

Water Funding Task Force Meeting (REVISED FINAL)

August 9, 2013 | Super 8 Hotel | Holdrege, NE

Task Force members in attendance were:

Voting Members:

Clint Johannes, **Chairman**, *NRC*

Roric Paulman, **Co-Chairman**, *Agriculture*

Garry Anderson, *NRC*

Joel Christensen, *MUD*

Kevin Fornoff, *NRC*

Joseph Hergott, *NRC*

Tim Luchsinger, *Municipalities*

Dick Mercer, *NRC*

Darrell Rains, *NRC*

Michael Reynolds, *NRC*

Scott Smathers, *Outdoor Recreation Users*

Steven Sugden, *NRC*

Brian Barels, *Public Power*

Stan Clouse, *NRC*

John Heaston, *Wildlife Conservation*

Thomas Knutson, *NRC*

Chandler Mazour, *Agribusiness*

Rex Peterson, *Livestock Producers*

Keith Rexroth, *NRC*

Gerry Dale Sheets, *Public Power and Irrigation Districts*

Dennis Strauch, *Irrigation Districts*

Non-Voting Members:

Senator Tom Carlson

Rex Gittins as designee for Brian Dunnigan.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Super 8 Hotel, Holdrege, Nebraska. The following members were absent: Lennie Adams; Senator Mark Christensen; Beverly Donaldson; Dave Deines; Richard Hadenfeldt; David Kadlecck; Senator Rick Kolowski; Senator Ken Schilz; Jeff Steffen; Senator Dan Watermeier; Senator Al Davis

The following attended as alternates: Tim Freburg for Senator Dan Watermeier

NOTICE OF THE MEETING

Notice of the meeting was published on the Department of Natural Resources web site (www.dnr.ne.gov/lb517). A copy of Nebraska's public meeting statutes was available in the room.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

The following informational materials were distributed at the Commission meeting:

- Agenda
- Minutes from July 26, 2013 meeting
- "City of Hastings, NE Well Based Nitrate and Uranium Management Plan" and maps
- Basin Tool Planning Form Comment Summary
- Map "Task Force Member's Home Locations and Meeting Locations"
- Task Force Bio Form
- "Sustainability Steps – Previous and Planned Action in the Republican Basin to Preserve Water"
- Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement Fact Sheet
- Exercise on Water Funding Task Force Goals and Criteria
- Legislative Bill 517 Approved June 4, 2013

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Clint Johannes stated that Notice of the meeting was published on the Department of Natural Resources web site (www.dnr.ne.gov/lb517). A copy of Nebraska's public meeting statutes was available in the room.

Mr. Johannes requested that anyone wishing to provide public comment at today's meeting please sign the "Speaker" sign-in sheet at the sign-in table.

Mr. Johannes also requested that all Task Force expense reimbursement sheets be provided to members of the consultant team for processing.

Task Force Membership

Mike Reynolds asked if there was a protocol for selection of member alternates. Clint clarified that each member has the ability to select their own alternate, as needed, but alternates may only speak during the public comment period and do not vote.

Issue was raised on what the protocol is upon resignation or death. Clint clarified that a member would be elected by caucuses and at that point would be a member in full standing.

Meeting Minutes

Tom Knutson moved and Garry Anderson seconded the motion to adopt the July 26, 2013 Task Force meeting minutes.

Motion Passed.

Aye: All voting members present.

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Karen Griffin, with Olsson Associates, introduced members of the consultant team and then reviewed the agenda and goals for the meeting.

EDUCATION SESSION

Mike Onnen, Manager of the Little Blue NRD, presented "Water Issues Facing the Little Blue NRD." Discussion followed. The presentation is available on the DNR website (www.dnr.ne.gov/lb517).

Marty Stange, with Hastings Utilities, presented "Groundwater Contamination in Hastings, NE." The presentation is available on the DNR website (www.dnr.ne.gov/lb517).

Break 10:55 a.m. - 11:10 a.m.

TASK FORCE MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

Basin Planning Tool Response

Karen Griffin reviewed the Basin Planning Tool Response form. See handout.

Proposed Meeting/Tour Schedule for Approval

Karen Griffin reviewed the Proposed Water Funding Task Force Meeting and Tours handout, content proposed by the Executive Committee. This was followed by a short question and answer session with Task Force members.

Garry Anderson moved and Joel Christiansen seconded the motion to adopt the schedule proposed by the Executive Committee.

