



LOWER REPUBLICAN NRD BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Lower Republican NRD Meeting Room, 30 North John, Alma, NE

May 14th, 2026, LRNRD Board Meeting, at 1:30 PM – **In-Person & Zoom Meeting**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:

Meeting notices were published in the Harlan County Journal and on the District Website at www.lrnrd.org. Chairman Marlin Murdoch called the meeting of the Lower Republican NRD Board of Directors to order with an invitation to prayer at 1:30 PM.

Chairman Murdoch announced that the current copy of the statute regarding public meeting laws is posted on the south wall and on the LRNRD website. Guests were asked to sign the attendance roster.

Excused Absences: Tim Kahrs.

Directors present via Zoom: Brian Ballou, Lee Fintel, Chris Grams.

Directors present at the NRD Office: Troy Fletcher, Matt Harrison, David Bartels, Don Duffy, Marlin Murdoch, Toby tenBensel, Brad Wulf.

Others present, via Zoom: Greg Shuck – Twin Valley Weed Management Area (TVWMA). Others Present, in-person: Jerry Kovarik, NRCS; Jill Hays.

Staff present: Todd Siel, Nick Simonson, and Kristi Heft.

MATERIAL E-MAILED OUT BEFORE THE MEETING & AVAILABLE AT THE MEETING

Agenda

LRNRD Board Meeting Minutes, 4/26

LRNRD/RWP Treasurer's Report, 4/26

LRNRD Staff Report, 5/26

Comments from the Public: Jill Hays, a Harlan County resident and nurse, addressed the board about a proposed solar farm located in Harlan County. She raised concerns about the proximity to waterways and potential environmental impacts. It was noted that the NRD lacks jurisdiction over renewable energy projects. Greg Shuck, on behalf of Twin Valley Weed Management Area (TVWMA), requested the LRNRD serve as a financial partner for the Invasive Species Control Grant, including helicopter spraying of Phragmites and sandbar reclamation. Twin Valley Weed Management is asking the LRNRD to potentially act as a financial partner to pay contractors directly and receive reimbursement through the grant process.

Motion #1 by Troy Fletcher, seconded by Matt Harrison, to approve the April minutes as presented. Motion carried. Aye 10, Nays 0, Absent 1, Tim Kahrs.

Motion #2 by Brad Wulf, seconded by Dave Bartels, to approve the LRNRD and Rural Water Treasurer's reports. Motion carried. Aye 10, Nays 0, Absent 1, Tim Kahrs.

NRCS Staff Report: Jerry Kovarik from Harlan Co. NRCS provided a brief update on NRCS programs and operations.

LRNRD Staff Report: Todd and Nick provided a brief update on LRNRD operations.

Variance Requests: No variance requests that required approval of the board were presented.

The Rural Water Expansion Project: Currently, we are focusing on finding a suitable location with adequate elevation for a well and tank system. We have explored moving further west or north, considering ground tanks and elevation requirements. Todd explained that the tower was successfully drained on May 4 and the booster pump station was functioning well at maintaining 142 PSI pressure. He noted that painting work on the water tower had begun but progress was slow due to potential safety concerns from wind and dust.

NRCA Update: All compliance water has been delivered to Harlan County Lake. We will get final approval for the compliance water delivered after June 1, 2026. Nebraska delivered approximately 12,950 acre-feet through 2025 water management activities (3,450 acre-feet) and augmentation pumping at the NCORPE, Rock Creek, and Turkey Creek projects from January through March 2026 (9,500 acre-feet).

NCORPE: The next meeting is set for May 20th in Curtis, at the offices of Middle Republican NRD. Troy Fletcher and Todd Siel are planning to attend.

WaterSmart: We are currently working on installing meters. Miranda and Nick continue to work on getting HydroData and Producer Connect up and running.

NARD Update: No update.

Other Business: The LRNRD discussed storage solutions, with plans to explore using space at the senior center for temporary storage of pallets and supplies.

Motion #3 Don Duffy, seconded by Toby tenBensel, to move that the Lower Republican NRD will act as a financial partner to pay contractors directly for the TVWMA. Payment will be reimbursed through the grant process. Ayes 10, Nays 0, Absent 1, Tim Kahrs.

Motion #4 Matt Harrison, seconded by Troy Fletcher, to move the Board into Closed Session at 2:38 pm to discuss Contractual Negotiations, Imminent Litigation, and Personnel. Motion carried. Ayes 10, Nays 0, Absent 1, Tim Kahrs.

Motion #5 by Matt Harrison, seconded by Troy Fletcher, to move that the Board come out of Closed Session at 3:16 pm and declare that no actions of the board, official or unofficial, were taken during said Closed Session. Motion carried. Ayes 10, Nays 0, Absent 1, Tim Kahrs.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on June 11th at 1:30 PM.

The meeting concluded at 3:18 PM.

Secretary

Date