

MINUTES - NORTH DAKOTA ATMOSPHERIC RESOURCE BOARD

APRIL 21, 2014

Chairman Henry Bodmer called a telephone conference call meeting of the Atmospheric Resource Board to order at 9:02 a.m., April 21, 2014.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken. Members present were Henry Bodmer, Monte Hininger, John Bollingberg, Matthew Leitner, Tom Tupa, Todd Sando and Rob White.

Others present were Darin Langerud, Director; Kelli Schroeder, Business Manager; Mark Schneider, Chief Meteorologist; Daniel Brothers, Meteorologist; and Hans Ahlness, Weather Modification, Inc. (WMI).

MINUTES

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. TUPA, SECONDED BY MR. SANDO, AND CARRIED ON A VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 6, 2013 MEETING AS DISTRIBUTED.

FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT

Ms. Schroeder reviewed the financial status report for the period ending February 28, 2014.

In response to a question from Mr. Tupa, Ms. Schroeder noted that the federal funds listed are appropriated (authority for acceptance) should we receive grant dollars from the federal government. Mr. Langerud noted that the legislature usually approves that every biennium, but it doesn't look like we will receive any federal funds this biennium.

In response to questions from Mr. Bodmer, Mr. Langerud said that the legislature approved salary increases for both years of this biennium. They approved a 3-5% increase for July 1, 2013 and a 2-4% increase for July 1, 2014. Budgeting for the next biennium will begin this summer.

2014 WEATHER MODIFICATION PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Mr. Langerud informed the board that permit applications and fees from Weather Modification, Inc. for District I and District II have been received. Legal notices were published in participating and bordering counties. The comment period ended Friday, April 18th with no public comment received. He asked the board to approve the permits for the 2014 project.

MR. TUPA MOVED TO APPROVE WEATHER MODIFICATION PERMITS FOR DISTRICT I AND II FOR WEATHER MODIFICATION, INC., FARGO, ND. SECONDED BY MR. BOLLINGBERG. VOTING YEA – MR. HININGER, MR.

BOLLINGBERG, MR. LEITNER, MR. TUPA, MR. SANDO, AND MR. WHITE. THERE WERE NO NAY VOTES. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

POLCAST HYGROSCOPIC SEEDING RESEARCH PROGRAM

Mr. Langerud reviewed the POLCAST5 operational plan. Due to budgetary constraints, he is planning to contract with the University of North Dakota (UND) and the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) to do a preliminary analysis of the data that we have from previous field campaigns rather than another field campaign to get more data. There are 44 randomized cases to be studied. From that analysis, we will be able to decide if we should go back into the field for more data or if we will be able to answer the questions we need to answer for the research and do a final report. Therefore, authorizing permit exemptions for the research will not be required this year.

NORTH DAKOTA CLOUD MODIFICATION PROJECT

Mr. Langerud reported on meetings with the district weather modification authorities in January. Budget details were reviewed.

In response to questions from Mr. Bodmer and Mr. Tupa, Mr. Langerud noted that Bowman County is levying around 4 mills. The Slope townships in the project are working together under the name, Severe Weather Management Association. They fund their portion through donations from the township boards.

County contracts will be mailed out this week. Intern pilots are hired. There were 12 applicants for the 9 positions.

Mr. Schneider reported that the radar meteorologists are hired. Three intern meteorologists have been offered positions. We are just waiting for their acceptance.

Mr. Langerud noted that we would probably be moving one Watford City crew to Williston this year due to housing issues. They will share the apartment that WMI leases in Williston with the Williston crew. The remaining Watford City crew will likely be staying in a 26' RV in the ND Housing LLC RV park.

All chemicals have been procured. We've taken delivery of most of it. The dry ice will arrive periodically throughout the summer. Dan and one of the temporary employees will get supplies distributed to sites in the middle of May.

POWDER RIVER TRAINING COMPLEX EXPANSION

Mr. Langerud reviewed a draft letter of comments that we have prepared regarding the Powder River Training Complex expansion. The draft is being reviewed by the Governor's Office.

Our concerns include: dealing with military aircraft, in some cases large force exercises, including bombers and fighter jets flying from 500 to 18,000 feet above ground level over the Bowman cloud seeding operational area. WMI has already sent in comments

on this issue. Additionally, we are concerned about our radar operations because the military will be dropping radar-jamming chaff that will make it difficult for our meteorologists to distinguish clouds from chaff.

In response to a question from Mr. Bodmer, Mr. Langerud noted that the Bowman Airport is progressing on their move to a new location. Concrete and asphalt will be laid this summer. They hope to open the new airport in January 2015. They will be letting bids tonight for some of the buildings on the grounds.

RADAR OPERATIONS

Bowman Year-round Operations

Mr. Langerud noted that we would have to move our radar facility from the current airport location to the new location. We've been working with the airport board on integrating our radar operations into their building plans. Our pedestal and radome will be put on top of the roof of the newly constructed building. We will be paying for some additional costs that will be incurred with the construction. We will have enclosed storage space, a ground floor operations area and enclosed access to the radome and pedestal, rather than climbing an outdoor tower as we currently do. The latest estimates from the airport board for our portion is approximately \$80,000, not including the cost of the move for personnel time and crane service. It may end up costing \$100,000 to get the move completed. We have funds in the budget to manage this, especially in light of not doing a POLCAST field campaign this summer.

Our technician thinks we will be down for a month to get the move completed. We're hoping to be able to make the move in September or October 2014.

Once the new airport is open, the airport board will be selling the existing property. So we will have to be off the current grounds at that time.

Procurement of NOAA NWS surplus WSR-74C spare parts

Mr. Langerud noted that we were just informed a couple of weeks ago that we are in line to acquire some of the spare parts from the NWS' phasing out of the 74-C radar network. The timeline is unsure but we're hoping we can get some parts in the next couple of months.

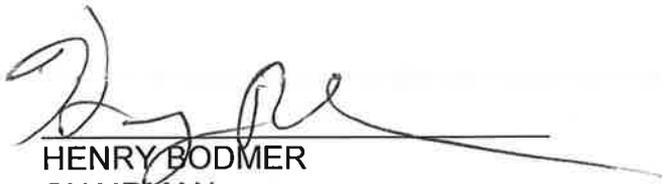
In response to a question, Mr. Langerud noted that Ground School would be held May 28-30th in Bismarck. All of our and WMI's staff will be present, as well as a couple of people from South Dakota School of Mines & Technology. The board is welcome to join us for any and all of the Ground School.

2014 COOPERATIVE OBSERVER NETWORK UPDATE

Mr. Brothers reported that our ARB Cooperative Observer Network had a net change of 3, going from 555 to 552 observers. We went from 258 to 256 reporting snow and 297 to 296 reporting rain only. Internet reporting increased by 14 observers.

In response to a question from Mr. Bodmer, Mr. Langerud mentioned that plains snowpack has pretty much disappeared but there is a huge mountain snowpack in Montana and Wyoming that will be coming through the Missouri and Yellowstone river systems this spring that could cause some trouble.

Being no further business the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:52 a.m.



HENRY BODMER
CHAIRMAN

Transcribed by Kelli Schroeder