

**MINUTES**  
**LOWER REPUBLICAN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT**  
Lower Republican NRD Meeting Room, 30 North John Street, Alma, NE  
February 11, 2021 at 2:00 pm

**Board of Directors Meeting**

Chairperson Marlin Murdoch called the meeting of the Lower Republican NRD Board of Directors to order with an invitation to prayer at 2:47pm immediately following the Variance Request hearings. Guests were asked to sign the attendance roster. The chairperson provided notice that the location of the current copy of the statutes dealing with public meetings laws is located on the south wall.

**MATERIAL E-MAILED OUT PRIOR TO THE MEETING & AVAILABLE AT THE MEETING**

Agenda

LRNRD Board Meeting Minutes, Index of Decisions, 1/21

LRNRD/RWP Treasurer's Report, 1/21

Staff Report

Variance Request #292 Kevin Peterson

Variance Request #293 & 294 F. Murdoch Ranch & Farms Inc.

Variance Request #295 & 296 Don Duffy

During the Variance Request Hearing the Red Cloud FFA gave a presentation on qualifying for the National Land Judging contest to be held in Oklahoma in May.

Excused Absences: Tim Kahrs, Nelson Trambly, Brad Wulf.

Directors present at NRD Office: Clark Andrews, David Bartels, Bill Bose, Matt Harrison, Terry Hoit, Marlin Murdoch, Roger Nelson, Toby tenBensel.

Others present at the LRNRD office: Don Duffy, Joe Haas, Kevin Peterson.

Via Zoom: Nick Simonson, NRCS.

Staff present at LRNRD office: Todd Siel, Shirlee Poyser, Kristen Heft, David Bantam, and Mark Bantam.

**Motion #1 by David Bartels seconded by Matt Harrison to approve the January Minutes and Variance Request minutes as presented. Motion carried.** Ayes 8, Nays 0, Absent 3 – Tim Kahrs, Nelson Trambly, Brad Wulf.

**Motion #2 by Roger Nelson seconded by Bill Bose to approve the LRNRD and Rural Water Treasurer's report. Motion carried.** Ayes 8, Nays 0, Absent 3 – Tim Kahrs, Nelson Trambly, Brad Wulf.

**NRCS Report:** Nick Simonson, Acting District Conservationist, gave the NRCS report. The report updates included EQIP and CSP.

**LRNRD Staff Report:** Manager Todd Siel gave a brief NRD Staff report. The South-Central Water Conference was held on February 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Phelps County Ag center. The conference looked much different and in-person attendance was less than past years. We had the same number of presenters speak about current conditions, trends, technology, and projects in south-central Nebraska, but many of our speakers presented virtually this year. A Zoom link was also available for those who wanted to attend virtually. Martha Shulski, state climatologist, provided the keynote address on everyone's favorite topic – Weather and Climate trends. Tom Riley, new Director at the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NeDNR), also presented his "Six Keys" regarding NeDNR's mission.

Red Cloud FFA will be attending the National Land Judging contest in Oklahoma. Students spoke to the board about the events leading up to Nationals and asked for a donation to help cover expenses.

**Motion #3 by Bill Bose seconded by Terry Hoit Bose to approve donating \$1,000 to the Red Cloud FFA team for expenses related to the National Land Judging contest in Oklahoma. Motion carried.** Ayes 8, Nays 0, Absent 3 – Tim Kahrs, Nelson Trambly, Brad Wulf.

Manager Siel explained that Nebraska Public Agency Investment Trust (NPAIT) is a cooperative investing program designed and governed by Nebraska public entities. Allowable under Nebraska statutes, NPAIT offers Nebraska public entities the opportunity to invest funds jointly – increasing efficiency and offering the financial benefits of joint investing. The program is governed by a Board of Trustees, from a variety of public agencies throughout Nebraska.

**Motion #4 by Clark Andrews seconded by David Bartels to approve becoming a participant in the Nebraska Public Agency Investment Trust (NPAIT). Motion carried.** Ayes 8, Nays 0, Absent 3 – Tim Kahrs, Nelson Trambly, Brad Wulf.

