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Board of Directors Meeting

March 11, 2009

1. **Call to order** – The monthly meeting of the High Plains Board of Directors was held March 11, 2009 at the Chamber’s conference room, 1517 Broadway, Scottsbluff, NE. Board president Jeff Schledewitz called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m. Those present included: board members Jeff Schledewitz, Emily Munter, Verlin Bruns, Owen Walker, Robin Lapaseotes, Dan Weinreis, Gerald Davis, and Kay Grote; project manager Dennis Beyer; Georgette Jordening and Curtis Cloud, NRCS; Cris Burks, Dept. of Ag.
2. **Approval of Minutes** – The Board reviewed the minutes of the February 11, 2009 meeting. Moved by Verlin Bruns, seconded by Gerald Davis, to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2009 meeting as presented. Unanimous. Motion carried.
3. **Treasurer’s Report** – The Board reviewed the Treasurer’s Report. Moved by Gerald Davis, seconded by Owen Walker, to accept the Treasurer’s Report as presented. Unanimous. Motion carried.
4. **Bills-to-be-Paid** – The Board reviewed the list of Bills-to-be-Paid, which have already by been paid. Dennis Beyer explained that the bills for March 11 need to be approved so they can be mailed out. Moved by Robin Lapaseotes, seconded by Gerald Davis, to approve the Bills-to-be-Paid as presented and authorize payment of bills. Unanimous. Motion carried.
5. **Reports**
 - a. **Project Manager Report** – Dennis Beyer reported that since the February board meeting, four contractors have been working to clean up and complete the work left by Storm Forestry. Beyer reported the work has been done in a very satisfactory manner and the landowners are satisfied with the work. Applications are still being submitted for removal work. Gerald Davis cited the need to get some more information out in the media about the Association still taking applications and plans to continue removal and treatment work in the spring. Some people are still not aware of the work being done by High Plains WMA or that they can contact the association to have work done on their land. The next edition of the Weed Watch is coming out in late May and will cover an 11-county area. Articles will be due April 15. Dennis provided sample letters to the board to use to write letters to our Senators in support of Resources Conservation and Development (RC&D) funding. He urged the board to send letters to all the Nebraska representatives to pursue a portion of the \$62 million in federal funds set aside for RC&D projects. Verlin Bruns advised the Board that the letters should be sent to Nebraska Representatives from individuals.
 1. **Secretary position filled** – The secretary position has been filled. Joyce Mick will start her duties with Panhandle RC&D and provide assistance to HPWMA starting March 16.
 - b. **Field Coordinator Report** – Beyer reported that he has received 11 applications for the field coordinator position, most through the Nebraska Workforce Development site. He has conducted three interviews with more scheduled for next week. He hopes to have someone hired by the end of the month. The Board discussed having four or five of the highest quality candidates selected comes before an interview committee for the final selection. Board members Jeff Schledewitz, Gerald Davis, and Owen Walker volunteered for this duty. They will assist Dennis Beyer with the final selection for the field coordinator position.



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c. Communications Committee Report – The next issue of The Weed Watch will be published in late May. Story deadline will be April 15.

d. Legislative Committee Report – No report

e. By-product Committee Report – No report. Beyer did indicate that a local businessman has approached him with interest in a wood pellet facility.

6. Old Business

a. Grant applications – Beyer reported that the grants for FY 2009 have been submitted and are pending approval.

b. ETF document issues – Beyer provided a list of all current projects and provided a status on each one. This list was a product of the audit conducted by the Nebraska Environmental Trust in December. The list addressed the concerns ETF had about procedures and contracts with landowners and contractors. Beyer reported that most of the concerns had been addressed and efforts taken to get the necessary signatures and conduct the needed follow-up on projects. Most of the projects have now been properly invoiced and some are just waiting on the documents to be mailed back from landowners to High Plains. The Board acknowledged Beyer's efforts to address these concerns and commended him a good job with the follow-up.

c. UN-L test plots update – Beyer reported the UN-L test pilot project shared by the University and High Plains is nearly complete. They are now reviewing claims and in final documentation. Once this is complete, High Plains HWA will have completed its obligation for the project.

d. Board Vacancy – At the February board meeting it was announced that John Berge had taken a position in Washington, D.C. and resigned from the HPWMA board. Chris Kaiser of the South Platte NRD was asked if he could fill the vacancy, but he has not provided a decision. Schledewitz said the board would be best served if it could appoint a person from the southern Panhandle region to the vacancy. Verlin Bruns said he had some individuals in mind that might be good candidates. He will contact these individuals to see if they are interested in serving on the Board.

e. NE Dept. of Agriculture letter – The Board reviewed a letter sent by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture concerning the disposition of chemicals. Due to concerns with the invoicing and application procedures for chemical products used by HPWMA on various projects, chairman Schledewitz recommended discussion of this item to be conducted under agenda item 8. Executive Session.

7. New Business

a. Landowner Meetings – Beyer reported that he would like to start holding informational meetings for area landowners once the field coordinator has been hired. These meetings will be held in Oshkosh, Bridgeport and maybe Big Springs or Chappell to accommodate landowners in the southern Panhandle. Verlin Bruns said he would check with the Deuel County Commissioners to see if there is interest in any new projects there. He also suggested putting some articles in the Deuel County newspapers to solicit interest in that area.



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8. Executive Session

Moved by Gerald Davis, seconded by Owen Walker, to enter into executive session at 2:18 p.m. for the purpose of discussing contractor evaluations and chemical use protocol. Unanimous. Motion carried.

Moved by Gerald Davis, seconded by Dan Weinreis to come out of executive session at 3:20 PM. Unanimous. Motion carried.

Chairman Schledewitz announced that no decisions had been made in executive session.

9. Next Meeting Time/Date

The next regular board meeting of the High Plains WMA will be held at April 9th at 1:30 PM at the Chamber's conference room.

10. Adjournment

With no further business, Chairman Schledewitz declared the meeting adjourned at 3:25 PM.