

December 17, 2020

## PRESS RELEASE

### Two Seats Open on the Central Platte NRD Board of Directors

(GRAND ISLAND, NE)- Keith Stafford, Lon Bohn, Brian Keiser and Jay Richeson were selected to serve on a Search Committee at the Central Platte Natural Resources District's (CPNRD) board of directors meeting on Thursday to recommend board members for Subdistrict 2 and Subdistrict 4.

The two vacancies are due to directors recently moving out of their subdistricts. Chris Henry, Cozad, moved out of Subdistrict 2 and therefore has resigned from the board. Eric Davis, Kearney, was elected to replace Keith Stafford in Subdistrict 4. Davis moved to a new location in Kearney and inadvertently moved into Subdistrict 3. The NRD will advertise for candidates in both subdistricts and letters of interest will be accepted until December 31, 2020. The Executive Committee will interview potential board members and make a recommendation to the board at the January meeting.

#### ACTION/AGENDA ITEMS

**Irrigation Well Survey Presentation** Charles Wortman, Professor of Agronomy- UNL, presented results of an irrigation well survey of nutrient concentrations and water quality properties. The Central Platte NRD took 100 well samples this summer to contribute to the statewide study. Wortman said the results indicated that 40 percent of the District's wells tested at or higher than 10 parts per million for nitrates; while nutrients, lime supply, salinity, and sodium are at acceptable levels.

**Upper Prairie/Silver/Moores Project** The Eastern Projects Committee reviewed and recommended approval of Change Order #1 from Blessing Construction to resurface 3,000 linear feet of the access road around the detention cell at the Upper Prairie/Silver/Moores Flood Risk Reduction Project in Grand Island, NE. The Board approved the invoice in the amount of \$35,511.

#### **Programs Committee:**

**-Website Rebuild** The committee reviewed nine proposals and recommended Provident Promotions of Hastings to rebuild the NRD website. The board approved the proposal in the amount of \$9,000 with a \$35 monthly fee to host the site. The project will begin in January with an anticipated launch date of March 1, 2021.

**-Outdoor Classroom** The committee reviewed an application from Stick Creek Kids Child Development Center in Wood River to expand the sensory garden in their natural playground. The board approved the request of \$2,500 to include native plants and expand the classroom to include additional learning features such as a mud kitchen and a farm-to-kitchen garden in conjunction with the Wood River FFA chapter. The center is licensed to enroll 80 youth from infants to 12 years old.

**-Cooperative Agreement** The board approved an unfunded cooperative agreement with USDA-NRCS.

**-Forestry Cost-Share** Kelly Cole, Administrative Assistant, provided information on the Nebraska Forest Restoration Partnership and new funding received through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Central Platte NRD will utilize the funds to provide 75 percent cost-share for windbreak establishment, windbreak renovation, and weed barrier installation. Cost-share is available for orders of 200 or more trees. Orders will be taken through April 1, 2021.

**Board Officer Nominating Committee** Ed Stoltenburg, Jerry Milner, and Doug Reeves were appointed to the Board Officer Nominating Committee to make recommendations for chairman and vice-chairman. Board officers may serve two, two-year terms. Current chairman Jim Bendfeldt and vice-chairman Mick Reynolds have both served two full terms.

**Managers Report** Lyndon Vogt, General Manager, provided a written update on Cease and Desist violations for the Water Quality Program:

Richard Urban – Signed a Consent Decree stating he will stay in compliance with the NRDs rules and regulations and will pay CPNRD \$2,500 to assist in the costs of the enforcement action and will pay the Polk County District Court \$1,000 as well as court costs.

Artie Moeller – Signed a Consent Decree and will pay CPNRD \$5,000 to assist in the cost of the enforcement action and will pay the District Court of Merrick County \$1,000 as well as court costs.

Bernard Katzberg – Court date has been postponed.

There are two other individuals who have cease and desist orders filed against them. One of them has not violated since he did not irrigate this year. It is questionable whether the other individual irrigated; however, both orders are still in force.

Vogt said with over 850 participants in the Central Platte NRD Water Quality Program, the NRD is very happy with the majority of individuals being in compliance with the rules.

**Nebraska Association of Resources District-** Jim Bendfeldt, NARD Board Member, requested action on the following:

**-Voting Delegates** The board elected Jim Bendfeldt as voting delegate and Jay Richeson as alternate for the Nebraska Association of Resources District's Legislative Conference to be held in January at the Embassy Suites in Lincoln, NE.

**-NARD Risk Pool Resolution** The board approved a resolution to allow Central Platte NRD's annual dividend from the NARD Risk Pool to be assigned to the NARD Foundation to purchase a building. The former NARD and NARD Risk Pool office was destroyed by a fire on May 30, 2020 in Lincoln, NE. The building to be purchased in the amount of \$2.1 million is located in south Lincoln and currently houses the Nebraska Community Foundation, who will remain as tenants and rent office space from the NARD.

**Natural Resources Conservation Service** Joe Krolkowski, District Conservationist, provided a written report for the board since the meeting was held by audio/video conference. Krolkowski provided information on the USDA's Farmers.Gov website where farmers and ranchers can manage their conservation activities and request assistance including the ability to view farm loan information.

**Nebraska Natural Resources Commission** Mick Reynolds, Middle Platte Basin Representative, reported that there will be a Middle Platte Basin Caucus held at the CPNRD office on January 13, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. to elect a Middle Platte River Basin representative. The board will nominate Reynolds during the caucus for another term.

**Cost-Share** 18 applications were approved through the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation and the Central Platte NRD cost-share programs in the amount of \$55,529.48. Practices approved were pipeline to pivot, brush management, center pivot, streambank stabilization, flow meter and well decommissioning.

**Platte River Resilience Letter** The board received a thank you letter for their support of the Platte River Resilience Fund. In September 2020, the board approved investing \$500,000 over three years in an endowment to fund the annual cost of maintaining water conveyance in the Platte River.

**Board/Staff Service Awards** Keith Stafford, Kearney, was presented an outgoing service award for 27 years of service; and Chris Henry, Cozad, was recognized for 5 years of service. Staff recognized were Shelly Lippincott-Secretary in Buffalo County, for 20 years of service; and Dean Krull- UNL Demonstration Project Coordinator, for 40 years of service.

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