

UPPER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
September 9, 2021 @7:00 PM CT

The budget hearing followed by the regular meeting of the Upper Loup Natural Resources District Board of Directors was held in Thedford, NE on Thursday, September 9, 2021. Chris Higgins called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Directors Present

Chris Higgins
Miles Maseberg
John Krave
Rebecca Connealy
Patrick Wright
Eric Schipporeit
Tony Ruhter
Eric Storer
Tom Johnson

Directors Absent & Excused

Judy Ridenour
Richard Burnside

Directors Unexcused

Staff in Attendance

Anna Baum, General Manager
Jamie Green, Admin. Secretary

Guests

Kevin Hood, NRCS District Conservationist

Call Budget Hearing to Order – Open Meeting Law – Adjourn

Higgins called the Budget Hearing to order at 7:00 pm.

Higgins made note of the Open Meetings Act posted in the Learning Center.

No public comment or testimony provided.

Hearing adjourned at 7:01 pm.

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 August Meeting

Higgins asked for additions and/or corrections to the August 12, 2021 meeting minutes. Schipporeit made a motion to accept the minutes as circulated and Ruhter seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote. (RCV#1)

Public Forum – No Representation

Agency Reports

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

District Staff Reports

Anna reported to the directors that she had a zoom call with Game and Parks, the Forest Service, and C. Ewoldt regarding available funding for improving access routes along river systems. The primary site that is being looked at is on forest ground. An update will be coming this fall.

Anna emailed an updated interlocal agreement with Bessey Nursery to the directors. There is a four cent average increase per seedling this year. Tree prices will be adjusted to match the increase.

Also emailed to the directors, was a Resolution created by the Tri Basin in regards to the 30 by 30 program or EO 14008. The NARD delegate is Judy Ridenour so directors can express their feelings on this issue to her prior to Annual Conference.

Anna asked the directors who would like to be the alternate for the Annual Conference and Storer volunteered. Wright made a motion to have Ridenour for the representative and Storer for the alternate and Maseberg seconded the motion. Aye: Connealy, Higgins, Johnson, Krave, Ruhter, Maseberg, Schipporeit and Wright. Abstain: Storer. Motion carried. (RCV #2)

Anna emailed an update from Jake on the new drill to the directors.

Anna provided a copy of a new soil initiative regarding soil health and increased partnership cooperation. NDEE and DNR will be approached to be a part of this initiative.

Executive Travel, a private business out of Lincoln, has a goal of planting 1,000,000 trees in Nebraska. They will be providing dollars to the NRD's for tree planting in each district. More information will be provided at a later date.

Jake has been busy with the drills and water quality testing of irrigation wells.

Lexi is doing domestic water quality testing.

Shane is finishing up chemigation checks and he had a forestry workshop on September 13th and 14th.

Action to Adopt FY 2021-2022 Budget

Anna provided visuals to the directors that depicted revenue sources, breakdown of budget expenses as well as the 2021-22 fiscal year compared to 2020-21 budget. Budget Asking is down 16%, levy rate down 20% and budget attributed to tax dollars down 3%.

Storer made a motion to approve the budget for fiscal year 2021-2022 and Wright seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote. (RCV #3)

Action to Adopt Resolution to Approve Additional 1% Increase

Storer made a motion to approve the additional 1% increase and Ruhter seconded the motion. Aye: Connealy, Higgins, Johnson, Kraye, Ruhter, Storer, and Wright. Nay: Maseberg and Schipporeit. Motion carried. (RCV #4)

Action to Adopt Resolution to Set Property Tax Request

Johnson made a motion to approve the property tax request set at \$368,650.00 and Storer seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote. (RCV #5)

Action to Adopt Resolution to Set Levy for FY 2021-2022

Maseberg made a motion to set the levy for fiscal year 2021-2022 at \$0.013529 per \$100.00 of valuation and Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote. (RCV #6)

Financial Report

The August financial report was reviewed by staff and directors. Storer made a motion to accept the financial report and Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote. (RCV #7)

Vote on Pickup Purchase

Anna reported to the directors of the 8 bid letters sent out there were 4 bids received for a new pickup and topper for Shane. Pony Express in Gothenburg had the lowest bid at \$37,893 for a 2022 Chevy Silverado 2500 pickup and topper.

Storer made a motion to approve the pickup purchase and Wright seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote. (RCV #8)

NE Soil & Water Conservation Program

Anna presented a NSWCP Application to the Directors. Schipporeit made a motion to accept the application and Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote. (RCV #9)

Wildlife – No Report

Water Sub-committee – No Report

Water Quantity

Anna let the directors know that Brown County Assessor's Office made a change in the valuation of irrigated acres. The new policy will be if you are watering, they will be valued at a full irrigated price, and if you are not watering they will be valued at half of the full irrigated price.

Anna stated to the directors that 13 applications for irrigated acres have been received. Of the 13 applications, 2 applications did not rank out at 15 points. There are 10 applications asking for 586 acres in Logan County. Therefore, even though all applications ranked 15 points or more, some applications will not be approved due to the limit of 500 acres per county. There was a total of 666 acres on applications that ranked 15 points or better. All of the 2021 expansion of irrigated acres applications are complete.

Anna has an Annual VIMP meeting with DNR at the end of September.

Water Quality

Anna reported to the directors she completed a new grant application to the NDEE to help fund the recycling position for the upcoming year.

Current NRD Projects

Anna informed the directors that every year the long range plan needs to be updated and submitted to the DNR and a copy was emailed to the directors for review. Any questions or changes can be discussed at the next board meeting.

Grant Reports – No Report

Coalition/Alliance

Anna emailed the goals and objectives for the Lower Platte River Basin Coalition to the directors. Any questions or changes can be brought up at the next Manager's Meeting in November. The consultants will attend either a December or January meeting to go over analysis of 2nd increment.

NARD Report – No Report

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

Johnson made a motion to approve Ridenour and Burnside absences and Maseberg seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote. (RCV #10)

The Director's Tour at the properties of Ruhter and Schipporeit have been set for October 14th with regular board meeting to follow at the American Legion in Brewster at 1:00 pm CT.

Anna emailed directors a nitrates and health study UNMC presentation. The study indicates a direct correlation with high nitrate levels and childhood cancer and birth defects. Anna will update directors as more information on this and other studies becomes available.

Adjournment

Higgins adjourned the meeting at 8:13 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, North Platte Tribune, 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 October 14, 2021 at 7:00 pm.