

May 14, 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 thirty-ninth meeting of the Nemaha Natural Resources District Board of Directors to order at 8:00 p.m. Thursday, May 14, 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.

DIRECTORS	Lisa Beethe	*Jon Keithley	Don Siske
PARTICIPATING:	Rob Bohling	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
	Doug Iske	Alan Romine	

DIRECTORS

ABSENT: Jessica Donnelly

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.

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 Hodges, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried on consent agenda.

6. **TREASURER’S REPORT**

Siske moved, seconded by Thorne, to approve the Treasurer’s Report as submitted.
Following some discussion, **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 had been distributed to all board members prior to the meeting.

B. Five Rivers RC&D

Sugden reported that they had been meeting by telephone, but they were not able to get much done. They did recognize some members for their years of service.

C. Nebraska Association of Resources Districts

Gigstad reported that they are still getting reports from the office. The NACD is trying to figure out how to hold a summer board meeting in July via Zoom or something.

D. Nebraska Natural Resources Commission

McDonald reviewed a written summary of activities that had been provided by Kent Zimmerman with DNR.

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:** Kuhl referred to information provided on a handout about the current use at the parks, some issues that have arisen, and the reopening of some of the restrooms.
- 2. Invasive Tree Problems at Kirkman's Cove:** Hilske stated Snoke had brought up the problem with cedar trees at the park wondering if we might do something similar to the project at Iron Horse. However, he added that Game and Parks didn't seem interested in such a project at Kirkman's Cove. He suggested this might be something to consider while working through the budget process if the board is interested in some tree removal there.
- 3. FY2021 Urban Special Project Applications:** Romine reviewed the two applications received and stated the committee felt both were viable projects.

Humboldt Lions Club – Lake Park Trail
Total Project Cost: \$11,500.00
NRD Funds Requested: \$5,750.00

Pawnee City Public Schools – Trees/Native Grass Plantings
Total Project Cost: \$6,660.00
NRD Funds Requested: \$3,330.00

Romine moved, seconded by Speece, to approve including funds in the FY21 budget for the Urban Special Project applications for the Humboldt Lions Club in the amount of \$5,750 and Pawnee City Public Schools in the amount of \$3,330.

Iske expressed concern about installing concrete trails and didn't feel this was a conservation measure. Hilske pointed out that right now this is part of the program guidelines. Snoke commented that this would be a handicapped accessible trail and thus the concrete. Lassen felt this is a trail within a park and not just a sidewalk. Beethe felt it's outdoor recreation, appropriate for this program, and it's still a trail. After further discussion, **motion carried.**

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

ABSENT: Donnelly

C. Executive Committee

- 1. COVID-19 Operational Plan Update** – Hilske reviewed the status of the office and the parks which remained basically unchanged since last month. He did report that some of the restrooms had been reopened at the parks.

2. ***Establish FY2021 Budget Committee*** – McDonald reported that the committee spent quite a bit of time on the budget. He asked for four or five members to volunteer for this committee which would begin meeting this summer. The following directors volunteered: Dan Stukenholtz, Bob Lassen, Lisa Beethe, Dan Hodges, Mike McDonald, and Kevin Thorne.
3. ***Discussion on FY2021 Salary Schedule*** – They spent a lot of time looking at salaries comparing with others across the state, but the options for comparisons were limited. They looked at starting salaries and the cost-of-living and service time increases. He asked for input from anyone on the board. No action.
4. ***Changes to District Property Valuations*** – McDonald reported that it is estimated valuations will continue to trend lower in 2020. Hilske reviewed some scenarios of different increases or decreases in valuation versus the potential levy. He asked directors to consider whether they are comfortable with increasing the levy if the need arises. They also discussed the needed cash reserve. No action.
5. ***Potential Water Department Position*** – Hilske reviewed a general proposal for a position that could be initially partially funded through a 319 grant since the grant work would precipitate the need for more help. He added that there might be other grant opportunities as well and various projects and duties coming up. They asked for more information on present job descriptions that would be affected by this new position. No action.
6. ***Master Plan Development*** – The committee is asking that a representative or two from each committee work together on updating the plan so it could be used during budget preparation.

10. UPDATE ON HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Hilske reviewed the progress on this and the recent meetings held. He reviewed the items that had been included in the plan and three items to be added to the new plan.

11. PLAN FOR HOLDING FUTURE COMMITTEE AND BOARD MEETINGS

Hilske stated we don't know yet what will be allowed in June but expect that we won't be allowed to house all of our board members in one location yet. However, it might be possible to hold in-person committee meetings while following the appropriate social distancing guidelines. The committees would probably meet on a different date than the board meeting, and members who are not comfortable with attending in person could still attend via Zoom. He stressed that directors who wished to attend the board meeting in person must notify the office in advance since only about six members could be accommodated with the space and equipment available.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS, JUNE MEETING DATE/TIME & AGENDA ITEM REQUESTS

The next meeting will be June 11, 2020, at 8:00 p.m. with committee meeting schedules to be announced. McDonald asked to use Dropbox or Google for meeting attachments so everyone could see the materials from all committees. Since we are seeing an increased use of the

parks, he also asked to look at whether rates should be increased to cover the additional workload. There was some brief discussion about the use and fees and the need to plan ahead if the fees were to be changed.

13. **CONSENT AGENDA**

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

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

ABSENT: Donnelly

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

ABSENT: Donnelly

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Approved 6/11/20

Secretary, Nemaha Natural Resources District