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## BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, July 10, 2008

11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Call to Order:** The July 10, 2008 meeting of the Panhandle RC&D Board of Directors was called to order by Treasurer Verlin Bruns at 11:00 a.m. Those in attendance included: Treasurer Verlin Bruns, Larry Gibbs, Charles Weston, Joe Nunn, Terry McCord, Rick Soper, Bill Patterson, Harold Winkelman, Mike Marker, Lonnie Miller and Ron Miller.

Staff present were: Ron Moore and Jennifer Rogers.

Guests included Kerri Schnase, Senator Ben Nelson's local representative.

**Approve Agenda:** Motion to approve the agenda made by Harold Winkelman; seconded by Charles Weston. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes:** Everyone took a moment to read through the June 5, 2008 Minutes. Motion to approve the June 5, 2008 Minutes made by Larry Gibbs; seconded by Joe Nunn. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** The July 10, 2008 Treasurer's Report was sent out prior to the meeting for everyone to have a chance to look through the items. Receipts included: \$2,000.00 from the Walmart Foundation for the Intertribal Gathering; \$3,909.57 leftover cash and donations from the Intertribal Gathering; \$200.00 money order donation to the Intertribal Gathering, and \$10,000.00 from High Plains Weed Management Association for the quarterly MOU reimbursement. The Receipts totaled \$16,109.57. Expenses included: \$250.00 to the UNL Extension for the Pine Ridge Teacher's Institute; \$25.00 to Allo Communications; \$400.00 to Dana Cole; \$775.59 to Kreider Insurance; \$500.76 to the Gering Civic Center; \$971.03 Payroll; \$924.78 Payroll; and \$19,000.00 cash withdrawal for the Intertribal Gathering. Expenses totaled \$22,847.16. Ending cash balance as of July 10, 2008 was \$45,461.91. Motion to approve the July 10, 2008 Treasurer's Report was made by Ron Miller; seconded by Charles Weston. Motion carried.

**Approval of Bills:** Motion to approve the July 10, 2008 Bills-to-be-paid was made by Larry Gibbs; seconded by Ron Miller. Rick Soper had a question on the FIG bills, wondering if by paying the bills on the list, wouldn't it leave the FIG account negative. Jennifer and Ron explained that there were still some program ad payments and other grant reimbursements that would be coming in, which would be gone through in detail on the next agenda item. Motion carried.

### Reports:

**Program Assistant Report:** Jennifer said the only two items she had at this time were for the Directors to begin thinking about this year's Annual Meeting, including available dates, times and where it should be held. Also, the Membership/Dues letters will be going out soon, and she wanted the Directors to look at whether the dues needed to be increased. Ron Miller said he believes this should be sent to a committee for review. Verlin was looking at the proposed budget Jennifer put together as a starting point for the Budget Committee, and he thinks we're looking in pretty good shape as far as

this year goes. Motion made by Ron Miller for the Budget Committee (Gary Fisher, Lonnie Miller, Verlin Bruns) to look at the current dues amount to see if it should be increased; seconded by Charles Weston. Motion carried.

**High Plains WMA Report:** Jennifer said that right now High Plains has 59 landowner applications and approximately 4000 acres they will be treated this round that was just sent out to the contractors. The group is also looking at setting their own price per acre. Harold questioned whether it was feasible to set the price per acre, or if they should be doing it per hour. Jennifer said the group has been working really closely with the contractors, and are making it a priority for the contractors to be happy with the situation since there are definitely not enough contractors to do all of the work that has already been submitted and more applications are being received every day.

**FIG Budget Report:** Jennifer included a breakdown of the expenses as well as the confirmed and projected income for this year's Intertribal Gathering for the Board to review. Ron Moore is estimating the total income and expenses to come out ahead this year by around \$900. There were 140 dancers and 600-700 people at each session, which was an increase from previous years. Every year there are more and more spectators. There were also 20 vendors, which was another increase from last year.

