

MINUTES
LOWER REPUBLICAN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
Lower Republican NRD Meeting Room, 30 North John, Alma, NE
August 12th, 2021

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 7:00pm. 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. Guests were asked to sign the attendance roster.

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

Agenda

LRNRD Board Meeting Minutes, 7/21

LRNRD/RWP Treasurer's Report, 7/21

NRCS Staff Report, 8/21

LRNRD Staff Report, 8/21

Draft 5th Generation Integrated Management Plan

Draft Monitoring & Studies Technical Memorandum for the NeDNR, URNRD, MRNRD & LRNRD

FY2022 Draft Budgets: Rural Water, Platte Republican High Flow Diversion & LRNRD

Excused Absences: Tim Kahrs, Terry Hoit.

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

Others present at the LRNRD office: Jerry Kovarik, NRCS, Roger & Sid Gruwell, Carl Wolfe.

Staff present at LRNRD office: Todd Siel, Nick Simonson and Shirlee Poyser.

Comments from the Public: none

Motion #1 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Roger Nelson to approve the July Board Meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Motion #2 by David Bartels seconded by Bill Bose to approve the LRNRD and Rural Water Treasurer's report. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

NRCS Staff Report: Jerry Kovarik gave the NRCS staff report. Jerry provided updates on Covid requirements, CRP, CSP and EQIP. A copy of this report is in the minute book.

LRNRD Staff Report: The NRD has received five (5) new telemetry meters; they have been installed and are up and running. As with any new technology there is a learning curve and a few kinks with the computer system that need to be worked out. The Integrated Management Plan (IMP) process continues to be on schedule for completion in October. The PRD Motion to Dismiss hearing was July 19th, 2021, with a ruling expected soon. Work on the Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) projects for Turkey and Thompson Creek continue. NRCS will submit a preliminary investigation and feasibility report in the next few months for the Flag Creek Watershed.

Roger Gruwell addressed the board regarding violations with wells and an acre transfer south of Naponee. Manager Todd Siel stated that we will schedule a Variance Hearing preceding the regular October meeting.

Manager Todd Siel presented the Fifth Generation Integrated Management Plan and the Monitoring and Studies Technical Memorandum for the NeDNR, URNRD, MRNRD and LRNRD.

Motion #3 by David Bartels seconded by Brad Wulf to approve the Fifth Generation Integrated Management Plan, jointly developed by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources and the Lower Republican Natural Resources District. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Motion #4 by David Bartels seconded by Brad Wulf to adopt the Monitoring & Studies Technical Memorandum for the URNRD, MRNRD, and LRNRD IMPs, jointly developed by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources and the Upper Republican, Middle Republican, and Lower Republican NRDs, to take effect on the same date as the Fifth Generation Integrated Management Plan. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

UNL Mesonet Station: The LRNRD agreement with Nebraska Mesonet for the Guide Rock station has expired. There was discussion regarding whether to enter into a new agreement or to terminate the arrangement.

Motion #5 by Bill Bose seconded by Nelson Trambly to discontinue supporting the Nebraska Mesonet, Guide Rock Weather Station. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Flow Meter Grants: The five (5) telemetry meters with digital registers will finish out our pilot program at the end of this year. The US Bureau of Reclamation has opened the grant application period for new WaterSmart grants and the deadline for applications is November 3rd. The grant request is capped at \$2 Million for any water savings project. The board asked Nick to continue with the grant application process and report back to the board at our September meeting.

LARM: The LRNRD insurance coverage through League Association of Risk Management (LARM) is up for renewal and Todd Siel asked the directors to consider extending the coverage for three (3) years, which will lead to a significant savings in premium.

Motion #6 by Matt Harrison seconded by Bill Bose to approve League Association of Risk Management as the LRNRD insurance provider for FY2022. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Motion #7 by Matt Harrison seconded by Toby tenBensel to allow the General Manager the authority to review and approve, and the LRNRD Chairperson the authority to sign a Resolution, with the League Association of Risk Management (LARM) for three years (FY 2022-2024). Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

PRD Update: The NeDNR hearing to address our “Motion to Dismiss” was held in Lincoln on July 19th. Attorney David Bargen met with the NRD managers ahead of the hearing to discuss strategy and the expected protocol for the hearing. A ruling should be forthcoming in approximately thirty (30) days.

NCORPE Update: Todd and Nick met with the other NCORPE managers in Curtis to discuss the FY22 draft budget. After the meeting, they proceeded to the NCORPE headquarters, south of North Platte. They visited several sites on the property, including: one of the augmentation well enclosures; the solar energy mesonet station; and the out-fall structure for the north pipeline.

NARD Update: In July, the NARD hosted the International Envirothon, which was held virtually for the participants. Nick Simonson and Mary Goebel served as judges for the event.

Rural Water Update: New superintendent Jim Zimmerman has learned quickly and is doing a great job. Water usage has been higher than normal this summer in comparison to average. The Rural Water building needs the skylights on the roof repaired. We are contacting contractors to evaluate what is needed.

Manager Siel presented the draft FY22 Rural Water Budget to the board.

Motion #8 by Nelson Trambly seconded by Toby tenBensel to approve the FY2022 Draft Rural Water Budget. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Manager Siel presented the draft FY22 Platte Republican High Flow Diversion Project budget to the board. There were no changes to the budget from last year.

Motion #9 by Bill Bose seconded by David Bartels to approve the FY2022 Draft Platte to Republican High Flow Diversion Project budget. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Motion #10 by Clark Andrews seconded by Nelson Trambly to move that the Board go into Closed Session at 8:12pm to discuss Contractual Negotiation, Imminent Litigation, and personnel. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Motion #11 by Clark Andrews seconded by Nelson Trambly to move that the Board come out of Closed Session at 9:40pm and declare that no actions of the board, official or unofficial, were taken during said Closed Session. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Manager Siel discussed the occupation tax rate with the board and stated that it has been at \$8 per acre since FY2018.

Motion #12 by Nelson Trambly seconded by Toby tenBensel to set the FY22 Occupation tax rate at \$8 per acre. Motion carried Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Motion #13 by David Bartels seconded by Toby tenBensel to set the Director’s Per Diem at \$75 per day. Motion carried. Ayes 5, Nays 4, Clark Andrews, Bill Bose, Matt Harrison, Nelson Trambly. Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Motion #14 by Brad Wulf seconded by Clark Andrews to approve the FY2022 salaries as presented. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Manager Todd Siel discussed the FY22 Draft LRNRD budget. Todd highlighted several different categories.

Motion #15 by Nelson Trambly seconded by David Bartels to approve the F2022 Draft LRNRD budget. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Motion #16 by Brad Wulf seconded by Bill Bose to set FY 2022 Budget Hearing Date and time for September 9th, 2021, at 6pm. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2 – Terry Hoit, Tim Kahrs.

Other Business: None.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be September 9th, 2021, at 6pm.

Meeting adjourned at 10:06pm.

Secretary

Date