

MINUTES - NORTH DAKOTA ATMOSPHERIC RESOURCE BOARD

APRIL 8, 2010

Chairman Henry Bodmer called a telephone conference call meeting of the Atmospheric Resource Board to order at 9:00 a.m., April 8, 2010.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken. Members present were Henry Bodmer, Bobb Brewer, David Hagert, John Bollingberg, Tom Tupa, Dale Frink and Steven Weber.

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

MINUTES

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. BREWER, SECONDED BY MR. TUPA, AND CARRIED ON A VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 5, 2009 MEETING AS DISTRIBUTED.

FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT

Ms. Schroeder reviewed the financial status report for the period ending February 28, 2010. In response to a question, Ms. Schroeder clarified which expenses fall under the Administration program budget. Mr. Langerud indicated that the total expected costs for the upcoming 2010 NDCMP program would be around \$840,000.

WEATHER MODIFICATION LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION

Mr. Langerud stated one license renewal application had been received and is from Weather Modification, Inc. Mr. Langerud approved the renewal of the weather modification license of Weather Modification, Inc., Fargo, North Dakota for 2010.

Mr. Langerud noted that, a couple of years ago, the Board gave the director the authority to approve license renewals provided that nothing significant changes in the interim.

2010 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. He recommended the permit applications be approved contingent upon public response after legal notices have been published and time has been allowed for public comment.

MR. HAGERT MOVED TO APPROVE WEATHER MODIFICATION PERMITS FOR DISTRICT I AND II FOR WEATHER MODIFICATION, INC., FARGO, ND, CONTINGENT UPON PUBLIC RESPONSE. SECONDED BY MR. BREWER.

VOTING YEA – MR. BREWER, MR. HAGERT, MR. BOLLINGBERG, MR. TUPA, MR. FRINK, AND MR. WEBER. THERE WERE NO NAY VOTES. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Mr. Taborsky joined the conference call.

POLCAST III RESEARCH PERMIT EXEMPTION

Mr. Langerud reviewed the POLCAST research projects from 2006 and 2008 and plans for another field campaign this summer. The purpose of the project is to assess the likelihood and feasibility of using hygroscopic seeding methods in North Dakota for the North Dakota Cloud Modification Project.

Mr. Langerud noted that according to North Dakota Century Code 61-04.1-12, the Board has the ability to exempt research and development activities from the permit process. Mr. Langerud requested that the Board authorize an exemption for POLCAST III (2010 season) to be conducted in June and July.

In response to questions, Mr. Langerud noted that the operational area for the POLCAST research project is within 100 km of the radar in GFK, on the west side of the Red River within the North Dakota state boundary. He also noted that safety procedures for this project would be handled exactly as NDCMP safety procedures are handled.

MR. BOLLINGBERG MOVED TO GRANT A PERMIT EXEMPTION FOR THE POLCAST III RESEARCH PROJECT FOR THE 2010 SEASON. SECONDED BY MR. TUPA. VOTING YEA – MR. BREWER, MR. HAGERT, MR. BOLLINGBERG, MR. TUPA, MR. FRINK, MR. TABORSKY AND MR. WEBER. THERE WERE NO NAY VOTES. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

NORTH DAKOTA CLOUD MODIFICATION PROJECT

Mr. Langerud noted that the Board is at the start of a new 3-year agreement with WMI for aircraft services. He discussed the cost differences from the estimates given and the negotiated amounts and how that affects the budget. Mr. Ahlness provided background information as to the changes in aircraft for District II.

Ms. Schroeder reported that she traveled to Grand Forks to interview 14 students for intern pilot positions. The 9 students chosen will now provide Mike Poellot with their top 3 choices for locations and he tries to match them up as best he can.

Mr. Schneider reported that he and Mr. Brothers are conducting interviews for the radar meteorologist and intern meteorologist positions. Two radar meteorologists will return from last year. There were 26 qualified applicants for the 3 radar meteorologist positions. There were 15 qualified applicants for the 3 intern meteorologist positions. He expects to have hiring completed by April 16th.

Mr. Schneider reviewed housing issues in the various field locations. Mr. Ahlness indicated he is most concerned about housing in Watford City this year for the 4 pilots and intern pilots.

Mr. Schneider reviewed chemical and flare procurement. Most of the chemical is expected to arrive by April 30th. We expect to come in at or under budget for chemical. We also will be ordering less dry ice this year because the Minot hybrid plane will not dispense dry ice. In response to questions, Mr. Schneider reviewed shelf life for the various chemicals we use and hazardous waste product disposal.

Mr. Ham reviewed his recent work using TITAN data to do an objective analysis of seeded storms versus non-seeded to determine differences in storm structure, precipitation development, etc. He also reviewed his work on a seeding timeliness study.

Mr. Langerud updated the Board on the status of the proposed Air Force expansion of the Powder River Military Operations Area, which would affect District I operations. It is not known yet how flight activity would be affected when the Military Operations Area is active and how often it would be active. Mr. Ahiness indicated that this possible expansion would most likely only affect our top-seeding activities. Public meetings will be held again this summer and we will be attending.

RADAR OPERATIONS

Bowman Year-round Operations

Mr. Langerud reviewed NWS radar coverage of southwest North Dakota and surrounding areas in Montana and South Dakota. Bowman Emergency Operations Center tested a data feed from our Bowman radar over the winter. It is probable that groups in that area will want us to continue operating the Bowman radar once the 2010 NDCMP is over. He is working with local groups in the area to develop a cost-sharing strategy.

Spare Parts Status


Mr. Langerud reviewed the status of spare parts for our radars. Over the winter, we sent away two magnetrons to be rebuilt. They are the main component that generates the electromagnetic energy the radar needs to transmit. We also acquired a transmit-receive vacuum tube, which is necessary for the radar to operate. It was gently used for a cost of \$6,000 versus three times that cost for new. Our radar technician bought new driver gears for the radar pedestal that moves the antenna. These gears wear over time and are difficult to find and expensive. We had these manufactured from scratch by a machinist for a substantially lower cost.

2010 ARBCON UPDATE

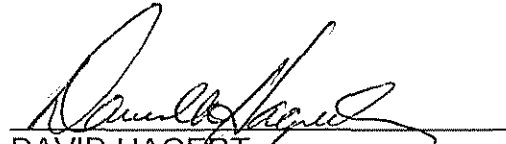
Mr. Brothers reported that requests for new observers went to all water permit holders, which resulted in 100 new volunteers. 663 volunteers reported rainfall for us last year. 759 volunteers have signed up for 2010. Three quarters of those signed up for internet reporting.

This fall we will start gathering snow data. We purchased 200 4-inch rain gauges that are appropriate for gathering snow. In July, Mr. Brothers plans to request volunteers from the current network for this purpose. He is hoping for 150-200 volunteers. Mr. Langerud indicated that the need for more snow data is great and this would help with snow modeling next spring.

Being no further business the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:30 a.m.



HENRY BODMER
CHAIRMAN



DAVID HAGERT
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Transcribed by Kelli Schroeder