

PLATTE RIVER BASIN COALITION (PBC) COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, October 5, 2023, 1 p.m. Central Time

Twin Platte Natural Resources District
111 S Dewey St., North Platte, NE 69101

MEETING MINUTES

1. Welcome/Call to Order/Open Meetings Act

Called to order by Kent Miller (TPNRD), Chair, at approximately 1:01 p.m. CT.
As directed by state statute, the Open Meetings Act was displayed during the meeting.

2. Roll Call

PBC ILCA Representatives

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Kent Miller, TPNRD | Travis Preston, NPNRD |
| John Thorburn, TBNRD | Brandi Flyr, CPNRD |
| Galen Wittrock, SPNRD | Jennifer Schellpeper, NeDNR |

Others in Attendance

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Ann Dimmitt, TPNRD | Brooke Mott, NeDNR | Avery Dresser, NeDNR |
| Angela Warner, CPNRD | Ryan Reisdorff, SPNRD | Shelly Julian, NeDNR |
| Nolan Little, TBNRD | Ryan Kelly, NeDNR | Arik Vossler, NeDNR |
| Caitlin Kingsley, NeDNR | | |

Shaded areas indicate online attendees.

3. Publication of Meeting Notices (*Attachment 3*)

- *North Platte Telegraph*: September 23, 2023
- *Sidney Sun-Telegraph*: September 28, 2023
- *Grand Island Independent*: September 22, 2023
- *Kearney Hub*: September 23, 2023
- *Scottsbluff Star Herald*: September 23, 2023

4. Agenda Review and Approval (*Attachment 4*)

MOTION: *To approve the October 5, 2023, agenda.*

Move: Jennifer Schellpeper

Second: Brandi Flyr

Discussion: None

Motion passed.

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5. Review and Approval of the August 3, 2023, Minutes (*Attachment 5*)

MOTION: To approve the August 3, 2023, minutes.

Move: Travis Preston

Second: John Thorburn

Discussion: None

Motion passed.

NeDNR will distribute a final copy of the minutes to the group and will post them on the website.¹

6. Budget Update (NeDNR)

A. General Updates

i. Years 7-9 (*Attachment 6Ai*)

Shelly Julian (NeDNR) said the only change was the DNR obligation amount for the CPNRD groundwater decertification (Contract #1382). The budget was adjusted slightly to reflect the contracted amount as opposed to the proposed amount. Caitlin Kingsley (NeDNR) stated the years 7-9 budget sheet has also been reformatted to show active projects on top (blue) and closed projects (gray) on bottom.

ii. FY 2023-2024 (*Attachment 6Aii*)

Caitlin Kingsley (NeDNR) called the group's attention to the updated numbers for Contract #1010. The previously presented values included the original contract amount that was spent during years 7-9; to avoid confusion, the FY 2023-2024 entry has been updated to reflect only the amendment obligation.

Additionally, placeholders were added for the three project proposals in today's meeting.

iii. Studies (*Attachment 6Aiii*)

Jennifer Schellpeper (NeDNR) pointed out the only updates to the Studies budget are new invoices for Contract #571-C for the 2023 Robust Review and Contracts #1287 and #1377 for Drought Plan Development. New invoices are highlighted in beige.

B. Invoices for Approval

i. HDR Invoice Amendment (for Drought Contingency Plan Development):

a. HDR Invoice #1200537414 (*Attachment 6Bia*)

- a. Invoice was presented at last meeting (8/3/23) for a total of \$55,144.66 (total professional services) but correct total

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is \$56,292.97. The difference between the amount approved on 8/3/23 and the invoice total is \$1,148.31.

MOTION: To approve the amendment of the HDR invoice to the correct total of \$56,292.97.

Move: Jennifer Schellpeper

Second: Travis Preston

Discussion: None

Motion passed.

ii. New HDR Invoices (for Drought Contingency Plan development)

a. HDR Invoice #1200547402 ([Attachment 6Biia](#))

b. HDR Invoice #1200552631 ([Attachment 6Biib](#))

MOTION: To approve the HDR invoices for development of the Upper Platte Drought Contingency Plan for the amounts of \$29,933.73 and \$12,105.02.

Move: John Thorburn

Second: Galen Wittrock

Discussion: None

Motion passed.

iii. New TFG Invoice:

a. Contract #571-C (Robust Review) –

TFG Invoice #23-3241 ([Attachment 6Biiaa](#))

MOTION: To approve the TFG invoice for efforts on the 2023 Robust Review for the amount of \$33,585.00.

Move: Brandi Flyr

Second: Jennifer Schellpeper

Discussion: Brandi Flyr (CPNRD) received a mislabeled invoice for Contract #571-A. The invoice amount matches CPNRD's obligation for invoice #23-3207, but the invoice is labeled as invoice #22-3104 from December 13, 2022.

Jennifer Schellpeper (NeDNR) confirmed that invoice #22-3104 was from the previous fiscal year for the amount of \$8,155.13.

Kent Miller (TPNRD) previously received and paid (\$449.50) for invoice (#23-3207) that did not match the current budget (\$532.83).

Shelly Julian (NeDNR) stated that TFG's record shows TPNRD paid the amount of \$532.83. CPNRD has the outstanding balance of \$532.83.

Motion passed.

