

MINUTES

NORTH DAKOTA ATMOSPHERIC RESOURCE BOARD

April 5, 1999

A telephone conference call meeting of the North Dakota Atmospheric Resource Board was called to order by Chairman William Geiger at 11:00 a.m. CST, Monday April 5, 1999. Members participating in the call were William Geiger, Judith DeWitz, Hattie Melvin, Jay Sandstrom, David Sprynczynatyk, and Gary Ness. Staff members present were Bruce Boe, Director; LeNor Dollinger, Business Manager; and Darin Langerud, Chief Meteorologist.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Judith DeWitz to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Hattie Melvin. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Hattie Melvin to approve the minutes of March 3, 1999 telephone conference call as distributed. Seconded by David Sprynczynatyk. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION OF 1999 WEATHER MODIFICATION PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Mr. Boe reported that permit applications for District I (Bowman County) and District II (McKenzie, Mountrail, Ward, and Williams Counties) had been received from Weather Modification, Inc., of Fargo. The applications were complete and in order, and the fee for each also received. Mr. Boe recommended that the board approve the permit applications, contingent upon public response. The legal "notices of intent to modify precipitation" must be published in the official newspaper of each county in and adjacent to each target area for two consecutive weeks, and an additional 21 days be allowed for public comment after the last date of publication, he added. Only after the period for comment had elapsed would permits be issued.

Gary Ness moved that the weather modification permits for Districts I and II be approved contingent upon public response. The motion was seconded by Jay Sandstrom. Members Judith DeWitz, Hattie Melvin, Jay Sandstrom, David Sprynczynatyk, and Gary Ness voted aye. There were no nay votes. Motion carried.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Senate Bill - 2023

Senate Bill 2023, the appropriations bill for the State Water Commission and Atmospheric Resource Board, is presently being considered by conference committee, Mr. Boe reported. The Senate had passed the bill with few changes from the executive budget recommendation, but the house has removed about \$150,000 in general funds from the programs. The Senate has not concurred with the House action, hence the conference committee.

Mr. Sprynczynatyk indicated that he is hopeful that all or a significant portion of the funds removed by the House will be restored in conference, and added that he believes the agency as a whole has fared better than many others.

House Bill - 1040

Mr. Boe reported that the amendments presented to the board in the previous meeting were adopted by the Senate, but when the bill went back to the House, the House did not concur. In conference committee another section created an option for portions of a county to have a weather modification authority. It passed the House by a 61 to 30 vote.

PROJECT PLANNING UPDATE

Mr. Boe informed the Board that District II will conduct the 1999 project with six aircraft, five at cloud base, and one at cloud top. District I will be conducted this year with just two aircraft, one at cloud top and one at cloud base.

Mr. Darin Langerud informed the Board he is presently hiring meteorologists. As of April 5, 1999 15 applications had been received for the 4 positions open this year. Three applicants have prior experience with the program. They are Mr. Paul Moen, Mr. Aaron Gilstad, and Ms. Renae Onstad.

To date there has only been one applicant for the two meteorological intern positions. The closing date is April 12, 1999.

Mr. Sandstrom asked how the cost share will split between the two districts, and about the percentage in state funding, with only one county in District I. Mr. Boe reported that he did not have the dollar amounts at hand for the split, but the overall sharing is 75% county funds and 25% state funding.

PUBLIC INFORMATION UPDATE

Q & A Brochures

The Question & Answer brochures were finalized and printed; 2,000 for the Atmospheric Resource Board, and another 2,000 for North Dakota Weather Modification Association. The cost was split accordingly. A number of them have been sent out to county authority members for distribution. Ms. Dollinger also distributed some at the recent KUMV Farm and Ranch Show in Williston.

Web Site Upgrade

Mr. Langerud informed the board that there are a number of ARB web site upgrades that have been given to the Planning and Education Division for posting. These include final wrap up on the public survey sent out to the rain gauge observers, and posting of the Leistriz economic study. The radar

data will again be on the Internet this summer, and the staff is working with Weather Modification, Inc. (WMI) to have the data posted more quickly.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned

William Geiger, Chairman

Hattie Melvin, Secretary

Date _____

Transcribed by Dawn Feist

