

TWIN PLATTE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT  
Board of Directors Meeting  
September 12, 2002

The Twin Platte Natural Resources District Board of Directors meeting was held at the United Nebraska Bank Center Meeting Room, Second Floor, West Wing, 111 South Dewey Street, North Platte, Nebraska on September 12, 2002. Mr. Rubenthaler called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. CDT (6:36 p.m. MDT). A legal notice of the meeting was published in the NORTH PLATTE TELEGRAPH. A news release containing the agenda for the meeting and including the time and place was sent to the news media in the District.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Eric Hansen  
James Meisner  
Robert Petersen  
Jim Rubenthaler  
Douglas Stack  
Joe Wahlgren  
Jerry Weaver  
Robert Wiseman

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Jeff Baldrige  
Todd Kramer  
Dennis Schilz

OTHERS PRESENT

None

NRCS PERSONNEL PRESENT

Mary Reece, District Conservationist

STAFF PRESENT

Glen Bowers, Water Programs Coordinator  
Amy Mapes, Administrative Assistant  
Kent O Miller, General Manager

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Report of Directors Excused - Mr. Rubenthaler reported that Mr. Baldrige, Mr. Kramer and Mr. Schilz were excused.

DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Directors Notebooks Containing Information Items Available for Handout - Mr. Rubenthaler reported that each Director has a notebook containing information items that are available for handouts for others attending the meeting.

Other Items - Mr. Rubenthaler reported that notebooks containing the USDA Natural

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Resources Conservation Service Conservation Plans signed by the General Manager as the Twin Platte Natural Resources District representative were available for information and that the notebooks would be passed around the Board table for review by each member of the Board of Directors present.

INFORMAL PUBLIC HEARING

An Informal Public Hearing relating to the proposed Twin Platte Natural Resources District 2002-2003 Fiscal Year Budget and the proposed 2002 tax rate was held. Minutes were prepared and may be referenced for information.

2003 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET

Restricted Funds Authority - Mr. Miller reported that the Nebraska Statutes provide that the Twin Platte Natural Resources District may exceed the budget limit for the 2002-2003 Fiscal Year by an additional one percent and carry forward to future budget years the full amount of the increase as unused restricted funds authority upon the affirmative vote of at least seventy-five percent of the Board of Directors. No action was considered, as eight members of the Board of Directors were present which would not allow for the opportunity for at least seventy-five percent of the Board of Directors to approve exceeding the budget limit for the 2002-2003 Fiscal Year by an additional one percent.

Final Approval -

Mr. Meismer moved to approve the following resolution:

WHEREAS, a legal notice of budget hearing and budget summary was published in the North Platte Telegraph on August 27, 2002 for a hearing scheduled for September 12, 2002 by the Board of Directors of the Twin Platte Natural Resources District; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Twin Platte Natural Resources District on September 12, 2002 held a public hearing for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions and observations of taxpayers relating to the proposed budget;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Twin Platte Natural Resources District Board of Directors approves the 2002-2003 Fiscal Year Budget as presented for public hearing.

Mr. Stack seconded the motion and it carried. (Motion #1)

AYE: Hansen, Meismer, Petersen, Rubenthaler, Stack, Wahlgren, Weaver

NAY: None

ABSENT: Baldrige, Kramer, Schilz, Wiseman

Set Property Tax Request -

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Mr. Stack moved to approve the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Nebraska Statutes provide that the property tax request for the prior year shall be the property tax request for the current year unless the Board of Directors passes by a majority vote a resolution setting the tax request at a different amount; and

WHEREAS, the 2001-2002 Fiscal Year property tax request for the Twin Platte Natural Resources Districts was \$349,328.01 and the 2002-2003 Fiscal Year Budget requires a property tax request for the Twin Platte Natural Resources Districts of \$359,928.00; and

WHEREAS, a legal notice of special hearing to set final tax request was published in the North Platte Telegraph on August 27, 2002 for a hearing scheduled for September 12, 2002 by the Board of Directors of the Twin Platte Natural Resources District; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Twin Platte Natural Resources District on September 12, 2002 held a public hearing for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions or observations of taxpayers relating to setting the final tax request at a different amount than the prior year tax request; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the Twin Platte Natural Resources District that the property tax request for the current year be a different amount than the property tax request for the prior year;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Twin Platte Natural Resources District Board of Directors sets the final property tax request for the Twin Platte Natural Resources District for the 2002-2003 Fiscal Year Budget at \$359,928.00.