**Motion #5 by Clark Andrews seconded by Bill Bose to approve variance request #292 for Kevin Peterson. Motion carried.** Ayes 8, Nays 0, Absent 3 – Tim Kahrs, Nelson Trambly, Brad Wulf.

The board reviewed variance request #294 then variance request #293. Marlin Murdoch left the room during the discussion of these variance requests.

**Motion #6 by David Bartels seconded by Toby tenBensel to approve variance request #293 and variance request #294 for F. Murdoch Ranch and Farms Inc. Motion carried.** Ayes 7, Nays 0, Absent 3 – Tim Kahrs, Nelson Trambly, Brad Wulf. Abstain – 1 Marlin Murdoch.

**Motion #7 by David Bartels seconded by Terry Hoit to approve variance request #295 for Don Duffy. Motion carried.** Ayes 8, Nays 0, Absent 3 – Tim Kahrs, Nelson Trambly, Brad Wulf.

**Motion #8 by Bill Bose seconded by Matt Harrison to deny variance request #296 for Don Duffy. Motion carried.** Ayes 7, Nays 1 Clark Andrews, Absent 3 – Tim Kahrs, Nelson Trambly, Brad Wulf.

**The Platte Republican High Flow Diversion Project Update:** NeDNR has received objections to the amended application from seven entities. We will have until March 21<sup>st</sup> to file any motions with NeDNR.

**NCORPE:** Invenergy will be monitoring conditions at the NCORPE property by measuring the potential for solar and wind energy. Senator Groene's legislative bills, LB589 - to change requirements for integrated management plans by natural resources districts and LB591 - to require a permit for any natural resources district water augmentation project, both received hearings in February. Manager Todd Siel provided letters of opposition to both bills.

**WFPO - RFP:** Watershed Flood Prevention & Operation (WFPO) grants were approved by the NRCS for both the Thompson Creek and West Turkey Creek Watersheds. NRCS also agreed to an internal preliminary investigative report (PIR) on Flag Creek. Thompson Creek and West Turkey Creek Watershed agreements from NRCS have been received and executed. The request for proposal (RFP) will be submitted to prospective consultants when completed. Todd has RFP templates and will be contacting Allen Gehring from NRCS to make sure the templates will meet NRCS criteria.

**Motion #9 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Terry Hoit to direct Manager Todd Siel to develop and execute a Request for Proposal (RFP) for both Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) grants, after consultation and approval from the Executive Committee. Motion carried. Ayes 8, Nays 0, Absent 3 – Tim Kahrs, Nelson Trambly, Brad Wulf.**

**NARD Legislative Conference & Legislative Update:** The annual NARD Legislative Conference was held January 25-26, 2021 in Lincoln. This event was shortened due to both the pandemic and weather. Like so many of our events, it was also held both in-person and virtually. Director Roger Nelson served as the representative for the LRNRD and like many of the NRDs, participation by Roger and LRNRD staff ended up being by virtual means. Roger's attendance is appreciated throughout the business session of the conference and he also participated in the NARD board meeting on Tuesday afternoon. One thing that has not changed

is the number of bills introduced compared to past years – There are over 700 bills for the legislature to consider this session. Many of those bills are relevant to our NRD and deserve our attention and we will monitor those which directly affect the LRNRD and our partners. The NARD summary of new legislation and what position has been taken on these bills will be updated weekly.

The next NARD Board meeting is March 7 & 8 at the new NARD building in Lincoln.

Manager Todd Siel mentioned how appreciative he is to the staff for taking on more responsibility with recent staff departures and absences.

**Motion #10 by Clark Andrews seconded by Roger Nelson to move that the Board go into Closed Session at 3:48pm to discuss Contractual Negotiation, Imminent Litigation, and personnel. Motion carried. Ayes 8, Nays 0, Absent 3 – Tim Kahrs, Nelson Trambly, Brad Wulf.**

**Motion #11 by Clark Andrews seconded by Roger Nelson to move that the Board come out of Closed Session at 4:35pm and declare that no actions of the board, official or unofficial, were taken during said Closed Session. Motion carried. Ayes 8, Nays 0, Absent 3 – Tim Kahrs, Nelson Trambly, Brad Wulf.**

**Other Business:** None.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 2:00 pm. The meeting was adjourned at 4:35pm.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date