

**UPPER ELKHORN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
June 26, 2017
O'Neill, Nebraska**

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order at 7:05 P.M. by Chairman Gene Kelly. The meeting was advertised in the Holt County Independent, the official UENRD newspaper. The Open Meetings Act was posted for public review.

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Gary Bartak	Mark Carpenter	Chris Dierks	Curtis Gotschall	Keith Heithoff
Ted Hughes	Jim Keller (7:09 pm)	Gene Kelly	John Meuret	Michael Moser
Aaron Rice	Roy Stewart	Chip Whitaker	Dale Wiles	

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Jake Dvorak

STAFF PRESENT:

Dennis Schueth, General Manager
Sarah Nevison, Water Resources Manager
Kelly Kloppenborg, Water Resources Technician
Wayne Frederick, Water Resources Technician
Jake Morten, Forestry, Wildlife and Resource Conservationist
Beth Walsh, Information & Education Coordinator
Andrea Fisher, Administrative Secretary
Tanner Jenkins, Bazile Groundwater Management Coordinator

GUESTS:

Brandon Peterson, NRCS – O'Neill
William Babutzke, Holt County Weed Superintendent
Bruce Ofe, Antelope County Weed Superintendent
Colin Nemec, O'Neill, NE
Clint Bordovsky, O'Neill, NE

ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

⇒ It was moved by Chris Dierks and seconded by John Meuret to adopt the agenda. **AYE:** Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Gotschall, Heithoff, Hughes, Kelly, Meuret, Moser, Rice, Stewart, Whitaker & Wiles. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Dvorak & Keller. **MOTION CARRIED.**

MINUTES:

The minutes of the May Meeting were reviewed by the Directors. ⇒ It was moved by Chris Dierks and seconded by Curtis Gotschall to approve the minutes of the May Meeting. **AYE:** Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Gotschall, Heithoff, Hughes, Kelly, Meuret, Moser, Rice, Stewart, Whitaker & Wiles. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Dvorak & Keller. **MOTION CARRIED.**

TREASURERS REPORT:

The May treasurers report was reviewed by the Directors. ⇒ **It was moved by Roy Stewart and seconded by Chris Dierks to approve the May Treasurers Report. AYE: Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Gotschall, Heithoff, Hughes, Kelly, Meuret, Moser, Rice, Stewart, Whitaker & Wiles. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Dvorak & Keller. MOTION CARRIED.**

PUBLIC FORUM-INPUT:

None

NE NEBRASKA WEED MANAGEMENT AGENCY REQUEST:

Bruce Ofe, Antelope County Weed Superintendent, and William Babutzke, Holt County Weed Superintendent, attended the board meeting to update the directors on the grant for Yellow Flag Iris project. They were able to map the locations of the yellow flag iris along the Elkhorn River in Holt and Antelope counties; however, due to time constraints they were unable to spray the areas. Due to the lack of spraying, the funds allocated by the UENRD were not expended. The NE Nebraska Weed Management is requesting that the UENRD keep the \$5000 previously pledged in their budget as match for a new Environmental Trust grant they will be applying for to control the yellow flag iris. ⇒ **It was moved by Chris Dierks and seconded by John Meuret to allocate up to \$5000 for grant match for the NE Nebraska Weed Management Yellow Flag Iris project request. AYE: Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Gotschall, Heithoff, Hughes, Keller, Kelly, Meuret, Moser, Rice, Stewart, Whitaker & Wiles. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Dvorak. MOTION CARRIED.**

AGENCY & STAFF REPORTS:

NARD Report: Ted Hughes reported that he attended the June NARD meeting in Norfolk on June 12. Ted reviewed the NARD awards and funds allocated for educational programs through the foundation. They also approved the change in the 414 plan and approved the budget for the next 2 years with a 4% increase in dues. The risk pool met following the board meeting. There will be a 5% increase in the health insurance premiums and a 2.9% increase in dental premiums. Ted reported that they have also chosen a new reinsurance company.

DNR Report: No report.

NRCS Report: Brandon Peterson, O'Neill NRCS office, attended the board meeting. Brandon reviewed his report that was mailed out to the directors. They are currently obligating EQIP contracts; ranking CSP contracts; and, developing CRP contracts for both tree reenrolls and the grassland program. The O'Neill office has one of 22 Pathways Student trainees hired across Nebraska. He will be working in the engineering field. These student trainees may be a way for NRCS to fill vacancies in the future.