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NeDNR will send a corrected invoice #23-3207 to CPNRD.²

NeDNR will distribute the approved invoices to the NRDs for payment.³

C. New Budget Requests

i. TPNRD-Irrigation Canal Recharge Sites

- a. Paxton-Hershey Canal Recharge Site (*Attachment 6Cia*)
- b. Suburban Canal Recharge Sites (*Attachment 6Cib*)
- c. Platte-Valley (North Platte Canal) Recharge Sites (*Attachment 6Cic*)

| Canal | TPNRD Portion (40%) | WRCF Portion (60%) | Total (100%) |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Paxton-Hershey | \$6,000 | \$9,000 | \$15,000 |
| Suburban | \$10,000 | \$15,000 | \$25,000 |
| North Platte | \$61,604 | \$92,406 | \$154,010 |
| Combined Total | \$77,604 | \$116,406 | \$194,010 |

MOTION: To approve the TPNRD budget request for the three recharge site projects summarized in the table above. The total amount of WRCF reimbursement requested is \$116,406 of the total \$194,010 project cost.

Move: Brandi Flyr

Second: Jennifer Schellpeper

Discussion: Ann Dimmitt (TPNRD) stated that the funds are being used to install/improve diversion structures and clean out existing ponds to create new recharge pits. These projects would establish one pit along Paxton-Hershey Canal, two on Suburban Canal, and five on North Platte Canal.

John Thorburn (TBNRD) asked about compensation for the project and if there is a flat rate even if there's not water. Ann Dimmitt (TPNRD) stated that they are still looking into compensation and are doing a 90/10 split per request. There is not a flat rate and at the end of year will calculate recharge to send payment in January for prior year. This goes through Western which does not charge for delivery of water.

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Travis Preston (NPNRD) asked if this is only used during periods of excess flow, which Ann Dimmitt (TPNRD) confirmed.

Motion passed.

ii. Other Budget Requests

Jennifer Schellpeper (NeDNR) gave a reminder that there is money available in the Water Resources Cash Fund (WRCF) for projects that recharge groundwater, reduce consumptive use, or enhance streamflow.

7. Drought Contingency Plan Development – Contract Amendments

A. #1287: NeDNR-USBR grant agreement

Caitlin (NeDNR) stated that NeDNR received USBR approval of a no-cost time extension until December 31, 2024.

B. #1377: NeDNR-PBC contract

C. PBC-HDR contract

Caitlin Kingsley (NeDNR) stated that both the NeDNR-PBC contract (#1377) and the PBC-HDR contract are set to expire on December 31, 2023 and will need to be amended to reflect the extension. The HDR contract will need to be extended first; John Engel (HDR) has previously agreed a no-cost time extension is appropriate. HDR will need to sign the contract amendment and then it will be brought to December 7 meeting for approval. The Contract #1377 amendment will also need to be approved on December 7.

NeDNR will prepare Contract #1377 and the PBC-HDR contract for approval at the December 7, 2023, PBC meeting.⁴

NeDNR will facilitate HDR's signature of the PBC-HDR contract amendment.⁵

8. Ongoing Project Activities/Operations—Obligated and Remaining Expenditures

A. CPNRD – No updates at this time.

B. TBNRD – The Cottonwood Ranch augmentation field well is operating right now. Currently working on a proposal for a WaterSMART Grant for a net recharge tool.

C. TPNRD – NCORPE has shut down for the year. Due to drought last year, NPPD is not running their hydros and cannot put water into the canals. Typically get a 6-week canal shut down due to maintenance at Lake

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Ogallala, but they are not running water through December and anticipate this to continue until spring.

- D. NPNRD – No updates at this time.
- E. SPNRD – No updates at this time.
- F. NeDNR – Had a 48-hour opening for excess flows September 26-28.

Dawson County Canal was opened for 100 cfs, Gothenburg Canal 100 cfs, Tri-County Canal 500 cfs split between Phelps (350 cfs) and E65 (150 cfs). NeDNR is coordinating with PRRIP on the Expanded Recapture Reconnaissance Study. The State is interested in putting WRCF towards expanding the recapture well network and working with TBNRD to develop an agreement for operation and maintenance. Wanted to reaffirm that the State and NRDs will continue to own the structures while PRRIP leases. Concerning PRRIP's interests, NeDNR will focus on the State's and NRD's needs, and any further work will be the responsibility of PRRIP.

9. Public Comment

No public comment was provided.

10. 2023 Scheduled Meetings and 2024 Proposed Meetings:

- December 7, 2023
- February 1, 2024
- April 4, 2024
- June 6, 2024
- August 1, 2024 (Basin-Wide Meeting)
- October 3, 2024
- December 19, 2024

11. Wrap-up, questions, action items, next steps

A. Action Items

1. NeDNR will distribute a final copy of the minutes to the group and post them on the website.
2. NeDNR will send out a corrected invoice #23-3207 for Contract #571-A to CPNRD.
3. NeDNR will distribute approved invoices to the NRDs for payment.
4. NeDNR will prepare Contract #1377 and the PBC-HDR contract to December 7, 2023, PBC meeting for approval.
5. NeDNR will facilitate HDR's signature of the PBC-HDR contract amendment.

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12. Adjourned at approximately 1:43 p.m. CT.