Mr. Petersen seconded the motion and it carried. (Motion #2)

AYE: Hansen, Meismer, Petersen, Rubenthaler, Stack, Wahlgren, Weaver,  
Wiseman

NAY: None

ABSENT: Baldrige, Kramer, Schilz

PUBLIC FORUM

The Public Forum of the meeting was opened. There were no comments, and the Public Forum was closed.

AGENDA MODIFICATION

None presented.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

No report presented.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Minutes for August 8, 2002 Meeting - Mr. Rubenthaler reported that the Minutes for the August 8, 2002 Board of Directors meeting were in the Directors' packet and he asked if there were corrections or additions to the Minutes.

Mr. Weaver moved that the Minutes of the August 8, 2002 Board of Directors meeting be approved. Mr. Petersen seconded the motion, and it carried. (Motion #3)

AYE: Hansen, Meismer, Petersen, Rubenthaler, Stack, Wahlgren, Weaver,  
Wiseman

NAY: None

ABSENT: Baldrige, Kramer, Schilz

COOPERATING AGENCIES REPORTS

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service – Mrs. Reece reported that in the Directors' packet for information was a written report and she reviewed the report.

Mrs. Reece reported that the Western Irrigation District had requested that the Twin Platte Natural Resources District submit a letter to the USDA-NRCS requesting federal assistance for repair of damages of Western Irrigation District facilities and that a letter had been submitted by the District, which was authorized by the Board on September 12, 2002, requesting assistance available in the Emergency Watershed Protection program.

Mrs. Reece and Mr. Bowers showed pictures of the August, 2002 range fire in the canyons south of the Platte River in eastern Lincoln County.

Other Agencies - No report presented.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS REPORT

Land Resources Subcommittee

No report presented.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS REPORT

Water Resources Subcommittee

No report presented.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS REPORT

Wildlife Habitat & Urban Affairs Subcommittee

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No report presented.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS REPORT  
Executive Subcommittee

No report presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Statement - Mr. Meismer reported that the Financial Statement for August 2002 was in the Directors' notebook and available as a handout for information.

Accounts Payable - Mr. Meismer reported that the Accounts Payable report was in the Directors' notebook and available as a handout and that he had reviewed the Accounts Payable and found the report to be in order.

Mr. Meismer moved that the Financial Statement for August 2002 be received and placed on file for audit and to approve payment of the invoices presented on the Accounts Payable report on September 12, 2002 in the amount of \$9,791.89. Mr. Stack seconded the motion, and it carried. (Motion #4)

AYE: Hansen, Meismer, Petersen, Rubenthaler, Stack, Wahlgren, Weaver,  
Wiseman

NAY: None

ABSENT: Baldrige, Kramer, Schilz

Budget Status – No report presented.

Bids/Proposals – None were presented.

Bids/Proposals Scheduled To Be Presented for Consideration During the October 10, 2002 Board of Directors Meeting – Mr. Miller reported that the District Policy provides that “The staff will notify the Board during the Board meeting immediately prior to the Board meeting at which bids will be presented for consideration”. Mr. Miller reported that the staff plans to present bids/proposals for consideration during the October 10, 2002 Board of Directors meeting for the purchase of a vehicle and a trailer. Mr. Miller reported that the vehicle and a trailer are for the District adding a second tree planting crew beginning in 2003. Mr. Miller reported that the vehicle to be purchase would be a heavy-duty ¾ ton pickup that has the capacity to pull a trailer carrying a tractor and tree planter and that the vehicle will replace the current sport utility vehicle assigned to the Water Programs Coordinator (Glen Bowers). Mr. Miller reported that the vehicle will better serve the current needs of the Water Programs and will be utilized each year in the tree program during tree planting. Mr. Miller reported that the trailer to be purchased would be a heavy-duty gooseneck trailer that has the capacity to carry a tractor and tree planter. Mr. Miller reported that the Budget provides for the purchase of the vehicle and a trailer.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS

