

## N-CORPE

### *Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement Project*

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#### **Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Feb. 25, 2015, 10 a.m. Twin Platte NRD, 111 S. Dewey, North Platte, Neb.**

Agendas were sent to all Board Members and all others requesting agendas. Agendas were posted in the following offices: Twin Platte NRD; Lower Republican NRD; Middle Republican NRD; and Upper Republican NRD.

**Board Members Present:** Brad Randel (Middle Republican NRD); Terry Martin (Upper Republican NRD); and Jerry Weaver (Twin Platte NRD). Absent: Lower Republican NRD

**Others Present:** Dean Large, Mike Clements, Kyle Shepherd, Jasper Fanning, Kent Miller, Jim Meismer, Bob Merrigan, Kevin Fornoff, Mike Keller, David Pieper, Marvin Knoll, Robert Peterson, Dan Estermann, Jared Gaedke, Marlene Estermann, Joe Estermann, Landon Shaw, Ann Dimmitt, Nate Jenkins, John Giroux.

**Information Sent to Board Members:** Agenda, financial report

**Information Available at Board Meeting:** Agenda; minutes of Jan. 21, 2015 meeting; January 2015 payables; January 2015 profit and loss; balance sheet as of January 31, 2015; proposed cooperative agreement with Nebraska Game and Parks; egg facility overview; grass drilling bids; George Vinton letter; HDR correspondence on Wellfleet Dam; project cost splits, profit and loss and balance sheets of project expenses for each member NRD; Forest Service mulch proposal.

Chairman Terry Martin called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. and designated NCORPE Manager Kyle Shepherd to run the meeting. Shepherd noted a copy of the Open Meetings Act was in the back of the room. Roll call was taken. Voting representatives from URNRD (Terry Martin); Middle Republican NRD (Brad Randel); and Twin Platte NRD (Jerry Weaver) were present. There was no voting representative from the Lower Republican NRD.

#### **Minutes:**

- Martin moved to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2015 meeting as presented. Seconded by Randel. Roll call vote: 3-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.

#### **Financial Report:**

- a.) Payables and Financial Reports:** Fanning reviewed the payables and financial statement. He noted that all project expenses had been separated into classes for each of the four member NRDs. Doing so will make it easier to track pumping expenses.
  - Martin moved to approve the payables and financial report. Seconded by Weaver. Roll call vote: 3-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.  
A request from Pinnacle Bank to clarify NCORPE account authorizations was discussed.
  - Weaver moved to give NCORPE Manager Kyle Shepherd and NCORPE Treasurer/Secretary Tim Kahrs of the Lower Republican NRD all authorizations related to the NCORPE account and for staff to research the if either needed to be bonded. Seconded by Martin. Roll call vote: 3-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.

Jenkins discussed a claim from attorney George Vinton for payment related to work he did for clients along Medicine Creek who have purchase agreements with NCORPE stating that NCORPE would pay some of their attorney's fees.

- Randel moved to authorize payment subject to approval by legal counsel to make sure payments are consistent with the purchase agreements. Seconded by Martin. Roll call vote: 3-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.

### **Project Update**

**a.) Augmentation Operations:** Mike Keller reported that as of today, 53,000 acre feet had been pumped from the project. Work on all of the wells is complete. Air conditioning issues on some of the wells are being looked at. Project operations for 2015 are expected to cease sometime in April or May.

### **b.) Medicine Creek Structures/Agreements**

i.) **Stockville Area Crossing:** Shepherd reviewed a request from Fred Bauer to install a new culvert and crossing on property where there had not previously been a culvert or crossing. The cost of installation would be \$60,000-\$70,000.

- Martin moved to direct staff to prepare a letter to Bauer denying his request. Seconded by Randel. Roll call vote: 3-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.

ii.) **Wellfleet Dam:** Shepherd said that HDR engineering wants to design a water outlet structure at the dam and provide NCORPE with a bid on what bwork needs to be done pursuant to conversations with the State.

- Martin moved to authorize up to \$5,000 for a study of the structure and pre-bid proposal. Seconded by Randel. Roll call vote: 3-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.

### **c.) Regional Water Model**

- Martin moved to postpone discussion of the model. Seconded by Randel. Roll call vote: 3-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.

### **Property Management/Operations**

**a.) Natural Resources Commission Funding:** Jenkins stated there was a desire from some to see if new funding for water projects could be accessed by NCORPE but that the Commission hadn't yet approved criteria projects must meet to be eligible for the funding.

**b.) Grass Drilling Bids:** Shepherd reviewed bids to drill grass seed on the NCORPE property. The three lowest bidders each submitted bids of \$12 per acre. The Board discussed whether to award bids to all three because of the large number of acres that need to be seeded.

- Martin moved to direct management to award bids to the three low bidders. Seconded by Randel. Roll call vote: 3-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.

**c.) Public Hunting Proposal/Game and Parks:** Shepherd addressed rumors that Game and Parks planned to stock deer on NCORPE property. Shepherd said the rumors were untrue and that would not be allowed. Game and Parks had provided a draft agreement that would guide cooperation between them and NCORPE should some of the property be open to public hunting under the Game and Parks open access program. Under the agreement, Game and Parks would fund a staff position. Shepherd said five individuals will be interviewed.

