

MINUTES OF THE
NEBRASKA NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING
JANUARY 29, 1998

Roy Stewart, Chair	Harold Klaege
Vince Kramper, Member	Perry Wigley
Don Larson, Member	Marlin Petermann
Beverly Donaldson, Member	Paul Zillig
Dale Watermeier, Member	Tom Moser
Joseph Hergott, Member	Dick Seymour
Richard Jiskra, Member	Gary Dorshorst
Wilbur Nelson, Member	Ron Cacek
Mike Shaughnessy, Member	Nick Johnson
Richard Mercer, Member	Terry Nicholson
Don Roberts, Member	Brian McDonald
Clifford Welsh, Member	Dayle Williamson, Director
LeRoy Pieper, Member	Jim Cook, Staff
Frank Bartak, Member	Terry Kubicek, Staff
Wayne Davis, Member	Tom Pesek, Staff
	Steve Gaul, Staff
	Gayle Starr, Staff

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair, Roy Stewart, at 10:35 a.m. in the Lower Level Conference Room E of the Nebraska State Office Building in Lincoln, Nebraska.

NOTICE OF THE MEETING

Public notice of the meeting was placed in the LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR on January 21, 1998, notifying the public of the meeting.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIAL

The following items of informational material were distributed during the course of the meeting and a copy of each is attached to the file copy of the minutes:

1. Nebraska Resources Development Fund Present Financial Status
2. Nebraska Resources Development Fund Quarterly Report - January 31, 1998
3. Draft Letter to Sponsor - Stevens Creek Project Proposal
4. Draft Letter to Sponsor - Cedar Creek Project Proposal
5. Aowa Creek Watershed map & Powder Creek Project information
6. Status of Small Watersheds Flood Control Fund
7. Soil and Water Conservation Program Fund Report - 1/98
8. Letter from Little Blue NRD (December 19, 1997) - Consideration of new practices under

- the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program
9. Natural Resources Enhancement Fund Receipts
 10. Natural Resources Conservation Service Report to the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission and Nebraska Association of Resources Districts - Farm Bill Activities
 11. FY 97 Annual Report - NRCS Conservation Progress
 12. 1998 Environmental Quality Incentives Program Release No. 0036.98

MINUTES

Motion was made by Davis and seconded by Kramper to approve the minutes of the December 11, 1997, Commission meeting as distributed. Motion carried unanimously.
Aye: Stewart, Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Nelson, Mercer, Davis, Donaldson, Pieper, Bartak, Larson, Shaughnessy, and Kramper
Nay: None
Not Present: Kroese

EXPENDITURES

Motion was made by Kramper and seconded by Jiskra to approve the expenditures report for December, 1997, as distributed. Motion carried unanimously.
Aye: Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Nelson, Mercer, Davis, Donaldson, Pieper, Bartak, Larson, Shaughnessy, Kramper, and Stewart
Nay: None
Not Present: Kroese

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dayle Williamson explained that he had been providing some assistance to the Western Governor's Association on some natural resources issues that Governor Nelson is interested in. He added that he and Brian Dunnigan had been working with the regional office of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to try to improve the operational programs in Nebraska.

Williamson explained that as Governor Nelson's representative on the Platte River Cooperative Agreement Governor's Committee he would be meeting with that group on a monthly basis. He added they were in the process of hiring an Executive Director and hoped to have that done by late spring.

ADVISOR'S COMMENTS

Perry Wigley explained that the Conservation & Survey Division had hired a new employee to work in superficial geology and he has already embarked on two new projects for the division. Wigley explained they have initiated studies at several locations in the Republican River valley to try to determine the influence of pumping groundwater from wells on river flows. He noted this will be an ongoing project and information useful in the discussions regarding the Republican River Compact. He also noted they will be involved with a number of Platte River Studies that will be partially funded through the Environmental Trust.

