



## LOWER REPUBLICAN NRD – BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Lower Republican NRD Meeting Room,  
30 North John, Alma, NE  
May 12, 2022, at 7pm

A notice of the meeting was published in the Harlan County Journal and on the District Website at [www.lrnrd.org](http://www.lrnrd.org).

### **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 7:20pm. 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, 4/22

LRNRD/RWP Treasurer's Report, 4/22

NRCS Staff Report, 5/22

LRNRD Staff Report, 5/22

Excused Absences: Clark Andrews, Bill Bose, Don Duffy, Tim Kahrs, Brad Wulf.

Directors present at NRD Office: David Bartels, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Marlin Murdoch, Toby tenBensel, Nelson Trambly.

Others present at the LRNRD office: Jerry Kovarik, NRCS, Troy Fletcher, Oxford, Greg Christensen, Alma, Mike Hynek, Guide Rock.

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

**Comments from the Public:** none.

**Motion #1 by Nelson Trambly seconded by Toby tenBensel to approve the April minutes and Rules Violation minutes as presented. Motion carried. Ayes 6, Nays 0, Absent 5.**

**Motion #2 by Toby tenBensel seconded by David Bartels to approve the LRNRD and Rural Water Treasurer's reports for April. Motion carried. Ayes 6, Nays 0, Absent 5.**

**NRCS Staff Report:** Jerry Kovarik gave the NRCS report. The report provided updates on EQIP, CSP and Road 702 and Road 739 Fires in Furnas County. A full copy of this report is in the minute book.

**LRNRD Staff Report:** WE GOT RAIN!! The best three words a farmer can hear so far in 2022! The entire district received significant rainfall, ranging from 2 to over 4 inches over the past few weeks.

**Wildfire updates:** Two separate fires occurred last month, affecting areas in Furnas, Red Willow, and Gosper Counties. Jerry Kovarik, as part of his NRCS report, has provided a summary of two informational meetings held to address assistance available from FSA, NRCS, RMA, and the NRD. The perspective from the LRNRD centered around two main topics: 1. How the usage of irrigation water within the burn areas may affect allocations, and 2. Fire damage to flow meters. We are addressing those instances where irrigation wells were pumped to suppress fire or for dust control on a case-by-case basis. In any situation where a wildfire is occurring, the priority is the protection of life and property. We are in the final year of our 5-year allocation period and will work with those irrigators in the burn area to manage their remaining allocation quantity. Also, any flow meters that incurred fire damage will be repaired or replaced by the LRNRD. Our Water Resources Technicians have been out inspecting and repairing meters this week.

**Drought Planning Exercise:** As part of the Republican River Basin Wide Plan (RRBWP), a drought planning exercise will be held on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022, in Cambridge. Directors are invited to participate, along with many other stakeholders. There will be a diverse group attending which should provide several unique perspectives to the effects of drought and possible ways to mitigate severe drought conditions. We will coordinate attendance details after the board meeting. An intern was hired to organize the drought planning exercise, and to prepare a survey. DNR will pay for half, and each of the four NRD's will be billed for 12.5% of the intern bill.

**Trees:** Tree planting has started. Nick has been in contact with the new tree planter, and they had been delayed slightly by the rain but were still planning on being out here by then end of this week. The hand plant trees have been going out and we have not received any calls about them to date, so we expect that the trees are healthy.

**New Employee:** We are pleased to announce that we have filled the West Water Resources Technician position. Travis Fisher will be joining the staff on May 16<sup>th</sup>. We hope to have Travis at the next board meeting, so you all have a chance to meet him.

Lee Fintel was sworn in as director in Sub-District 5 prior to the LRNRD Board Meeting. Lee replaces Terry Hoit who resigned in January.

**Electronic Recycling:** Hildreth - Thursday, June 2nd 8:00-12:00; Alma - Thursday, June 2nd 1:00-5:00; Red Cloud - Friday, June 3rd 8:00-12:00pm.

**Tire Recycling:** Guide Rock - Wednesday, July 27th 8:00-12:00; Franklin - Thursday, July 28th 8:00-12:00; Alma - Thursday, August 4th 8:00-12:00pm.

Staff's recommendation is to approve the following Variance Requests as presented.

**Motion #3 by Toby tenBensel seconded by David Bartels to approve Variance Request #310 & #311 for Mike Hynek: Rule 6-5.1 Water Transfer and Rule 5-3 Well Spacing. Motion carried. Ayes 6, Nays 0, Absent 5.**

**Motion #4 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Lee Fintel to approve Variance Request #312 for Greg Christensen Rule 6-5.1 Water Transfer. Motion carried. Ayes 6, Nays 0, Absent 5.**

**Motion #5 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Nelson Trambly to approve Variance Request #313 & #314 for Kristi Kammerer Kreuzer Rule 6-5.1 Water Transfer and Rules 5-3 Well spacing. Motion carried. Ayes 6, Nays 0, Absent 5**

**Groundwater Rules and Regulations:** 2022 is the end of our five-year allocation period and a good time to make necessary revisions and modifications to the current rules and regulations. Manager Siel stated that the board would need to have a Rules and Regulations workshop to address updates to the rules. Siel asked for a freeze on any variance requests until October.

**Motion #6 by Nelson Trambly seconded by David Bartels to postpone the consideration of any variance requests relating to Rule 6-5.1 requiring board approval until the October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Board Meeting. Motion carried. Ayes 6, Nays 0, Absent 5.**

**Watershed & Flood Prevention Operations Environmental Assessment Plan and Design (WFPO EA):** Olsson is working on the changes to the proposed alternatives. Due to the refocusing of the preferred alternatives after the ad hoc committee meetings, we are behind schedule with the projects. We believe it's possible to make up the time and get back on schedule, but the delay may cause the NRCS review to push us beyond the target date to complete the EA and we may need to request an extension. We will have another public meeting to discuss the preferred alternatives for each watershed. Hopefully, we will have proposals submitted to Lincoln and the National Water Management Center by October.

**Rural Water Update:** Adam Marshall Land & Auction has three pieces of Rural Water equipment up for auction on their website. The equipment is located outside of Kearney and bidding will end on May 24, 2022.

**Platte to Republican High Flow Diversion Project (PRD) Update:** There are no updates. Plans are to have a conversation with Tom Riley at DNR.

**Flag Creek:** Purchase agreement is done, waiting on signatures. Closing date is set for May 31, 2022. Olsson has been contacted to assist with the pump test.

**NCORPE Update:** Demand charge and operating expenses will be paid soon. The NCORPE board voted to continue with condemnation procedures on the Bruce McDermott property.

**NARD Update:** The next meeting will be held in Scottsbluff on June 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with the annual basin tour.

**Other Business:** The NRD has an 800 number that gets very few calls. Staff recommends that we eliminate the 800 number.

This year marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Arbor Day and also the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NRD system. The Arbor Day Foundation will honor each NRD and each county at a public tree planting ceremony with a tree. All 23 NRD’s have been asked to participate.

**Motion #7 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Nelson Trambly to support the Arbor Day Foundation 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, by participating in the Arbor Day tree planting ceremony. Ayes 6, Nays 0 Absent 5.**

**Motion #8 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Nelson Trambly move that the Board go into Closed Session at 8:21pm to discuss Contractual Negotiation, Imminent Litigation and Personnel. Motion carried. Ayes 6, Nays 0, Absent 5.**

**Motion #9 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Nelson Trambly to move that the Board come out of Closed Session at 9:04pm and declare that no actions of the board, official or unofficial, were taken during said Closed Session. Motion carried. Ayes 6, Nays 0, Absent 5.**

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 7pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:04pm.

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Secretary

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Date