**d.) Forest Service Mulch Proposal:** Shepherd said the Forest Service has proposed applying tree mulch on NCORPE roads at different depths to see how it works on sandy roads. The cost would be \$25,000, with NCORPE reimbursed half that amount at the beginning, and reimbursed the remainder at the end of the project. The Board wanted more information and requested that the Forest Service attend the next meeting to make a presentation.

**e.) Budget Crediting:** Nothing discussed.

**f.) Land/Facility Use Proposal:** John Giroux and Jerry Santee of Bio-Ag Solutions made a presentation to the board about their interest in acquiring NCORPE property for an egg farm. They desire one section of land to accommodate future expansion. The first phase would have 12 barns, require 80-

100 acres and be operational in 18-24 months. Each phase would require about 25 million gallons of water annually. In the first phase, 4-5 million bushels of corn would be needed annually; the feed mix is 79% corn, 20% soybeans. There would be approximately 200 employees. And the farm would produce 60 million dozen eggs annually.

- Martin moved to appoint a committee comprised of Jerry Weaver and Brad Randel to work with the group and report back to NCORPE. Seconded by Randel. Roll call vote: 3-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.
  
- b.) **NCORPE Account Authorization:** The Board discussed adding new NCORPE Manager Kyle Shepherd and new board member Tim Kahrs, who represents the Lower Republican NRD on the NCORPE Board and is secretary/treasurer of NCORPE, to the NCORPE account.
- Meismer moved to add Kyle Shepherd to the NCORPE account. Seconded by Martin. Roll call vote: 4-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.
- Martin moved to add Tim Kahrs to the account as secretary/treasurer of NCORPE. Seconded by Meismer. Roll call vote: 4-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.

#### **Project Update:**

- a.) **Augmentation Operations:** Mike Keller said that impellers on four wells remain to be replaced and a temperature gauge on one drive is being fixed. Fanning said that all water required to be delivered for 2014 will soon be delivered and 2015 pumping will occur, to be completed before June 1. Should there be a minimal number of shutdowns, pumping could be completed in late April.
- b.) **Medicine Creek Structures/Agreements:** Nothing reported.

#### **Property Management/Operations**

- a.) **Grass Seed Bid:** Jenkins reviewed grass seed bids that had been received seeking enough grass seed to seed approximately 9,600 acres. Each of the bidders said they could supply approximately 1,500-2,500 acres worth of seed. Because of the uncertainty of future seed supplies and the desire to establish grass on the property as soon as possible for best land management practices, the Board agreed to pursue buying seed from as many of the bidders as necessary to attain 9,600 acres worth. The Board also agreed that is wise to get as much seed as possible this year in order to utilize a grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust.
  - Randel moved to attain as much seed as possible from vendors who bid and to leverage the grant funds. Seconded by Kahrs. Roll call vote: 4-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.
- b.) **Public Hunting Proposal/Game and Parks Commission:** Fanning and Jenkins reported that funding from the Game and Parks Commission that would pay for a new NCORPE employee, in exchange for NCORPE allowing public hunting access on approximately 8,500 acres, was dependent on a federal grant and that it would be a few months before it was known whether the grant would be awarded. Hiring, then, would not be able to occur until possibly July if the Board was to wait until acceptance of the grant was known. The Board decided it was prudent to pursue hiring an employee sooner and to involve Game and Parks under the assumption the grant would be received.
  - Martin moved to pursue hiring an NCORPE employee, with Game and Parks being involved to the extent they are able. Seconded by Meismer. Roll call vote: 4-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.
- c.) **2015 Cropland Lease Agreement:** Jenkins provided an overview of the proposed 2015 lease including language that allowed the tenant to chop silage provided he drilled a cover crop by Oct. 1. The tenant also wished to graze the cover crop until April 1, 2016.
  - Meismer moved to approve the lease as presented and to add allowance for grazing cover crop until April 1, 2016. Seconded by Martin. Roll call vote: 4-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.
- d.) **2015 Grazing Options/Rental:** Shepherd said that a landowner whose property abuts approximately 100 acres of NCORPE grassland that doesn't have a stock tank or well had requested to lease the land for grazing and the

Board agreed to allow the rental. Shepherd and Jenkins said NRCS officials said grazing NCORPE property for approximately one month early in the spring would be acceptable and Shepherd will pursue options for doing so.

- e.) **Gran Bin Site:** Shepherd said some bids had been received to break up and remove concrete pads that used to hold grain bins on the property. The cost would be approximately \$70,000 and it would cost another \$40,000 to crush the concrete.

Meismer moved to authorize Shepherd to receive and awards bids for removing and crushing the concrete.

Seconded by Martin. Roll call vote: 4-yes. 0-no. Motion approved.

**Open Forum:** Joe and Dan Estermann expressed concern about additional wildlife on and near the NCORPE property.

There was no other business and the board adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

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Brad Randel, Board Secretary

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Date