Harold Klaege, representing the Natural Resources Conservation Service, distributed a report and commented briefly on several items. He noted that word is expected soon on the number of acres accepted in the CRP Program under the last sign-up. He added that the number of conservation compliance status reviews had been reduced dramatically for 1998 which will allow field personnel more time to work in the field. He added that the 12 priority areas for the 1998 Environmental Quality Incentive Program were attached to his report along with a map showing the

areas.

ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

Vince Kramper noted that the Environmental Trust Board had met on Tuesday evening to accept the recommendation of their selection committee which recommended the approval of 84 projects for just over \$6 million. He added that they had received 174 requests for a total of \$36 million. Kramper and Mercer both commented on the need to provide oversight of the approved projects for the Environmental Trust and indicated that some NRDs may be providing some assistance in that oversight effort.

PLATTE RIVER

Dayle Williamson briefly reviewed the background cooperative agreement between the three states and the federal government and outlined the procedures being followed by the Governance Committee in carrying out their responsibilities. Jim Cook also reviewed the activities that are taking place within the State of Nebraska on this effort.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Terry Kubicek explained that the Comprehensive Planning Committee had not met. He noted that the soil survey activities and the DEM/DOQ project are both pretty much on schedule at this time. Steve Gaul described several of the activities that the Comprehensive Planning Section is involved with including the Lower Platte Feasibility Study with the NRDs and the Corps of Engineers and the Water Use Study with the U.S. Geological Survey.

LEGISLATIVE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE

Don Roberts explained that staff Attorney Jim Cook had briefed the committee on a number of Legislative bills and that the committee was recommending Commission positions on five Legislative bills. Motion was made by Roberts and seconded by Kramper to recommend that the Commission support L.B. 1004 which would increase from \$15 million to \$17 million the uninflated total cost of projects which can receive financial assistance from the Nebraska Resources Development Fund. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Nelson, Mercer, Davis, Donaldson, Pieper, Bartak, Larson, Shaughnessy, Kramper, Stewart, and Roberts,

Nay: None

Not Present: Kroese

Motion was made by Roberts and seconded by Jiskra to support L.B. 1049 which would reduce the required cost-share rate from 90% to 75% when an NRD orders the application of permanent practices to agricultural lands to alleviate erosion problems under the Erosion and Sediment Control Act and would eliminate the need to provide cost-share if the land involved was publicly owned. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: Jiskra, Watermeier, Nelson, Mercer, Davis, Donaldson, Pieper, Bartak, Larson, Shaughnessy, Kramper, Stewart, Roberts, and Hergott

Nay: None

Not Present: Kroese

Motion was made by Roberts and seconded by Jiskra to support that part of L.B. 1108 which provides a deficit appropriation to the Commission for the state's share of expenses for the Platte River Cooperative Agreement. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: Watermeier, Nelson, Mercer, Davis, Donaldson, Pieper, Bartak, Larson, Shaughnessy,

Kramper, Stewart, Roberts, Hergott, and Jiskra

Nay:None

Not Present: Kroese

Motion was made by Roberts and seconded by Kramper to support L.B. 1202 which provides legislative intent to appropriate \$300,000 to the Tree Recovery Program and \$300,000 to the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Fund for tree-related activities eligible for cost-share assistance under that fund. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye:Nelson, Mercer, Davis, Donaldson, Pieper, Bartak, Larson, Shaughnessy, Kramper, Stewart, Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, and Watermeier

Nay:None

Not Present: Kroese

Motion was made by Roberts and seconded by Davis to support Amendments to L.B. 921 to provide for cost-share assistance for installation of irrigation well meters in the Republican River alluvium. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye:Mercer, Davis, Donaldson, Pieper, Bartak, Larson, Shaughnessy, Kramper, Stewart, Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, and Nelson

Nay:None

Not Present: Kroese

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Dale Watermeier indicated that Tom Pesek had reviewed the Resources Development Fund Status report with the committee.

