



LOWER PLATTE SOUTH
natural resources district

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TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Dan Schulz, Resources Coordinator *DS*

DATE: August 19, 2020

SUBJECT: Recreation, Forestry & Wildlife Subcommittee Minutes

On Tuesday, August 18, 2020, the Recreation, Forestry and Wildlife Subcommittee virtually met at 5:30PM. Subcommittee members Go Toing were Chair, Anthony Schutz, Gary Aldridge, Deb Eagan, Luke Peterson, Ray Stevens, and Sarah Wilson. Others virtualizing were Tyler Cramer- Olsson; Scott Hrabik-JEO; Amy Jones- Prairie Plains Resource Institute; Ariana Kennedy, David Potter, Larry Ruth, Brian Schuele-Olsson; Dan Schulz, and Paul Zillig.

Agenda item #1. Village of Elmwood Request-Storm Water Land Rights Easements on the MoPac East Conservation Corridor. See attached numbered pages 1-4. Staff provided background on Elmwood's storm water project north of "E" Street and along Railroad Avenue. Hrabik provided clarifications and answered questions on Elmwood's need for the permanent easement for the storm water outlet and the temporary construction easement for cleaning out the drainage ditch on District property.

It was moved by Stevens, seconded by Eagan and unanimously approved to recommend that the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors authorize the General Manager to execute a permanent drainage easement and temporary construction easement within the MoPac East Conservation Corridor for the Village of Elmwood's street improvement project along Railroad Avenue subject to legal counsel review.

Agenda item #2. Olsson Professional Services Agreement – MoPac East & Homestead Trail Bridges Repair Options and Construction Documents. See attached numbered pages 5-24. Staff reviewed the trail bridges inspections completed by Theisen Construction and the four bridges Theisen identified as those in most need of repairs, two bridges on the Homestead Trail and two bridges on the MoPac East Trail. Schuele and Cramer answered questions on the Olsson scope of services and the letter agreement to prepare repair/replacement options, construction plans and provide bidding services.

It was moved by Eagan and seconded by Stevens to recommend that the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors approve the letter agreement for professional services with Olsson to develop repair/replacement options, construction documents and specifications to repair four bridges on the MoPac East Trail and the Homestead Trail on a time and expense basis not to exceed \$59,000.

Voting in favor of the motion were Eagan, Peterson, Schutz, Stevens and Wilson.

Not voting – Aldridge.

Agenda item #3. Nebraska Environmental Trust Grant Application – Wachiska Audubon Request for Matching Funds. See attached numbered pages 25-33. Knott provided background and answered questions about Wachiska Audubon and the need for the District’s matching funds for the Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET) grant application. Knott explained that if the NET grant is approved, the matching funds for prairie maintenance expenses (\$3,000/year for three years) won’t be needed until fiscal year 2022.

It was moved by Stevens, seconded by Peterson and unanimously approved to recommend that the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors pledge \$3,000 per year for three years of matching funds towards Wachiska Audubon’s Nebraska Environmental Trust grant application for prairie maintenance expenses.

Agenda item #4. Homestead Trail – Etmund Haying Lease. See attached numbered pages 34-38. Staff reviewed situations where adjacent landowners had been farming lands that were part of the trails conservation corridor when the

District obtained the corridor. Over a period of time, the District verified the property boundary, built fences on the property line and converted those farmed segments back to native grass and wild flowers. One of those areas is adjacent to Larry Etmund who is interested in a haying lease on those converted lands. Staff discussed conversations with Mr. Etmund who is willing to clear out the encroaching woody vegetation in exchange for a lease to hay. He is willing to hay half of the converted land a year or, hay it all every other year. Staff explained this would be beneficial to maintain the grassland planting so it doesn't eventually become a woodland.

It was moved by Stevens, seconded by Eagan and unanimously approved to recommend that the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors authorize the General Manager to sign a lease with Larry Etmund to hay grasslands along a portion of the Homestead Trail subject to legal counsel review.

Agenda item #5. Recreation, Forestry and Wildlife Subcommittee Measurable Goals and Outcomes. See attached numbered pages 39-43. Potter reviewed the District's master plan for fiscal year 2020 goals & outcomes and answered questions. Potter then went over the proposed master plan measurable goals and outcomes for fiscal year 2021.

It was moved by Schutz, seconded by Stevens and unanimously approved to accept the FY'21 measurable goals for RF&W subcommittee and submit the goals to Finance and Planning to include in the FY 2021 LRIP.

Agenda item #6. Conservation Easements. See attached numbered pages 44-47. Zillig went over the report on the conservation easements the District holds.

Agenda item #7. Nebraska Environmental Trust Grant Application – Prairie Plains Resource Institute Request for Matching Funds. See attached numbered pages 48-54. Jones reviewed the NET grant application to do prairie restoration on private and conservation lands in eastern Nebraska using high diversity local ecotype seed mixtures. Schulz reviewed the 2021 Long Range Implementation Plan for Recreation, Forestry and Wildlife Subcommittee program area habitat improvement which has \$25,000 budgeted to pursue programs with entities in working with private landowners on grassland management and restoration that encourages pollinator species and grassland diversity. Jones indicated the

District's matching funds would be used in the Lower Platte South NRD. The grant would be administered by Prairie Plains Resource Institute and the land owner contracts would be administered through the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission's Private Lands Program.

It was moved by Eagan, seconded by Peterson and unanimously approved to recommend that the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors pledge \$25,000 of matching funds towards Prairie Plains Resource Institute's Nebraska Environmental Trust grant application for grassland diversification in the Lower Platte South NRD.

Schutz adjourned the subcommittee meeting at 6:47PM.