



News Release

(HOLDREGE, Neb.) -The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's board of directors elected new officers and seated two new board members at the first monthly meeting of 2021 on Thursday.

David Rowe of Johnson Lake was elected to his second two-year term as board president. Rowe has represented Dawson County on Central's board since 2005. Other directors elected as officers by their fellow board members were Marty Mueller of Ogallala, vice president; Robert Dahlgren of Bertrand, secretary; and Geoff Bogle of Elwood, treasurer.

The two new members elected in November are Tim Boyle of Elwood, representing Gosper County; and Kyle Shepherd of North Platte, representing Lincoln County.

Also at Thursday's meeting:

- Gwen Kautz and Pat Hecox, representing Dawson Public Power District, attended to meeting to visit with directors and staff about the integration study involving the two districts. Kautz is Dawson's general manager and Hecox is DPPD's board chairman.

Last month, Central and Dawson announced that they had entered into an agreement to share the costs of retaining a consultant to conduct a study to determine whether consolidation is an economic and strategic fit that benefits both entities, as well as their customers and stakeholders. The study is to commence later this month.

- The board approved a \$749,800 work order to address seepage issues that were identified last year near the Elwood Reservoir pump station. Geotechnical investigations and a study of soil conditions at the site revealed the nature of the seepage issue and led to development of an approach to correct the situation. RJH Engineering of Englewood, Colo., is the contractor for the project.
- The board approved the hiring of Scott Dicke as the new irrigation and water services manager. He will assume the duties of Dave Ford who is retiring at the end of January. Dicke will begin his duties on Jan. 26. He is presently the assistant general manager at the Lower Republican Natural Resources District in Alma.
- The directors approved a one-year extension to the mowing contract at Johnson Lake with Firefly Landscaping of Loomis for an amount not to exceed \$38,000.
- The board approved a \$10,000 contribution to the Keystone-Lemoyne Fire & Rescue Dept., to help acquire a fire tanker. The equipment would improve the department's ability to fight fires in an area that includes Lake McConaughy.
- The directors also approved a request from the Johnson Lake Hike/Bike Trail Committee for a \$260 contribution to help purchase bike racks for installation around the trail.
- The board approved the inclusion of 1,030 acres in the 2021 Water Leasing Program. In exchange for payment of \$100/acre, irrigation customers who submit acres for the program agree to not irrigate the acres. Instead, the Platte River Recovery Program leases the water which is added to the Environmental Account in Lake McConaughy and is available to benefit wildlife habitat along the Platte River.
- The board accepted a bid from Quality Trucks & Trailers of St. Edward, Neb., for a used semi-cab and chassis for \$53,000. The directors also awarded a bid to Nebraska Crane, Inc., of Bertrand to supply a side-dump trailer for \$44,750.
- Natural Resources and Compliance Manager Mike Drain informed the board about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's intention to remove the interior least tern from the federal endangered species list in the near future. He said there will be no immediate impacts on the manner in which Central monitors and protects the small shorebirds because of the need to continue protection plans for the species, as well as for piping plovers, another shorebird listed as threatened that shares similar habitat along the Platte River.
- Drain also announced that the Final Project Boundary Review Report, which was submitted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in December, is available to the public on Central's web site (www.cnppid.com).
- Civil engineer Tyler Thulin reported that Lake McConaughy's elevation was 3,244.8 on Thursday, up about a foot since the board's committee meeting on Dec. 18. Inflows are around 1,150 cubic feet per second and releases are about 500 cfs. Snowpack measurements in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado and Wyoming are below average for this time of year.
- Board members and staff were given the opportunity during the meeting to share memories and recognize the service to the District by Michael Klein. Klein, who was recognized by his peers as an expert in Nebraska water law, was Central legal counsel from 1985 until his death in December.

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