



LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

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Memorandum

Date: Dec. 13, 2024

To: Executive Subcommittee members

From: Mike Sousek, General Manager

RE: Executive Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

The Executive Subcommittee met at 12:00pm on Thursday, December 12, 2024, at the NRD Office Large Conference room in Lincoln. Subcommittee members attending included Dave Landis, Deb Eagan, Bob Andersen, Tom Green and Lisa Lewis. Subcommittee member Chelsea Johnson was absent. NRD staff members in attendance include Dave Potter, Chris Barber, Nathan Kuhlman, Will Inselman, Bryce Jensen and myself.

The first few items on the agenda dealt with Personnel Policy changes dealing with Policy #17-Employee Expense Reimbursement, Policy #21-Vacation Time, Policy #22-Sick Leave, Operating Policy G2-Fencing on NRD Property and Operating Policy C5-Conferences and Meeting. These policy changes were taken up individually and discussed.

Changes to policy #17-Employee Expense Reimbursement was first on the docket. A simple change here dealt with an employee title, changing administrative assistant to administrative and finance manager. **It was recommended by Tom Green, seconded by Lisa Lewis to recommend to the board that Policy 17 changes be accepted and adopted by the LPSNRD board. Recommendation carried unanimously.**

See attached Policy 17 for proposed change.

The second policy discussed were changes to Policy #21-Vacation Time. A reworking of time accrual was discussed. The new accrual chart as proposed reflects current market practices with organizations we are compared against. The market standard for first year employment is 92 hours, our current rate is 48 hours. After 10 years of service, the market value is 143 hours, we are currently at 120 hours, the proposed change will get us to 136 hours in year 10. The new proposal over the span of years of service has narrowed the gap between the market and the NRD, especially in earlier years. In total, the district will increase vacation hours by year 25 to 200 hours (current year 25 is 192 hours). From year

10 to year 25 we continue to close the gap. Our comparable organizations at year 25 run from 184 hours to 208 hours.

A second change in disbursement of vacation hours will also be recognized by the proposed change. Currently, employees receive their full annual allotment of vacation hours on July 1st. Under the new policy, vacation hours will be earned, accrued, and disbursed incrementally with each pay period.

Changes also included mirroring the vacation policy to the current sick leave policy. The proposed policy will allow for 15-minute increments of vacation time being used after the initial first hour of vacation.

Lastly, the policy change would increase the hours allowed to carry over from one year to the next. The current carry-over hours are set at 192, the proposal would increase that amount to 400 hours (2 years of accrual for those here 25 years or longer). We currently have the lowest carryover amount amongst comparable organizations. With the proposed adjustment, we will rank second, behind Papio Missouri NRD which allows for a carry-over of up to 424 hours.

It was recommended by Bob Andersen, seconded by Deb Eagan to recommend to the board that Policy 21 changes be accepted and adopted by the LPSNRD board. Recommendation passed with 4 yes votes and 1 abstain (Deb Eagan).

See attached policy #21 for proposed changes.

The next policy change discussed dealt with Policy #22- Sick Leave. After initial discussion amongst the committee, it was decided that more time was needed to absorb the information. The committee asked the General Manger to provide more data from our comparable organizations to better understand the current market trends. No action was taken, and the item will be added to the January subcommittee meeting for further discussion.

Next was a discussion of the district Operating Policy G-2-Fencing on NRD Property. The recreation, forestry and wildlife committee recently asked staff to review the fencing policy and make change recommendations. See attached document for those changes. In essence, we are providing the district the ability to cost-share on fencing at a 50/50 rate rather than the 100% cost share we currently have been practicing. **It was recommended by Bob Andersen, seconded by Tom Green to recommend to the board that Operating Policy G-2 changes be accepted and adopted by the LPSNRD board. Recommendation carried unanimously.**

The last policy discussed was Operating Policy C-5 Conferences and Meetings. The committee discussed possible changes to address expenditures being processed but for various reasons, attendance at conference or meeting is not followed through. No action was taken on this matter, it was forwarded to the January subcommittee meeting for further discussion.

Next on the agenda was a discussion to renewal our Work Crew Agreement with Cornhusker State Industries. There are no changes from the original 2022 agreement to the 2025-year agreement. It

was staff recommendation to approve the agreement as presented. There was discussion that revolved around the pay scale the inmates receive. There were also comments made about the opportunities the correction system and inmates receive from this agreement. **It was recommended by Dave Landis, seconded by Lisa Lewis to recommend to the board that the General Manager sign the 2025 Work Crew Agreement. Recommendation carried with a vote of 3 to 2. Nay votes were recognized from Tom Green and Deb Eagan.**

See attached renewal acknowledgement.

The committee then discussed the General Managers upcoming evaluation. A question will be added to the evaluation to gather insight from the board into possible changes to the evaluation itself. Staff were instructed to send the evaluation out to the directors and all responses will be sent directly to Chair Dave Landis.

Chair Landis made the announcement that he has formed the Nominating Committee for the upcoming LPSNRD 2025 officer positions. The nominating committee will begin meeting to have a slate of candidates prepared for the January board meeting. Nominating Committee members include Larry Ruth, Susan Seacrest and Ken Vogel.

