

Healthy Soils Task Force (HSTF) Meeting Minutes

Wednesday July 22, 2020

Conducted through Zoom

Hosted by Chairman Keith Berns

Members Present:

Richard Bartek, Keith Berns, Hannah Birge, Bob Bettger, Ron Bolze, Lisa Lunz, Mike McDonald, Nate Pflueger, Charles Shapiro, Jeff Steffen, Steve Tucker, Steve Wellman, Greg Whitmore

Members Absent

Jerry Allemann, Ray Ward

Ex Officio Members Absent

Senator Tim Gragert, Senator Julie Slama,

Staff and Audience Attending:

Steve Roth, staff, Nebraska Department of Agriculture; Aaron Hird, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); Alex Brechbill, staff, Senator Gragert; Alan Moeller, Nebraska Elder Climatology Legacy; Andrew Pierson, Audubon Nebraska; Boone McAfee, Nebraska Corn Board; Kim Davis, staff, Senator Gragert, Dean Edson, Nebraska Association of Resource Districts, Keith Byerly, Soil Health Partnership, Crystal Powers University Extension Engineer David Hyten University of Nebraska, Andrea Hartman, Center for Rural Affairs, Nathan Mueller University Extension, Katie Pekarek, University Extension, Andrea Basche UNL Agronomy Department

Meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m. CDT.

Chairman Keith Berns stated that the Zoom meeting was being conducted under the Open Meetings Act. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is available upon request.

Berns also noted that a Public Meeting Notice was published in the Lincoln Journal Star on July 16, 2020. An affidavit of the notice is available for review upon request.

The minutes from May 21, 2020, meeting were accepted by acclamation.

The chart presented below reflects the general ledger activity in the financial report, which shows no change since the last meeting. However, three invoices for public meeting notices that were placed in the Lincoln Journal Star are being processed for payment. The total for meeting notices would be \$62.77. Therefore the total amount expended by the Task Force since its formation is \$1,736.40. The total amount that can be expended by the Task Force as indicated in statute is \$10,000. The remaining amount of funds the Task Force can spend is \$8,263.60.

Expense	Amount
Meeting Notices	\$30.54
State Vehicle Rental	\$54.05
Mileage	\$1,570.79
Misc Travel	\$18.25
Grand Total	\$1,673.63

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The financial report was accepted as presented.

Chairman Berns opened up discussion on the latest revision of the HSTF initiative and report draft. The revised document was sent to committee members for review prior to the meeting so they could provide input during the meeting.

Each member was given the opportunity to give overall comments on how they felt about the direction that had been taken in revising the draft document. Once committee members gave their comments, Berns allowed guests in attendance to add any additional comments. Many of the guests had provided input or content as the document was being written.

Comments were wide ranging, with some members in total agreement with what was presented. Others had specific areas they felt could be revised or needed additional detail. Some members had concerned that the document goes beyond what the Task Force is required to do by statute.

Additional discussion took place regarding the length of the document, specific words used, what title to use for the initiative itself, and on how the final report should be produced.

Berns expanded on the need to be making decisions on the formatting of the document, who will produce it, and in what form it will be distributed. No final decision was made but several members plan to look into the options and report back to Berns.

Berns also talked about doing some type of outreach that would give agricultural stakeholders the opportunity to review the document at some point and provide comments. Members discussed several options including working with multiple commodity groups, associations and other farm/ranch organizations.

Berns said that the writing committee would meet in the next seven to ten days to do further editing to the draft report and then discuss further a procedure to get input for agricultural stakeholders. He said further discussion is also needed on the formatting and design of the final report.

Berns stated that he is considering holding the next meet of the HSTF in September depending on the progress of revising the draft of the legislative report.

Meeting adjourned at 3:40 pm. CDT.