Keith Rexroth moved to amend the motion to replace the October 17 & 18 Kearney trip with Sidney. The

motion was seconded by Roric Paulman from Sutherland. Discussion followed to clarify that the meeting in Sidney on the 17th and 18th is predicated on the availability of representatives from Wyoming and Colorado. If they are not available, the Sidney meeting should take place on the 31st of October and the 1st of November. The motion to amend was voted and carried. The original motion setting meeting places and schedule was then voted and carried as amended.

Motion Passed.

Aye: All voting members present.

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Meeting and Tour Planning Logistics

The Task Force offered suggestions regarding future meeting logistics planning such as: begin Friday meetings at 8:00 a.m., use time more constructively such as over lunch and dinner hour, balance education and tour time, time better spent in meeting setting allowing for discussion and moving forward.

Other suggestions included: post lodging confirmation on the DNR website to reduce volume of emails, issue press releases following each meeting to continue informing and educating the public, and prepare draft talking points for the Task Force after each meeting.

(Lunch – 30 mins)

DISCUSSION OF MINDMIXER SITE FOR TASK FORCE COMMENT

Patti Banks, with Vireo, presented an overview of the MindMixer site and how the Task Force may use it as a vehicle for Task Force discussion between meetings.

WATER FUNDING TASK FORCE GOALS AND CRITERIA EXERCISE

Definition of Sustainability

Patti Banks then presented a working definition of sustainability to the Task Force for discussion. Discussion followed. Key changes include: Strike “does not cause harm to ecosystem.” Replace with “promote healthy watersheds.”

The revised working definition follows: *Water use is sustainable when current use promotes healthy watersheds, maintains water quality and protects the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

Goals and Criteria

Patti Banks then presented the Task Force’s mission as written in the legislative bill. See handout. Discussion followed and included a reiteration of the importance of identifying sources of funding for water projects. For the discussion on criteria, each Task Force member identified the three goals that are most important to him. Results follow. The three most important are in *italic, bold text*.

- 1. The extent to which the PPA provides increased water productivity and otherwise maximizes the beneficial use of Nebraska’s water resources – 15 votes***
- 2. The extent to which the PPA assists the state in meeting its obligations under interstate compacts or decrees or other formal contracts or agreements – 8 votes***
- 3. The extent to which the PPA promotes objectives described in the Annual Report and Plan of Work for the Nebraska State Water Planning and Review Process issued by DNR – 3 votes***
- 4. The extent to which the PPA has been approved for funding through an established state program – 1 vote***

5. ***The cost effectiveness of the PPA in meeting the state's water management goals – 11 votes***
6. The extent to which the PPA contributes to the state's water management goals – 3 votes
7. ***The extent to which the PPA contributes to multiple water supply management goals, including, but not limited to flood control; agricultural use; recreational benefits; wildlife habitat; conservation of water resources, and preservation of water resources for future generations. – 19 votes***

In discussion the Task Force recommended a revision to Goal #7 revising it to include “municipal and industrial uses” and therefore revised as follows:

7. ***The extent to which the PPA contributes to multiple water supply management goals, including, but not limited to flood control; municipal and industrial uses, agricultural uses; recreational benefits; wildlife habitat; conservation of water resources, and preservation of water resources for future generations.***

Break 2:00 – 2:05

Frank Kwapnioski with H2Options presentation. The presentation is available on the DNR website (www.dnr.ne.gov/lb517).

PUBLIC COMMENTS 2:51 PM

Karen Griffin requested that anyone who signed-in to please come forward to provide public comment. The following individuals provided comment:

- Stu Luttich – Mission statement has no reference to recharge. Where's the emphasis? How to get water back into aquifer? Suggests we have to figure out a way to recharge before it becomes critical.
- Terry Madson – Troubles me loosing aquifer. Good science is available. Western Kansas lost stream flow. Only 2-3 lifetimes left. It will be extinct if we don't change something.

Individuals from the community present during the meeting included:

- Stu Luttich
- Terry Madson, farmer
- Bob Dahlgreen, banker
- Don Holen, farmer
- Irv McQuarrie, Invest Tune Retire, Inc.
- Fred Knapp, NET News
- Jenny Sidlo, Hastings Utilities
- Tim Freburg, NE Legislature (alternate for Senator Watermier)
- Lyndon Vogt, CPNRD
- Dustin Wilcox, NARD
- John Thorburn, Tri-Basin NRD

EDUCATION SESSION

Jasper Fanning, Manager of the Upper Republican NRD, presented “Water Issues Facing the Republican River NRD's.”

WHAT'S NEXT

Karen Griffin, reviewed Task Force next steps, and project schedule. The next meeting/tour will be held on Thursday August 22 and 23rd at the Monsanto Research Station near Gothenburg, NE.

Meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.