

High Plains Weed Management Association

Board Meeting Minutes: June 18, 2008

The June 18, 2008 meeting of the High Plains Weed Management Association was called to order by President Jeff Schledewitz at 1:00 p.m. Those in attendance included: Project Manager Dennis Beyer, Field Coordinator Roy Lyles, Jennifer Rogers, John Berge, Verlin Bruns, Mike Marker, Terry McCord, Emily Munter, President Jeff Schledewitz, Treasurer Owen Walker, Dan Weinreis, Cris Burks, Curtis Cloud, Dallas Johannsen, Justin Shaw, Jeannie Stanko, Gene Witt, and Georgette Jordening.

2. Minutes: The previous meeting's minutes (May 29, 2008) were reviewed. Motion made by Mike Marker to accept the May 29, 2008 minutes as presented; Owen Walker seconded. Motion carried - unanimous

3. Treasurer's Report: Everyone went over the Treasurer's Report. Deposits included: \$1,000.00 from Alligare (Summit Sponsorship); \$150.00 from FECON (Summit Sponsorship); \$907.00 from Don Loos (Landowner Cost-Share); \$150,000.00 from the Nebraska Environmental Trust (NP River Grant Advancement); \$12,595.00 from Western Nebraska Community College (Summit Registrations). Total deposits were \$164,652.00.

Expenses included: \$507.00 to the Scotts Bluff County Treasurer (Honda Registration); \$30.00 to the City of Oshkosh (Rental Space); \$56.29 to Allo Communications (Phone Bill); \$16,060.43 to the Gering Civic Center (Summit Rental/Expenses); \$406.07 to Gering Civic Center (Meeting Rental); \$3,200.00 to Blackshirt (Land Clearing); \$1,345.21 to Connecting Point (Desktop Computer/Printer Cartridge); \$4,244.30 to Van Diest (Chemical); \$518.85 to Panhandle Acceptance Company (Honda Lease); \$125.00 to The Mitchell Index (Weed Watch Insert); \$2,258.25 reimbursement to Garden County Weed Authority; \$524.21 reimbursement to Dennis Beyer (GPS Units); \$63.97 reimbursement to Jeff Schledewitz (Grand Island trip); \$115.00 to Bayard Transcript (Weed Watch Insert); \$300.00 to Kristi Paul (Weed Watch Assistance); \$17.55 reimbursement to Jennifer Rogers (Office Expenses); \$322.00 to Smith, Snyder, Pettit & Wallien (Lawyer's fees); \$67.65 to Cyclone Express Mart (Gas); \$112.80 to Chappell Register (Weed Watch Insert); \$273.60 to Star Herald (Landowner Meeting Ad); \$260.00 to Western Nebraska Observer (Weed Watch Insert); \$152.10 to Sidney Sun Telegraph (Weed Watch Insert); \$175.00 to Garden County News (Weed Watch Insert); \$3,066.01 to Van Diest Supply (Chemical); \$990.00 reimbursement to Morrill County Weed Control; \$133.32 reimbursement to Deuel County Weed Control; \$2,000.00 to Sky Copters (Demonstration/Mapping). Total expenses were \$37,324.61, leaving an ending cash balance of \$129,701.78.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report by Emily Munter; seconded by Terry McCord. Motion carried - unanimous.

Bills for Approval. Everyone went through the bills-to-be-paid. Motion to pay the “Bills for Approval” as presented made by Mike Marker; seconded by Emily. Motion carried – unanimous.

4. Reports:

a. Project Manager Report – Project Manager Dennis Beyer reported on the results of the landowner’s and contractor’s meetings that were held at the beginning of May. There is a lot of interest at all of the meetings. High Plains has also received a request from Kent Aden with the West Central WMA and the Platte Valley WMA on whether we would like any work requiring a helicopter to be included on their upcoming project and call for bids. They have 4,000 acres ready to be treated, and the call for bids will be advertised on July 1 and awarded on July 22. Cris Burks asked whether there is a greater risk of weather slowing the helicopter down; Dennis doesn’t think that’s going to affect anyone, whether we include our projects in with these, or have ours done separately. Roy said that there will also be a meeting with Platte Tracks in order to get them involved in the river work as well. The river treatment will not strictly be done by the helicopter. Jeff thinks it will be best to have a machine in the river itself for the project as opposed to a helicopter. Gerald Davis (Rush Creek Land & Livestock) also has Dan Lyle with Sky Copters lined up to do in excess of 300 acres near Oshkosh with the helicopter when he is finished at Crescent Lake. John Berge questioned whether our cost would be proportional to how many acres we will need done if we go with the other WMAs, which it will be. Dan with Sky Copters may also be able to come up to do more mapping while we’re having him do applications. Dennis also showed some pictures of the Russian olive removal work that is underway with Blackshirt LLC at Henry.

