



# LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

3125 Portia Street | P.O. Box 83581 • Lincoln, Nebraska 68501-3581  
P: 402.476.2729 • F: 402.476.6454 | [www.lpsnrd.org](http://www.lpsnrd.org)

Agenda Item #14

## Memorandum

**Date:** August 26, 2020  
**To:** Each Director  
**From:** McKenzie Barry, Environmental Education & Communications Coordinator  
**Subject:** I&E Subcommittee Meeting

The Information and Education Subcommittee met via video teleconference Tuesday, August 25 at 5:30 pm. Subcommittee members present were Greg Osborn (Chair), Gary Aldridge, Vern Barrett, Tom Green, Luke Peterson, Milt Schmidt, Mike Dekalb and Ray Stevens. Others present were Board Chair Larry Ruth and staff members Paul Zillig, David Potter, McKenzie Barry, Adam Sutton, and Mike Mascoe. Additionally Andrea Faas from Pioneers Park Nature Center and Brittney Albin from Lincoln Public Schools joined the meeting.

Chair Osborn called the meeting to order. Barry discussed the Prairie Immersion program. It is geared towards 4<sup>th</sup> graders when they study prairies and Nebraska History and is open to all students and schools in Lower Platte South NRD (LPSNRD) to attend. Schools either attend this field trip at Pioneers Park Nature Center (PPNC) or Spring Creek Prairie (SCP).

Since 2018, the NRD has had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Pioneers Park Nature Center/City of Lincoln to pay \$6.50/student, not to exceed \$12,000 a year. And a letter of understanding with Spring Creek Prairie for the same amount per student.

This year, with the ongoing pandemic, many schools will not be doing in person field trips, and the agreement needs to be modified to include virtual experiences and zooms. Students will watch a pre-recorded video series to learn all about the prairie and then will zoom as a classroom with Staff.

In the MOU renewal PPNC is requesting the NRD pay \$75 for each classroom zoom they facilitate with students, not to exceed \$6,000. For any school wishing to attend in person, the \$6.50/student rate still applies, not to exceed \$3,000.

SCP is also requesting the NRD pay \$75 for each classroom zoom, not to exceed \$5,000, and the \$6.50 rate per student for in person.

**It was moved by Dekalb seconded by Barrett and unanimously approved to approve the rate of \$75 per zoom/class participating in the Prairie Immersion Program with Pioneers Park Nature Center (PPNC) or Spring Creek Prairie and authorize the General Manager to sign the amended renewal for PPNC reflecting these changes, pending review by legal counsel.**

Barry then discussed the School Tour Program. The NRD has had an MOU with PPNC/City of Lincoln to cost-share on grades K-3 Discovery Habitat Hikes for the past 9 years. These hikes are 1.5 hours long and are available for all students and schools in LPSNRD to attend. Total cost for the hikes is \$4.50/student. The NRD cost-shares on these and pays \$3/student, not to exceed \$22,000 a year to help support these hikes. The additional \$1.50/student is paid for by the Friends of Wilderness Park.

This year, with the ongoing pandemic, many schools will not be doing in person field trips, and the agreement needs to be modified to include virtual experiences and zooms. Students will watch a pre-recorded video then will zoom as a classroom with Staff. In the MOU renewal PPNC is requesting the NRD pay \$50 for each classroom zoom they facilitate with students not to exceed \$10,000. For any school wishing to attend in person, the \$3 /student cost-share rate still applies, not to exceed \$5,000.

**It was moved by Schmidt and seconded by Dekalb and unanimously approved to approve the rate of \$50 per zoom/class participating in the School Tour with Pioneers Park Nature Center (PPNC) and to authorize the General Manager to sign the amended renewal for PPNC reflecting these changes, pending review by legal counsel.**

Next to be considered on the Agenda was the request from Lincoln Public Schools. The Subcommittee heard a presentation from Brittney Albin, Lincoln Public Schools Sustainability Coordinator about the project.

Two new High Schools sites are being constructed by Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) over the next few years. The one in Northwest Lincoln opens in 2022 and the Southeast site opens 2023. LPS is adding many green features to these sites as they are constructed. These include: permeable pavement, bio-retention cells, wetland enhancements, native plantings/prairie areas, a greenhouse, garden infrastructure and some outdoor classroom space.

LPS is preparing a grant application for the Nebraska Environmental Trust and is asking the NRD to consider obligating funds to help with the outdoor classroom areas at these schools. They are requesting \$10,000 a year for 3 years, a total of \$30,000 towards the project. \$15,000 of NRD money will be used at each High School site to help fund the Outdoor Classroom plantings.

**It was moved by Stevens and seconded by Schmidt and unanimously approved to approve the request from Lincoln Public Schools and support an NET application to obligate \$30,000 in funds for the Outdoor Classrooms at the new High Schools in the amount of \$10,000 a year, beginning in FY 2022.**

Staff also reviewed with the subcommittee the 12 month review of FY20 completed goals and proposed FY21 Goals. Barry noted that the FY20 completed goals for Environmental Education were affected by the pandemic due to school closures. However she felt they were able to adjust, get creative and still deliver some programming.

**It was moved by Osborn and seconded by Dekalb and approved to accept the FY 2021 measurable goals for the Information & Education Subcommittee and to submit the goals to the Finance & Planning Subcommittee for inclusion in the FY 2021 Long Range Implementation Plan with Osborne, Dekalb, Peterson, Green, Stevens, Schmidt and Barrett voting yes and Aldridge not voting.**

There being no further business, Chair Osborn adjourned the meeting at 6:50 PM.