Holt County Extension Agent: No Report.

RC&D Report:

North Central RC&D: No report.

Loup Basin RC&D: No report.

Northeast RC&D: No report.

Information & Education Report: Beth Walsh's report was mailed out in the Directors packets. Beth reported that she attended the NARD Basin Tour June 12 & 13. She passed around the tour booklet showcasing the projects discussed throughout the tour of Northeast Nebraska.

Water Resources Report: Sarah Nevison's report was mailed out in the Directors packets. Sarah reviewed the handouts the Directors received; and, noted the updated phase levels as of May 2017 map. Water data is being reviewed and discussion will continue in July as to whether or not an expansion of groundwater irrigated acre sign up will be held.

Bazile Management Area – Tanner Jenkins: Tanner Jenkins' report was mailed out in the Directors packets. Tanner reported on the progress of notifying cooperators within the tier 1 and tier 2 areas of available cost share incentives for the Bazile Groundwater Management area. He has also visited with landowners within the UENRD to promote the project. A presentation was given to NDNR employees June 6 who wanted to know more about water quality projects in the area. Tanner also announced that he is resigning as the coordinator of the BGMA project. His last day will be July 3, 2017.

EXCUSED ABSENCES:

⇒ It was moved by Jim Keller and seconded by Chris Dierks to excuse the absence of Jake Dvorak. **AYE:** Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Gotschall, Heithoff, Hughes, Keller, Kelly, Meuret, Moser, Rice, Stewart, Whitaker & Wiles. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Dvorak. **MOTION CARRIED.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Legislative, Finance and Planning Committee: The committee met prior to the board meeting.

- **Action on Current Bills and Cost-Share requests:** The Committee reviewed the current bills. ⇒ It was moved by Roy Stewart and seconded by Dale Wiles to approve the current bills for payment. **AYE:** Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Gotschall, Heithoff, Hughes, Keller, Kelly, Meuret, Moser, Rice, Stewart, Whitaker & Wiles. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Dvorak. **MOTION CARRIED.** Discussion was held regarding the funding of the weather stations. Are they receiving updated technology and able to supply users with real time data. ⇒ It was moved by John Meuret and seconded by Gary Bartak to fund the weather stations. **AYE:** Gotschall, Hughes, Keller, Rice, Whitaker & Wiles. **NAY:** Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Heithoff, Kelly, Meuret, Moser & Stewart. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Dvorak. **MOTION FAILED.** Roy also noted that the committee reviewed the accounts receivable and bank statements; and, both looked to be in order.
- **Alternate Signature from General Manager signing checks:** The Committee also discussed the absence of an alternate UENRD check signature. Since the retirement of Don Caouette, the District has been without an alternate signature for checks in the event the General Manager is unavailable. ⇒ It was moved by Gary Bartak and seconded by Michael Moser to approve Kelly Kloppenborg as the alternate signature for signing UENRD checks. **AYE:** Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Gotschall, Heithoff, Hughes, Keller, Kelly, Meuret, Moser, Rice, Stewart, Whitaker & Wiles. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **ABSENT:** Dvorak. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Water Resources and Watershed Committee: The Committee met prior to the board meeting. John Meuret reported that McCrometer has developed new technology for their flowmeters. This may be the subject of a future meeting.

- **Groundwater Acre Certification/Transfer Issues:** None
- **October 2017 Acre Expansion Sign-up Discussion:** Information has been presented to the Committee for their review and discussion in July.
- **NRD/NRCS Shared staff member for Bazile Management Area:** The Committee discussed the idea of sharing a staff person with NRCS and the 3 other BGMA NRDs. The proposal would be 75% NRCS and 25% split between the 4 BGMA NRDs. This person would work out of the Pierce NRCS office and focus on getting conservation practices implemented in the BGMA through NWQI and EQIP. Since the resignation of the project coordinator this might be another alternative to keeping the project moving forward.