b. Field Coordinator Report – Field Coordinator Roy Lyles also reported that in his opinions all three landowner meetings went really well. In the back of the meeting packet, there is a list of people whose applications have been submitted. We’re working really closely with NRCS programs, and Roy believes we’re going to have quite a bit of demand. The projects that are currently underway, such as the Williams and Lessert properties are going well, and next, Blackshirt will be moving on to Massey’s property. There’s going to be approximately 130 acres up at the state line that will be worked on in the upcoming weeks. Roy said the contractors are also very interested in getting going. Jeff, Roy and Dennis all met with Ducks Unlimited this morning regarding project coordination and how they would like to use some of their funding to piggyback with our work for wildlife habitat projects. If the board knows of any other landowners that might be interested in receiving assistance from HPWMA or Ducks Unlimited, they should have them contact Dennis or Roy. Ducks Unlimited is also very interested in purchasing wetlands. By using them as a partner now and in the future, our efforts will work really well with our programs and grant applications. Five contractors are presently ready to get going and three to four of them are presently working either here or elsewhere. That means there are potentially ten to twelve contractors who want to be involved in the bids process. The group is predicting that there won’t be much competition as far as the individual projects go because

there is so much work to be done, and so few contractors. So far there are over 2,000 acres in pending landowner applications.

5. Old business

a. New Board of Directors – The committee designated to appoint the new High Plains Weed Management Association Board of Directors met on June 8th. Eighteen people were on the list of those interested in being board members. Jeff said it was a pretty hard process and decision. They came up with a group of nine names, but eventually decided to put in two more because the High Plains bylaws allow for up to eleven Board Members. Those picked include: John Berge, Verlin Bruns, Gerald Davis, Kay Grote, Robin Lapascotes, Mike Marker, Terry McCord, Emily Munter, Jeff Schledewitz, Owen Walker, and Dan Weinreis. There will also be a standing team of Technical Advisors who will be able to attend any and all meetings and give their input and expertise to the Board. Jeff received approval from the current members and will be obtaining an official signature page to affirm the vote.

b. Landowner and Contractor Meetings – Covered in Project Manager and Field Coordinator Reports.

c. Preferred Contractor's List – The group had previously discussed the possibility of putting together a “Preferred Contractor’s List” and how contractors might go about being qualified or certified with High Plains. Mike Marker questioned whether we would be able to do that since we are receiving state and federal funds, and John Berge wondered if that might not take away some of the competition from those who have made the list. Terry McCord made a motion to have a list on High Plains’ website of any contractor’s who are “qualified” after meeting all of the eligibility requirements of the bid process; seconded by John Berge. Motion carried – unanimous.

d. Final Summit Update – Included in the packets was a breakdown of the expenses and income for the Invasive Species Summit. The leftover funds are for the Nebraska/Wyoming Task Force, and may be used to host another Summit next year. At this point, we’re not sure exactly how the final check from WNCC for the registrations was done because there a couple of discrepancies based on the registrations list and the check amount. John Berge offered to try to obtain a more detailed breakdown from the Business Office for our records. Emily Munter said she wanted to thank everyone for their efforts on the Summit, and that she received a lot of positive feedback from it. Jeff Schledewitz said it was a great thing for the entire valley, and he would like to see it happen again.

e. Insurance – Dennis and Jeff have been working with J.G. Elliot on finalizing the entire insurance packet; they just met yesterday and have been trying to iron out the final details. It should be complete by tomorrow, and once the final information comes in, they will report back to the group.

6. New business

a. Project Applications – See Project Manager and Field Coordinator Reports.

c. Contractor's Increasing Costs – One other thing at the contractor's meeting that was brought up was the increasing fuel costs that the contractors may be facing in the coming months. Emily Munter thinks the majority of the responsibility should be on the contractor to include that in the bid, but it might be better for us to help them project themselves. A committee consisting of Dan Weinreis, Jeff Schledewitz, Roy Lyles, Dennis Beyer, and Emily Munter will meet prior to the next meeting in order to discuss this issue and report back to the group.

d. Density Classifications – Most of the contractors have been asking if we have some way of bidding on the size or density of the infestation. Dennis has been in contact with Steve Brill in Goshen County, and he is currently having the same issues and will be sitting down with his contractor to hash some of that out. Jeannie is afraid that if went with the density, then that will give the contractor the opportunity to come back and put any overages onto High Plains. If we just do a visual classification and then have a line on information saying “densities are approximate” then that should cover those instances.

Another question that has come up has been when the contractors will be getting paid, and whether they will have to wait for a board meeting for their payments. John Berge mentioned having the executive committee handling all of the fiduciary business. This item will be discussed further at the next meeting.

The need for a nominating committee to vote on new officers for the Board of Directors was discussed. John Berge made a motion to install the steering committee consisting of Jeff Schledewitz (President), Kay Grote (Secretary) and Owen Walker (Treasurer) installed as the officers for the next year of board business, and to appoint Emily Munter as Vice President; seconded by Mike Marker. Motion carried – unanimous.

e. Watershed Tour – High Plains has two seats available on an upcoming Watershed Tour sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. Anyone who would like to go should contact Jennifer before the next meeting. Tabled until the July meeting.

7. Next meeting time and date – John Berge made a motion to set the second Thursday of every month as the meeting date for High Plains Weed Management Association; seconded by Mike Marker. Motion carried – unanimous. The next meeting will be held Thursday, July 10th at 1:30 p.m. at the Bluffs Business Center.

8. Adjournment – Motion made by John Berge to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Terry McCord. Motion carried – unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.