

June 11, 2020  
Nemaha Natural Resources District  
Regular Meeting  
Tecumseh, Nebraska

1. **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Chair Bill Niedfeldt called the five hundred fortieth meeting of the Nemaha Natural Resources District Board of Directors to order at 8:00 p.m. Thursday, June 11, 2020, at the NRD Headquarters in Tecumseh, Nebraska, via telephone conference call and Zoom videoconferencing. Niedfeldt briefly reviewed the meeting procedures prior to the initial roll call. He instructed everyone to state their name before speaking, including during roll call votes, and to mute themselves when not speaking.

<b>DIRECTORS</b>	Lisa Beethe	Doug Iske	Alan Romine
<b>PARTICIPATING:</b>	Rob Bohling	*Jon Keithley	*Don Siske
	Jessica Donnelly	*Robert Lassen	Eldon Snoke
	Randy Fox	Tim Loseke	Mike Speece
	*Jim Gerweck	Michael McDonald	Dan Stukenholtz
	Orval Gigstad	Russel Moss	Duane Sugden
	Dan Hodges	*William Niedfeldt	*Kevin Thorne

**DIRECTORS**

**ABSENT:** None

**STAFF**

**PARTICIPATING:** \*Bob Hilske, Manager  
Scott Nelson, Assistant Manager  
\*Jane Kuhl, Administrative Assistant  
Chuck Wingert, Water Resources Manager  
Jill Rogman, Administrative Assistant

**GUESTS**

**PARTICIPATING:** None identified

\*Present at the meeting location; all other attendees were on conference call/Zoom.

Chair Niedfeldt read the following public meeting announcement: This meeting of the Nemaha NRD Board is being held in accordance to Executive Order 20-03 issued on March 17, 2020 by the Governor of Nebraska which provides a limited waiver to State Statute 84-1409 allowing the use of video and teleconference to hold public meetings; all other requirements in the Open Meetings Act still apply to this meeting. The public is being allowed to access this meeting via tele-conference; however, they will be limited to listening to the meeting. The Open Meetings Act allows political sub-divisions to hold occasional meetings without allowing public comment; therefore, for the ease of holding this meeting, no public comment will be accepted.

Chair Niedfeldt then reviewed the meeting procedures.

2. **PROOF OF PUBLICATION**

Proof of Publication was presented and is on file.

3. **EXCUSED ABSENCES – None**

4. **OPEN FORUMS**

Staff, both in person and on conference call/Zoom, introduced themselves. No guests introduced themselves.

5. **MINUTES**

**Siske moved, seconded by Lassen, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried on consent agenda.**

6. **TREASURER’S REPORT**

**Siske moved, seconded by Keithley, to approve the Treasurer’s Report as submitted. Motion carried on consent agenda.**

7. **STAFF REPORTS**

Hilske reviewed his report. Nelson briefly reviewed his report.

8. **AGENCY/ASSOCIATION REPORTS**

**A. Natural Resources Conservation Service**

A written report was distributed to all board members.

**B. Five Rivers RC&D**

Sugden reported that Jessica Jones is stepping down as president of the RC&D.

**C. Nebraska Association of Resources Districts**

Gigstad reported on their recent meeting which included an update on the damage to the NARD’s office building during the weekend’s riots in downtown Lincoln. Nebraska may host the National Envirothon in 2021. They approved the budget and made some adjustments to the retirement program due to COVID. Award winners were selected.

**D. Nebraska Natural Resources Commission**

McDonald had nothing to report for this month.

9. **STANDING COMMITTEES**

**A. Programs & Projects Committee**

*1. Well Permit Applications:* None.

## **B. Operations & Education Committee**

1. **Update on Status of NRD Parks and COVID-19 Restrictions:** Romine referred to a written report provided to all directors.
2. **Humboldt Urban Special Project:** Romine referred to a written report that explained that the work on this project had been completed prior to an agreement being in place. The committee asked staff for a recommendation on how to proceed since work was not authorized to be done until after the agreement was signed by both parties. Furthermore, payment would not be available until after the FY21 budget is approved in September. The committee considered several penalties and was recommending a 5-year moratorium on applications for Urban Special Projects from the City of Humboldt, who was sponsoring the project.

**Romine moved, seconded by Siske, to notify the City of Humboldt that they would not be eligible for approval of an Urban Special Project application for the next five years.** Whether to issue any penalty at all was discussed. Romine added that the staff would be looking at ways to modify the policy to address/avoid a situation like this in the future. After further discussion, **motion carried.**

**AYE:** Bohling, Donnelly, Fox, Iske, Moss, Niedfeldt, Romine, Siske, Speece, Stukenholtz, Thorne

**NAY:** Beethe, Gerweck, Gigstad, Hodges, Keithley, Lassen, Loseke, McDonald, Snoke, Sugden

3. **Discussion on FY2021 Parks Budget:** Romine briefly reviewed some items including restrooms, tree removal, etc. He encouraged directors to contact staff with ideas. No action.
4. **Completing an NRD Park Use Survey:** Romine explained that Game & Parks might help with fishery renovation at Kirkman's Cove but only if it is a no-wake lake. They suggested surveying users about not only boating but perhaps other uses too. Hilske further commented that we could easily survey our park permit holders. Romine added that staff would begin working on a survey. No action.

