



Resource Conservation & Development, Inc.

Empowering Citizens to Build Strong Communities

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BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 8, 2008

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

Call to Order: The May 8, 2008 meeting of the Panhandle RC&D Council was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by President Gary Fisher. Introductions were made. Those present at the meeting were: Larry Gibbs, City of Gering Representative; Harold Winkelman, Cheyenne County; Charles Weston, Box Butte County; Terry McCord, Garden County; Mike Marker, Scotts Bluff County; Bill Patterson, City of Oshkosh; Rachel Gibson, Village of Henry; Dave Ostdiek, North Platte NRD; President Gary Fisher, Dawes County; Lonnie Miller, City of Terrytown, Vice President Ron Klemke, City of Oshkosh; Ron Miller, Scotts Bluff County; and Gary Grubbs, Banner County.

Staff present were: Ron Moore and Jennifer Rogers.

Guests: Scott Cotton, UNL Extension Office, Dawes County

Agenda: A motion was made by Harold Winkelman to approve the May 8, 2008 Agenda; seconded by Mike Marker. Motion passed.

Approval minutes: Larry Gibbs made a motion to approve the minutes from the Marcy 13, 2008 meeting, with a second by Harold Winkelman. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Members went through Treasurer's Report briefly, as it was sent out prior to the meeting for review. A motion was made by Terry McCord to accept the May 8, 2008 Treasurer's Report; seconded by Charles Weston. Motion passed.

Approval of Bills: The March Bills-to-be-Paid includes: Allo Communications, \$25.00; Ron Moore (postage reimbursement, \$82.00; Indian Country Today, \$612.00; Beehive Insurance, \$675.00; Gary Fisher (mileage reimbursement), \$211.08. A motion was made by Larry Gibbs to approve the Bills-to-be-Paid; seconded by Mike Marker. Motion passed.

Program Assistant Report: CDBG Training: Jennifer reported that the date for this year's Community Development Block Grant Administrator's training has been scheduled for July 22-25. Jennifer would drive up to Lincoln on Tuesday, July 22, attend the training on the 23rd and 24th, and take the exam to become certified on the 25th. A hotel room would be needed for three nights, and there is a block of rooms set aside at the Chase Suites hotel at a reduced rate for training participants. Jennifer has estimated that the costs associated with the trip would be between \$600 and \$650. By becoming certified in CDBG, Jennifer and Panhandle RC&D would be able to assist cities, villages, and counties with administering their Block Grants for their local projects. Typically, a 3% administration fee is charged for this service. A motion was made by Larry Gibbs for Jennifer to attend the CDBG training, with Council reimbursement of up to \$650; seconded by Bill Patterson. Motion passed.

Diversity Policy and Action Plan: The proposed Diversity Policy and Action Plan Jennifer put together for the Council's review was again presented. This policy is part of the Diversity Outreach effort funded through a \$5,000 grant from the National Association of RC&D Councils. Efforts associated with the project are underway, including researching possible programs for American Indians and other youth in the Nebraska Panhandle. Scott Cotton believes having a diversity policy in place is extremely important, particularly given the kind of projects associated with the RC&D program. A lot of negative societal factors have been linked to school-aged kids with idle time on their hands, including an increased crime rate. This might be a good opportunity to further explore existing groups and programs, and to see how RC&D can support what is in

place, and identify gaps in services or additional needs. A motion was made by Larry Gibbs to accept and adopt the proposed Diversity Policy and Action Plan, with the addition of: "...while encouraging and supporting the learning of English for continued and future success" under #3 on the Action Plan; seconded by Mike Marker. Motion passed.

Personnel Committee Report: Mike Marker reported that he and Ron Miller met with Jennifer regarding changes in benefits offered for her position. He passed out a breakdown of what is being proposed to the board, including: increasing her work week from 20 hours to 40 hours (due to the MOU with the HPWMA), providing one week of paid vacation, one week of sick leave, six paid holidays, and a \$2500 health care allowance in order to cover her health care expenses, as insurance is currently not offered. One issue that was brought up by President Fisher regarded the unlikely event that Jennifer might no longer be employed before the year's mark of the \$2500, and what might be done in that case. Jennifer said that if that were to occur, the time put in could be calculated in order for her to pay back any portion associated with time not put in. Harold Winkelman asked about the possibility of looking at cumulative vacation and sick leave, which would increase the longer Jennifer had been employed with RC&D. Mike Marker said that the benefits package would be reviewed six months from now to see if it might be a good idea to increase the vacation/sick leave benefit, as well as other provisions. A motion was made by Gary Grubbs to approve the benefits package and increased work week as presented; seconded by Bill Patterson. Motion carried.