#### **Old Business:**

**RC&D Association Nominations:** Jennifer said that right now Cheryl is on the Nominating Committee for the Nebraska RC&D Association Awards, but that they are still needing input from the rest of the board. The nominations are due by August 10, and some of the categories that a decision needs to be made on includes the Council Member of the Year, Sponsor of the Year, and Spirit of Nebraska Award.

**Completed Projects Reports:** Ron included a printout in their packets of the completed projects for the Board's review. The handouts really lay out what the benefits have been as well as the costs. There will be more at the next meeting to approve as completed. The most important part of these printouts is that they show how much RC&D has been able to accomplish.

**Area Plan Meeting/Update:** Included in the board packets were the existing Area Plan as well as a revised draft that included the changes that were discussed at the Area Plan Meeting in June. RC&D will be conducting town hall meetings over the Panhandle to receive more input from the area communities. The goal of that meeting was to identify the goals and areas we want to continue to be involved in, which was accomplished.

#### **Project Updates:**

**Organic Farming:** Ron Miller has been selected as the local coordinator for the statewide RC&D organic farming project. Ron reported that there's been a move in the 2008 farm budget for increased funding for organic farming; they're finding through a study in Iowa (which is pushing organic farming a lot more aggressively than Nebraska) that they have a lot of organizers at the federal, state, and local level, which includes the RC&D. The funding is that they'll start with \$50 per acre. Their net dollars have been raised about eight times over. The RC&D's involved in this project (included Panhandle) will be holding organic farming conferences and will be helping and assisting those interested in going organic. Moving to organic is not going to pay off the first couple of years, so the goal of cost share programs and assistance is to help the producers get established. It takes three years to be certified organic. If you use this with the soil health, then that can help or increase the

yields. The income off of organic wheat was \$22 and there are a lot of outlets/markets for these products.

**Big Springs Memorial Flag Project:** The Nebraska Game and Parks is willing to cover 80 percent of clearing pathways and brush from the pond. They are also looking into grant possibilities with the Environmental Trust.

**Chappell Lake Restoration** – Verlin reported that an agreement has been signed with the South Platte NRD to go in and get some of the moss out. Ron Miller said there are some technologies that have established the cleaning of ponds that might take away the need to clean it out that could be looked into.

### **New Business**

**Annual Work Plan:** A handout was included in the packet for the board to begin looking at in order to get this year's Annual Work Plan completed. The committee needs to bring this back for approval next month. The Annual Work Plan is what we submit to NRCS to receive the \$20,000 support.

**2009 RC&D Proposed Budget:** Lonnie Miller reported that he has received the info from me, but hasn't had a chance to get together with Gary Fisher so at this time, he would like to try to schedule a meeting and then bring back the Budget to the next meeting. The situation that we have right now with the High Plains revenue, the preliminary numbers do show we're in pretty good shape. Ron Miller said he would encourage Ron Moore to be involved in that.

### **Funding Request:**

**Buckboard Therapeutic Riding Academy:** Kathy Gatch asked Jennifer to bring a proposal to the board to see if they might be willing to do a rider or horse sponsorship for this riding season. The group has over 100 riders this season. The group is also continuing to work toward getting funding for an indoor arena. Rick Soper is afraid that this would set a bad precedent for the organization to then have to donate funds to other groups. At this point, the only other groups that RC&D has actually donated to has been the Intertribal Gathering and the UNL Extension Pine Ridge Teacher's Institute. Rick also said that it may be more appropriate for the directors to give donations on a personal basis as opposed to a donation from the RC&D. Of course, he agrees with the group's mission and what they are doing, but questions whether RC&D is at a point yet where it can afford to be donating money to other groups. Ron Miller made a motion to submit this to the Budget Committee for review; seconded by Mike Marker. Motion carried.

**Adjournment:** A motion was made by Larry Gibbs to adjourn the July 10, 2008 meeting of the Panhandle RC&D Board of Directors; seconded by Terry McCord. Motion carried.

With no further business, at 11:55 a.m. Treasurer Verlin Bruns adjourned the meeting.