

UPPER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
June 9, 2022 @ 7:00 PM CT

The regular meeting of the Upper Loup Natural Resources District Board of Directors was held in Thedford, NE on Thursday, June 9, 2022. Chris Higgins called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Directors Present

Chris Higgins
Richard Burnside
John Krave
Judy Ridenour
Patrick Wright
Miles Maseberg
Tony Ruhter
Eric Schipporeit
Rebecca Connealy
Eric Storer

Directors Absent & Excused

Tom Johnson

Directors Unexcused

Staff in Attendance

Anna Baum, General Manager
Jamie Green, Admin. Secretary

Guests

Kevin Hood, District Conservationist, NRCS

Call Regular Monthly Meeting to Order

Higgins called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Open Meetings Act

Higgins made note of the Open Meetings act posted on the wall in the Learning center.

Agenda Modifications

Higgins asked if there were any modifications to the agenda. No Modifications.

Action on Minutes of April Meeting

Higgins asked for additions and/or corrections to the April 14, 2022 meeting minutes. Maseberg made a motion to accept the minutes as circulated and Krave seconded the motion. Aye: Higgins, Krave, Maseberg, Ridenour, Connealy, Ruhter, Schipporeit and Wright. Abstain: Burnside and Storer. Motion carried. (RCV #1)

Public Forum – No Representation

Agency Reports

Kevin Hood gave a report to the directors on current NRCS operations.

District Staff Reports

Anna informed the directors that Dick Hadenfeldt, who serves on the Commission Board for the Loup Districts, will not be on the board after January 1st. They are looking for directors who are interested in serving on the Commission and representing the Loup Districts.

Anna let the directors know they just added more topics for the Watershed Science quizzes and videos on nebraskawaves.org. The modules provide more information on water quality and water quantity, and the interaction between the two.

Anna reported to the directors, while doing static water wells and locations Lexi found a few that had issues, so we will be re-evaluating where static water wells that are being tested are located in the sub basins and making changes. There is a grant available through NDEE for 2023 that will help purchase transducers and real time recorders. All of the transducers are at their life span and will be in the budget to purchase new ones.

Anna thanked the directors for their help in transporting the drill. She has submitted the final grant report for the drill, once that is approved, we can allow producers to pick up 15-foot drill.

Lexi is catching up and finishing static water levels, working on ACE camp, the newsletter, and getting ready to do domestic water testing. There were 37 applications submitted for ACE camp.

Shane has been working on chemigation inspections.

Jamie asked the directors if, due to a change with IRS federal tax due dates, we could switch from a monthly pay schedule to a biweekly pay schedule. The directors approved the switch. Jamie also informed the directors the postage will be changing from \$0.53 to \$0.57, which is cheaper than public rates due to our postage meter service.

Financial Report

The June financial report was reviewed by staff and directors. Burnside made a motion to accept the financial report and Storer seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote. (RCV #2)

NE Soil & Water Conservation Program

Anna went over the current NSWCP policies with the directors. It was decided to maintain the current policies in effect.

Wildlife – No Report

Water Sub-committee – No Report

Water Quantity

Anna presented a Request for Variance to the directors for review. Ridenour made a motion to approve the variance and Burnside seconded the motion. Aye: Burnside, Connealy, Higgins, Krave, Maseberg, and Ridenour. Nay: Schipporeit, Storer, and Wright. Abstain: Ruhter. Motion carried. (RCV #3)

Anna stated she emailed static water level graphs to the directors. There was discussion regarding the findings.

Storer made a motion to allow a total of 2500 irrigated acres at 500 acres per Sub-district and Krave seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote. (RCV #4)

Water Quality

Anna advised the directors Sub-district 2 is next for water testing. There are 124 domestic wells and 36 irrigation wells that will be tested this summer for nitrates and manganese. Bacteria testing will be available upon request.

Current NRD Projects

Anna let the directors know they received some comments from DNR and Game & Parks regarding changes to the Groundwater Management Plan. There were no comments received from NDEE. She asked the directors if they had any comments or changes, if not a public hearing will be scheduled for before the next board meeting in July.

Upper Loup NRD Safety Plan & Personnel Policy Update Review

Anna reviewed changes to the ULNRD Safety Plan and Personnel Policy. She asked directors for input on current policies, and if there were any changes to the policies. Discussion was held regarding current policies. A final draft will be emailed to directors.

Benefit Plan Reinstatement

Burnside made a motion to reinstate the employee benefit plans 457 and 414, and Wright seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote. (RCV #5)

Budget

Anna emailed an expanded version of the budget categories to the directors. There was discussion held regarding possible newsletter changes.

Grant Reports

Anna reported to the directors there was no response to the Drought Mitigation survey. It will be in the newsletter and the date will be extended to the end of July. Then we will go to the stakeholders with the draft of the Drought Mitigation plan. She submitted the final report for the Drought Resiliency plan. Chris Hobza will attend our August meeting to go over the 3-year Drought Resiliency study completed on the South Loup. She will be writing another grant to help pay for the Recycling Coordinator.

Coalition/Alliance

Anna let the directors know they are having a technical meeting during our ACE camp so will not be able to attend, but will catch up on topics covered with the minutes.

Higgins went to a meeting on April 19th at Lower Platte South NRD regarding an update on the 2nd 5-year increment.

NARD Report

Ridenour attended the Basin Tour in Scottsbluff on June 6-7. She attended the board meeting and a forestry vegetation committee meeting, where they went over awards. Some of the highlights included: visiting the Enterprise Canal Diversion Project in Mitchell, the Sidney Bioretention Project, Perkins Canal overview, visiting Chimney Rock in Bayard, Lake Minatare Lighthouse, and the Minatare Diversion

Project. She was impressed by the greenhouse at the North Platte NRD in Scottsbluff. It is a geothermal greenhouse that produces bananas, cucumbers, tomatoes, papayas, etc. They have donated 4,000 lbs. of fruits and vegetables to the Veterans Home. Due to bad weather, she didn't get to go to a logging presentation at Chadron State Park, but did get to see a presentation on fires and fire prevention.

Approval of Director Absences, Correspondence, Scholarships, Informational Items & Complaints

Burnside made a motion to approve Johnson absence and Maseberg seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote. (RCV #6)

Storer made a motion to approve all 4 ACE Camp scholarships and Maseberg seconded the motion. Aye: Burnside, Connealy, Higgins, Krave, Maseberg, Ridenour, Ruhter Schipporeit, and Storer. Abstain: Wright. Motion carried. (RCV#7)

Adjournment

Higgins adjourned the meeting at 8:57 pm.

Judy Ridenour, Secretary

Tally of votes cast on motions, Financial Reports and Manager's Report are on file with the official minutes of this meeting. The meeting was advertised in the Thomas County Herald, Stapleton Enterprise, McPherson County News, Hooker County Tribune, Grant County News, ULNRD website, and the ULNRD newsletter. The next Board of Directors Meeting will be held at the office on Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 7:00 pm.