Nebraska Association of Resources Districts – Annual Conference – Mr. Meisner reported that the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts annual conference would be held September 23-24, 2002 in Kearney, Nebraska. Mr. Meisner reported that in the Directors' packet for information was the Conference Program and he reported that Mr. Rubenthaler, Mr. Miller and he are planning to attend the conference and that if other Directors would like to attend, you should notify the office and the staff would register you for the conference and make lodging reservations. Mr. Meisner reported that the Fear Ranch has been selected to receive the Outstanding Grassland Conservation Award, which will be presented during the noon luncheon on Monday, September 23. Mr. Meisner reported that the Fear Ranch received the Twin Platte Natural Resources District Outstanding Grassland Conservation Award in 2001 and the District nominated the Fear Ranch for the NARD award. Mr. Meisner reported Mr. Carhart would also be attending the luncheon. Mr. Petersen said that he would also be attending the luncheon. Mr. Meisner reported that during the annual conference, resolutions will be considered and that the resolutions that the office has received that will be considered during the conference are in the Directors' packet. Mr. Meisner reported that resolution 5 was submitted after the deadline and will require a two-thirds affirmative vote for consideration during the conference. Mr. Meisner asked if any Director wished to request that the Board direct how the District's five votes should be cast for a resolution during the conference and there were none.

Mr. Miller reported that the Board needed to take action to select a voting delegate for the conference.

Mr. Petersen moved that for the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts 2002 Annual Conference the Twin Platte Natural Resources District's voting delegate be Mr. Rubenthaler and the alternate voting delegate be Mr. Meisner. Mr. Wahlgren seconded the motion, and it carried. (Motion #5)

AYE: Hansen, Meisner, Petersen, Rubenthaler, Stack, Wahlgren, Weaver,  
Wiseman

NAY: None

ABSENT: Baldrige, Kramer, Schilz

Nebraska Association of Resources Districts – Water Policy Task Force – Mr. Meisner reported on recent activities of the Water Policy Task Force.

Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District Water Conservation Task Force - No report presented.

Platte River Citizens Advisory Council – Mr. Meisner reported on recent activities of the Platte River Citizens Advisory Council.

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Sandhills Resources, Conservation & Development Council - Mr. Hansen reported on recent activities of the Sandhills Resources, Conservation & Development Council.

Requests for Authorization to Travel - No requests were presented.

DISTRICT REPORT

Requests for Assistance – No requests for assistance were presented.

Cost-Share Programs - Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program - Mr. Miller reported that during the July 11, 2002 Board meeting, the Water Resources Subcommittee and the Land Resources Subcommittee reported on their discussions in regard to the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program and that the Board agreed, due to the uncertainty of funding for the 2003 Fiscal Year, to delay implementation of the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program in the Twin Platte Natural Resources District until funding is known for the 2003 Fiscal Year.

Mr. Miller reported that the Legislature during the August Special Session did not reduce funding for the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program and that the amount of funding that will be available for the 2003 Fiscal Year in the Twin Platte Natural Resources District would be \$80,486.60.

Mr. Miller reported that in the Directors' packet for information were a listing of the eligible practices for the 2002 Fiscal Year, the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program Fund Distribution to Natural Resources Districts revised 8/21/02, the allocation of funds for the eligible practices within the Twin Platte Natural Resources District authorized by the Board of Directors for the 2002 Fiscal Year, the Twin Platte Natural Resources District Draft Guidelines developed by the staff and utilized for the 2002 Fiscal Year, the funds distributed within the Twin Platte Natural Resources during the 2002 Fiscal Year, and the total funds distributed within the Twin Platte Natural Resources from January 1, 1977 through June 30, 2002.

Mr. Miller reported that the Board needs to determine eligible practices for the 2003 Fiscal Year, needs to determine the allocation of funds for the eligible practices for the 2003 Fiscal Year and needs to establish guidelines.

Cost-Share Programs - Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program – Eligible Practices for the 2003 Fiscal Year – The Board agreed that for the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program that Eligible practices for the 2003 Fiscal Year remain the same.