Motion was made by Watermeier and seconded by Bartak to advise the Lower Platte South NRD and the Village of Cedar Creek not to proceed with an application and feasibility report for the Cedar Creek Flood Control Project and to transmit the comments and questions contained in the letter from the Director of Natural Resources. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye:Davis, Donaldson, Pieper, Bartak, Larson, Shaughnessy, Kramper, Stewart, Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Nelson, and Mercer

Nay:None

Not Present: Kroese

Motion was made by Watermeier and seconded by Larson that the Commission advise the Lower Platte South NRD that it may proceed with an application and feasibility report for the Stevens Creek Watershed Project and that it is to address the comments and questions contained in the letter from the Director of Natural Resources. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye:Donaldson, Pieper, Bartak, Larson, Shaughnessy, Kramper, Stewart, Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Nelson, Mercer, and Davis,

Nay:None

Not Present: Kroese

Watermeier commented briefly on the land sale of 40 acres near Douglas which was acquired with funds from the Small Watersheds Flood Control Fund. Motion was made by Watermeier and seconded by Larson to accept the high bid of \$54,200 or \$1,355 per acre for the 40-acre Clark tract at South Branch Little Nemaha Site 1-B. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye:Pieper, Bartak, Larson, Shaughnessy, Kramper, Stewart, Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Nelson, Mercer, Davis, and Donaldson

Nay:None

Not Present: Kroese

Watermeier explained that Tom Moser, Manager of the Lewis & Clark NRD, had briefed the committee on the Resources Development Fund application for the Powder Creek Project.

Tom Pesek then introduced Wakefield City Manager, Terry Nicholson, who introduced their City Engineer, Nick Johnson and Brian McDonald, who then briefed the Commission on the Wakefield Levee Resources Development Fund Project application.

Watermeier noted he had asked this item be placed on the agenda to discuss an increased appropriation for the Resources Development Fund and the strategy that might be used to acquire that increase. Marlin Petermann, representing the Pappio-Missouri River NRD, distributed some information regarding past Resources Development Fund appropriations and commented on the need for an increased appropriation to meet the requirements of current projects.

Watermeier noted the Status Reports on the Small Watersheds Flood Control Fund, Soil & Water Conservation Fund, and Natural Resources Enhancement Fund had been provided to Commission members.

1998 MEETING SCHEDULE

Motion was made by Kramper and seconded by Larson to approve the following meeting schedule for the upcoming year:

March 18-19	September 29-30 (NARD, 28-29) at KEARNEY
April 29-30	October 28-29
June 10-11	December 9-10
August 12-13 at BEATRICE	January 27-28, 1999

Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: Bartak, Larson, Shaughnessy, Kramper, Stewart, Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Nelson, Mercer, Davis, Donaldson, and Pieper

Nay: None

Not Present: Kroese

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Commission Chair, Roy Stewart, called for nominations for the position of Commission Chair for the upcoming year. Don Roberts nominated Vince Kramper. Motion was made by Watermeier and seconded by Jiskra to close nominations for the position of

Commission Chair and cast a unanimous ballot for Vince Kramper. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: Larson, Shaughnessy, Kramper, Stewart, Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Nelson, Mercer, Davis, Donaldson, Pieper, and Bartak

Nay: None

Not Present: Kroese

Jiskra then called for nominations for the position of Commission Vice-Chair. Don Roberts nominated Wayne Davis. Motion was made by Jiskra and seconded by Watermeier to close nominations for Commission Vice-Chair and cast a unanimous for Wayne Davis. Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: Shaughnessy, Kramper, Stewart, Roberts, Hergott, Jiskra, Watermeier, Nelson, Mercer, Davis, Donaldson, Pieper, Bartak, and Larson

Nay: None

Not Present: Kroese

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Vince Kramper asked Commission members to indicate their choice of committee assignments for the upcoming year and indicated that he and Wayne Davis would be making committee assignments.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Commission is March 18 and 19 in Lincoln.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:00 NOON.