The General Manager informed the subcommittee that the district has been invited to a dinner following the senators reception at the NARD Legislative Conference. This dinner will be sponsored by Houston Engineering and will be in conjunction with Middle Niobrara NRD. All directors, staff, and state senators are welcomed. It will be left to individuals' preference to attend or not. As details become available, they will be shared.

MJS

Personnel Policy No. 17: EMPLOYEE EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

Employees shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses which they have incurred as a result of authorized activities for the District. Before an employee incurs an expense, they shall obtain the prior approval of his or her supervisor or the General Manager.

Employees shall claim reimbursement on forms supplied by the District. Paid receipts for all items for which reimbursement is requested shall be submitted with expense forms.

Use of District credit cards will be allowed upon authorization from the General Manager.

The General Manager will approve employee expense reports before reimbursement is paid. The ~~Administrative Assistant~~ [Administration & Finance Manager](#) and the General Manager will review credit card invoices.

The Treasurer will review and compare credit card invoices and expense claims submitted by the General Manager prior to reimbursement or payment.

When it is necessary for an employee to remain away from home overnight in the service of the District, the District will pay reasonable lodging and meal expenses.

All expenses of a spouse travelling with an employee on NRD business shall be paid personally or be reimbursed to the District within 30 days.

On occasion, an employee may be requested by their supervisor or the General Manager to use their personal vehicle for District business. When such personal vehicle is used for District business, the employee will be paid the rate allowed by the State of Nebraska per mile for the actual miles driven.

Personnel Policy No. 21: VACATION LEAVE

Accrual

Vacation leave accrual begins on the first day of employment and ends on the last day of employment. The rate of accrual is shown in the accrual charts which follow.

Occasional employees shall not be entitled to vacation leave.

Employees accrue vacation only when they are in pay status.

Time worked in excess of 40 hours in the workweek does not affect vacation leave accrual.

When balances are posted, figures should represent accrual up to the time of posting.

Accrual Chart

Full-time employees earn vacation leave as follows:

<i>Years of Service</i>	<i>Hours per Month</i>	<i>Days per Year</i>
1st through 5th year	8.00 hours	12 days
Beginning of 6th year	10.00 hours	15 days
Beginning of 8th year	10.67 hours	16 days
Beginning of 10th year	11.33 hours	17 days
Beginning of 12th year	12.00 hours	18 days
Beginning of 14th year	12.67 hours	19 days
Beginning of 16th year	13.33 hours	20 days
Beginning of 17th year	14.00 hours	21 days
Beginning of 18th year	14.67 hours	22 days
Beginning of 19th year	15.33 hours	23 days
Beginning of 20th year	16.00 hours	24 days
Beginning of 21 years and over	16.67 hours	25 days

Vacation leave may not be taken in excess of three continuous weeks or 15 continuous working days, without 60 days prior approval of the General Manager.

All vacation leave must be scheduled in advance with the employee's supervisor and/or the General Manager. All vacation leave taken must be recorded.

If a District-observed holiday occurs while an employee is on vacation leave, he or she will be paid for the holiday, and the holiday will not be charged against vacation leave.

Vacation leave may be taken in 15 minute increments with a minimum time to be charged of one hour.

Balancing of Vacation Leave

The amount of vacation leave that can be accumulated by employees effective July 1, 2025 is 400 hours. Employees will not accrue any additional vacation leave until their balance drops below 400 hours.

Employees may check their current vacation balance by accessing Intuit Workforce.

Payments Upon Separation from the District

An employee separated from the District for any reason will receive pay for unused vacation leave. In the event of death, payment will go to the employee's designated eligible survivor.

Vacation Leave Accrual for Rehires

For purposes of vacation leave accrual, employees who leave the District (for other than corrective action reasons) and return to a leave-eligible position within three years will be credited with prior years of service. The leave accrual date will be adjusted to reflect the absence.

G-2: FENCING ON NRD PROPERTY

~~The District shall be responsible for 100% of the cost to install and maintain the fences along the NRD property boundaries, where and as determined needed by the General Manager in consultation with appropriate staff members, and shall cost-share 50%-50% with the adjoining landowners where fence is requested by the landowner and the General Manager in consultation with appropriate staff members has determined that fencing is not needed by the NRD.~~

1. The District shall be responsible for 100% of the cost to install and maintain boundary fences on newly acquired properties unless agreed upon in writing by adjoining property owners that a fence is not needed.
2. Where and as determined needed by the General Manager in consultation with appropriate staff, the District shall be responsible for 100% of the cost to install a District boundary fence.
3. The District shall be responsible for 100% of the maintenance of existing fences on NRD boundaries and shall cost-share 50%-50% if maintenance or repair of the existing boundary fence is due to negligence of the adjoining landowner.
4. At the request of an adjoining landowner the District shall cost-share 50%-50% for a new or replacement District boundary fence when one is requested by the adjoining landowner.



RENEWAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WORK CREW AGREEMENT

Lower Platte South Natural Resources District agrees to exercise the final one-year renewal option of its *Work Crew Agreement* with the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services/ Cornhusker State Industries (NDCS/CSI) for labor performed by incarcerated individuals on behalf of the District. All provisions of the agreement will remain in effect with no change. This option will extend the agreement from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025.

Mike Sousek, General Manager
Lower Platte South Natural Resource District

Date

Jeremy Elder, Industries Administrator
Cornhusker State Industries

Date