Cost-Share Programs - Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program – Funding for the 2003 Fiscal Year –

Mr. Stack moved that for the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program that for

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Practice NC-12, Windbreaks, that 30% (\$24,145.98) of available funds be reserved from July 1, 2002 to January 30, 2003; for Practice NC-14, Planned Grazing Systems, that 30% (\$24,145.98) of available funds be reserved from July 1, 2002 to January 30, 2003; for Practice NC-17, Irrigation Water Management, that 30% (\$24,145.98) of available funds be reserved from July 1, 2002 to January 30, 2003; and that for the other eligible practices that 10% (\$8,048.66) of available funds be reserved from July 1, 2002 to January 30, 2003 and that any funds available after January 30, 2003 may be used for any eligible practice. Mr. Meismer seconded the motion, and it carried. (Motion #6)

AYE: Hansen, Meismer, Petersen, Rubenthaler, Stack, Wahlgren, Weaver,  
Wiseman

NAY: None

ABSENT: Baldridge, Kramer, Schilz

Cost-Share Programs - Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program – Guidelines – Mr. Miller reported that in the Directors’ packet for information were Guidelines developed by the staff and utilized for the 2002 Fiscal Year. Mr. Miller reported that an Option #2 was included for Item A as there is a possibility that this fiscal year requests could exceed the funds available for Practice NC-14, Planned Grazing Systems and for Practice NC-17, Irrigation Water Management due to less Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program funds being available this year, due to the large number of EQIP applications that have not been funded this year and due to the delay in implementing the program this year. Mr. Miller reported that Option #2 gives the Board an opportunity to rank the applications if there are more requests this year than there is money to fund the requests rather than using first come first serve and that if the demand for the funds do not exceed the available funds from September 13 thru October 4, then the District could revert to applications being considered in the order the producers sign them.

Mr. Meismer moved to approve the following guidelines for the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program:

- A. Applications will be considered in the order the producers signs them. (For the 2003 Fiscal Year, for Practice NC-14, Planned Grazing Systems and for Practice NC-17, Irrigation Water Management, from September 13 thru October 4, 2002, applications will be received, the Land Resources Subcommittee will prepare a recommendation for the Board of Directors for action during the October 10, 2002 Board meeting for funding applications received for Practice NC-14, Planned Grazing Systems, the Water Resources Subcommittee will prepare a recommendation for the Board of Directors for action during the October 10, 2002 Board meeting for funding applications received for Practice NC-17, Irrigation Water Management, and if funds are available for Practice NC-14, Planned Grazing Systems and/or for Practice NC-17, Irrigation Water Management after October 4, 2002, applications will be considered in the order the producers signs them.)
- B. Funding adjustments shall go back to the reserved category established by the Board of Directors that the funds came from.

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- C. From July 1 – January 30, applications shall be considered for funding only when funds are available to fully fund the contract.
- D. From January 31 – June 30, the funds from each reserved category shall be merged and applications on file shall be considered for funding in the order they are signed by the producer and only one application may be approved for partial funding at any time.
- E. On June 30, all applications not approved by the Board of Directors shall be cancelled.

Mr. Stack seconded the motion, and it carried. (Motion #7)

AYE: Hansen, Meismer, Petersen, Rubenthaler, Stack, Wahlgren, Weaver,  
Wiseman

NAY: None

ABSENT: Baldrige, Kramer, Schilz

Cost-Share Programs - District Conservation Program – Sealing Abandoned Wells – Mr. Miller reported that in the Directors' notebook and available as a handout for information was a report. Mr. Miller reported that 5 contracts have been approved for a total cost-share allocation of \$900.00 and that \$4,100.00 was available for additional contracts.

Cost-Share Programs – NE Buffer Strip Program - No report presented.

Tree Program – No report presented.

Range Programs – Mr. Miller reported that in the Directors' packet was information for a “Fire and Its Impact on Rangeland Field Tour” scheduled for September 27, 2002, which the District is one of the sponsors.

Soil Conservation Programs –No report presented.

Wildlife Habitat Programs - No report presented.

Water Programs – Ground Water Program – District Programs – Mr. Bowers showed graphs and data for ground water levels within the District. Mr. Bowers showed pictures and reported on the status of the Canal Screen Cleaning Demonstration Project.

Water Programs – Ground Water Program – 319 Project – No report presented.

Water Programs –Watershed Program – No report presented.

Water Programs – Platte River Activities – No report presented.

Regulatory Programs – No report presented.

Information & Education Programs – No report presented.

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Requests for Authorization to Travel – No requests were presented.

Legislation – No report presented.

Meetings and Dates of Interest – Mr. Miller reported that various items of information were in the Directors' packet and in the Directors' notebook and available as a handout.

Miscellaneous Information – Mr. Miller reported that various items of information were in the Directors' packet and in the Directors' notebook and available as a handout.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m. CDT (9:05 p.m. MDT).

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Jerry Weaver, Secretary

KOM:Minutes:Bmin0902