⇒It was moved by Ted Hughes and seconded by Aaron Rice to explore the opportunity of sharing a staff member with NRCS, LENRD, LCNRD & LNNRD. AYE: Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Gotschall, Heithoff, Hughes, Keller, Kelly, Moser, Rice, Stewart, Whitaker & Wiles. NAY: Meuret. ABSTAIN: None.

ABSENT: Dvorak. MOTION CARRIED.

- **Keystone XL Pipeline-Nebraska Public Service Commission:** Discussion was held on the UENRD position of the Keystone XL pipeline. The UENRDs current position is in opposition of the TransCanada Keystone XL pipeline route over the Ogallala Aquifer. ⇒It was moved by Roy Stewart and seconded by Chris Dierks to send a letter to the Nebraska Public Service Commission restating the Upper Elkhorn NRDs current position. AYE: Dierks, Gotschall, Heithoff, Keller & Stewart. NAY: Bartak, Carpenter, Hughes, Kelly, Meuret, Moser, Rice, Whitaker & Wiles. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Dvorak. MOTION FAILED. ⇒It was moved by Ted Hughes and seconded by Keith Heithoff to adopt a neutral position on the Keystone XL pipelines new eastern route with all assurances that the Ogallala aquifer will be protected at all costs. AYE: Heithoff & Hughes. NAY: Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Gotschall, Keller, Kelly, Meuret, Moser, Rice, Stewart, Whitaker & Wiles. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Dvorak. MOTION FAILED.
- **ELM Update:** None.

Personnel, Equipment, Promotion & Education Committee: The Committee met on June 22 with staff for the FY 17-18 salary negotiations.

- **NRD/NRCS Shared staff member for Bazile Management Area:** Previously discussed.
- **2017-2018 Salary/Equipment/Building Discussion:** ⇒It was moved by Curtis Gotschall and seconded by Chris Dierks to go into executive session at 8:45 PM to discuss job performances of the Upper Elkhorn NRD Staff and to protect the public interests and reputation of those from any undue harm and the impact it may have on the FY 17-18 salaries and excuse all staff from the executive session. AYE: Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Gotschall, Heithoff, Hughes, Kelly, Meuret, Moser, Rice, Stewart, Whitaker & Wiles. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Dvorak & Keller. MOTION CARRIED. Chairman Gene Kelly reconvened the regular board meeting at 9:08 PM. ⇒It was moved by Curtis Gotschall and seconded by Chip Whitaker to approve the salary recommendations for FY 17-18. AYE: Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Gotschall, Heithoff, Hughes, Keller, Kelly, Meuret, Moser, Rice, Stewart, Whitaker & Wiles. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Dvorak. MOTION CARRIED.

COALITION/TASK FORCE UPDATE:

Lower Platte River Basin Water Management Plan Coalition: There is a meeting scheduled for September 5, 2017 at the LPNNRD in Wahoo. This meeting is open to the public for any of the UENRD Directors who would like to attend. HCR is expected to have the final numbers regarding development in the basins.

Niobrara River Basin Coalition: The contract is still in the process of being reviewed.

Nebraska Habitat Conservation Coalition (Piping Plover): No Report.

Nebraska Ground Water Management Coalition: The summary document containing lawsuits filed by NRDs and the outcomes proposed to the Coalition will be handled by the NARD. Once completed, the NARD will bill the NRDs to pay for the project which is expected to cost approximately \$100 per district.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT: Dennis Schueth's report was mailed out in the Director's packets. A copy is included with the official copy of the minutes in the office.

JULY BOARD MEETING:

The next regular board meeting will be held at 7:00 PM on July 24, 2017 at the NRD office in O'Neill.

⇒ It was moved by John Meuret and seconded by Jake Dvorak to adjourn at 9:15 PM. AYE: Bartak, Carpenter, Dierks, Gotschall, Heithoff, Hughes, Keller, Kelly, Meuret, Moser, Rice, Stewart, Whitaker & Wiles. NAY: Bartak. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Dvorak. MOTION CARRIED.

I, the undersigned Secretary of the Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the proceedings had and done by the Board of Directors on June 26, 2017 that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to said meeting, the minutes of the Chairman and the Board were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days and prior to the next convened meeting of said body, that all news media requesting notification of the time and place of said meeting and the subjects to be discussed at said meeting.

Dale Wiles, Secretary/Treasurer