## **C. Executive Committee**

1. **COVID-19 Operational & Office Opening Plan**– Hilske reviewed the plans which would allow additional but limited access to the office beginning June 15. All non-NRD meetings in the board room would continue to be prohibited, and restrooms will not be open to the public. All staff including clerks report as usual.
2. **Option for Holding the July Board Meeting** – Hilske pointed out that beginning July 1 video conferencing will no longer be allowed for public meetings. In order to exercise social distancing during an in-person meeting, it might be necessary to find an alternate location. Using the NRD's shop might be an option; however, no air

conditioning would limit this for summer meetings. A decision will be made by June 25 in order to provide notice to the public. Committee meetings will be scheduled according to their agendas.

3. ***FY2021 Property & Liability Insurance Premium Quotes:*** Hilske reviewed the quote from The Harry A. Koch Company as follows:

Property	\$ 4,455.00
Auto	\$ 5,285.00
Workers Comp	\$12,352.00
Other	\$24,280.00
Total	\$46,372.00

He added that the total premium increased \$701 over last year. Not included was cost of the treasurer's bond (\$400) and any increases due to the annual workers comp audit and replacement of equipment throughout the year.

**Siske moved, seconded by Lassen, to approve the quote of \$46,372 from The Harry A. Koch Company for property and liability insurance coverage for the period 7/1/20-6/30/21. Motion carried.**

**AYE:** Beethe, Bohling, Donnelly, Fox, Gerweck, Gigstad, Hodges, Iske, Keithley, Lassen, Loseke, McDonald, Moss, Niedfeldt, Romine, Siske, Snoke, Speece, Stukenholtz, Sugden, Thorne

4. ***FY2021 District Salary Schedule*** – McDonald began by reviewing a six-year comparison of salaries and benefits. Hilske further explained the different budget and actual figures. McDonald then reviewed the committee's recommendation to provide a one percent base increase plus any applicable service increase for those employees who qualify this year. No merit increases were included. He cited the concerns regarding COVID as one factor in their decision along with a tight budget, new manager, and the health insurance increase. Hilske added that the overall increase would total 1.3 percent. McDonald then reviewed the staffing history since 1975 including the possible addition of a partially grant-funded employee for the water department. Stukenholtz expressed concern that salary increases of any kind were being considered and that they should be frozen across the board. Niedfeldt replied that these are not huge increases and that he had checked with other public boards who were giving larger increases than this. Lassen pointed out that the overall change for FY21 would be less than the overall change for FY20 and that the committee spent a lot of time trying to come up with a plan.

**McDonald moved, seconded by Gerweck, to approve the District salary schedule for FY21 resulting in an overall increase of 1.3 percent. Motion carried.**

**AYE:** Beethe, Bohling, Donnelly, Fox, Gerweck, Gigstad, Hodges, Iske, Keithley, Lassen, Loseke, McDonald, Moss, Niedfeldt, Romine, Siske, Snoke, Speece, Sugden, Thorne

**NAY:** Stukenholtz

5. ***New Manager Hiring Procedure*** – Niedfeldt reported that a search committee will be selected in July and that it would likely include the Executive Committee, with each of the other two committees choosing one representative, and one or two employees. He added that the committee needed to be somewhat limited and also pointed out the amount of time that members would need to commit. He also welcomed any suggestions or input. Stukenholtz expressed interest in serving as the representative from his committee. Hilske reviewed a rough timeline for the process. Niedfeldt asked any members of the Executive Committee to notify him by July 1 if they definitely do not wish to be on the committee. He also asked for anyone else wishing to serve on the committee to let him know by July 1. Beethe suggested providing the entire board with a copy of the job description to allow input on any changes. McDonald stressed the importance of completing our master plan before the search process begins.
6. ***Update on Health Insurance Premiums*** – Hilske reviewed a summary of the health insurance rates over the past 10 years.
7. ***Master Plan Update Process*** – McDonald had mentioned this item earlier and indicated it would be on the July agenda for more input.

#### 10. **FY2021 BUDGET**

Rogman reported she is working on plugging in numbers based on information received from staff and educating herself on the budget process. Hilske highlighted some of the larger expenditures expected to be included in the budget. He added that the property tax valuation forecast looks to be pretty stagnant.

#### 11. **ANNOUNCEMENTS, JULY MEETING DATE/TIME & AGENDA ITEM REQUESTS**

The next meeting will be in person on July 9, 2020, at 8:00 p.m. with committee meeting schedules to be announced.

#### 12. **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Gerweck moved, seconded by Thorne, to approve the consent agenda.** Consent agenda items: Minutes, Treasurer's Report. **Motion carried.**

**AYE:** Beethe, Bohling, Donnelly, Fox, Gerweck, Gigstad, Hodges, Iske, Keithley, Lassen, Loseke, McDonald, Moss, Niedfeldt, Romine, Siske, Snoke, Speece, Stukenholtz, Sugden, Thorne

#### 13. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Siske moved, seconded by Gerweck, to adjourn. Motion carried.**

**AYE:** Beethe, Bohling, Donnelly, Fox, Gerweck, Gigstad, Hodges, Iske, Keithley, Lassen, Loseke, McDonald, Moss, Niedfeldt, Romine, Siske, Snoke, Speece, Stukenholtz, Sugden, Thorne

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 p.m.

*Approved 7/9/20*

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Secretary, Nemaha Natural Resources District