead with the allocation on sub areas 4 and 6. The committee would like to have another advisory meeting to gather more input and solutions to groundwater management.

Pat discussed when a good time for this meeting would be. Public notice will be given when the meeting details are finalized.

**Operating, Personnel, and Safety Policy Committee
Dave Kadlecek**

Director Kadlecek reported on the following:

Regular Board of Directors' Meeting
April 8, 2014

- The trees on the back edge of the property are dying and need addressed. They are partially on private ground so the NRD would need land owner permission.
- Pat discussed that the trees could be a liability and the NRD could be held responsible if there are any problems. The NRD will contact the land owner to discuss removing the trees.
- Pat further discussed the insurance policy used by the NRD. The OPP Committee would like to advertise for quotes for the upcoming year.

Old or New Business

None.

Public Comment

No further Comment

Executive Session

Dave Kadlecek moved to go into an Executive Session at 3:23 pm to discuss legal issues; Curtis Roth seconded the motion. Roll call: (11) ayes, (0) nays

John Burke moved to close the Executive Session at 3:50 pm; Scott Berndt seconded the motion; Roll call: (11) ayes, (0) nays

Excused Absences

None

Next Board Meeting

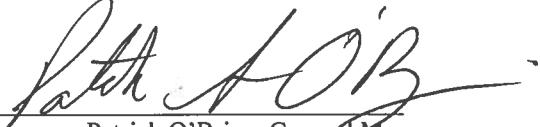
John Burke moved to have the next board meeting May 8th, 2014 at 9 a.m. in Alliance, NE, Scott Berndt seconded the motion: Roll Call: (11) ayes, (0) nays.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.



Rich Zochol, Chairman of the Board



Patrick O'Brien, General Manager

Date Signed 5.15.14