High Plains Weed Management Association Committee Report: Ron Moore informed those who were unaware of the phone vote in April of the approval by a majority of members of accepting the High Plains Weed Management Association/Panhandle RC&D Memorandum of Understanding. Mike Marker believes it might be beneficial to receive a report from Dennis Beyer at the RC&D meetings regarding progress, as well as their meeting minutes included in the RC&D board packets. Jennifer reported that the North Platte NRD has also committed to assisting HPWMA in their efforts, by allowing Roy Lyles, to act as Field Coordinator for the group while retaining his position at the NRD. The North Platte NRD and HPWMA also adopted their own Memorandum of Understanding.

Project Proposals:

Chappell Lake Restoration: the City of Chappell and a group of concerned citizens has submitted a project proposal to RC&D requesting our assistance in helping them clean out and restore one of their local ponds. The South Platte NRD, as well as possible funding sources are all being looked at for getting the project completed. At this time, they are requesting assistance in: funding location, grant applications, project start-up, and organizational support. A motion was made by Larry Gibbs to approve the Chappell Lake Restoration as a project under the RC&D; seconded by Ron Klemke. Motion passed.

Continuous No-Till Cropping System Education and Promotion: The Panhandle No-Till Partnership is requesting to become a committee under the RC&D in order for the RC&D to assist them in their education efforts, many that are already under way. The Partnership is a team of NRD managers, NRCS District Conservationists, UNL Extension Educators and Nebraska No-Till Cadre members. The group's goal is to educate producers, ag businesses, ag lenders, and the public on the benefits of no-till. At this time, they are requesting assistance from the RC&D in: funding location, grant applications, and outreach/media efforts. Motion made by Mike Marker to approve the Continuous No-Till Cropping System Education and Promotion as a project under the RC&D; seconded by Lonnie Miller. Motion passed.

Project Status: Currently, there are six projects (Farm and Ranch Museum, Pumpkin Creek Water Management Coalition, Friends of the Intertribal Gathering 2007, Friends of the Gering Library, Buckboard Therapeutic Riding Academy 2007, and the Deuel County Health Foundation) that need to be voted into Project Completion Status. Two of the projects, Friends of the Intertribal Gathering and Buckboard Therapeutic Riding Academy are two ongoing projects that simply need to have the previous year's efforts closed out. If the board votes to close out the projects, Ron Moore will have a full printout for accountability reports available at the

next meeting. Mike Marker made a motion to approve the six projects presented (Farm and Ranch Museum, Pumpkin Creek Water Management Coalition, Friends of the Intertribal Gathering 2007, Friends of the Gering Library, Buckboard Therapeutic Riding Academy 2007, and the Deuel County Health Foundation) as completed; seconded by Terry McCord. Motion passed.

Five Year Area Plan Meeting: Due to the cancellation of the previously scheduled Five Year Area Plan planning meeting, a date needs to be set to make-up that meeting. It was decided that due to the next meeting's date falling on the week of the Ninth Annual Intertribal Gathering, both the regular meeting of the Panhandle RC&D Board of Directors, as well as the Five Year Area Plan meeting will be held on June 5th, 2008 at the Gering Civic Center. The regular meeting will begin at 2:00, with the Planning meeting to be held directly thereafter, until approximately 7:00 p.m. Members will need to RSVP to Jennifer as soon as possible in order to get the information to the Gering Civic Center.

Adjournment: A motion was made by Terry McCord to adjourn the May 8, 2008 meeting of the Panhandle RC&D Board of Directors; seconded by Gary Grubs. Motion passed.

Scott Cotton briefly discussed some of the upcoming projects that he is working on and have been approved as projects under the RC&D including the 2008 Pine Ridge Teacher's Institute. He also distributed handouts regarding those events.

With no further business, at 12:05 p.m., President Gary Fisher adjourned the meeting.