



LOWER REPUBLICAN NRD – BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Lower Republican NRD Meeting Room,
30 North John, Alma, NE
July 13th, 2023, at 7:00pm

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:

Meeting notices were published in the Harlan County Journal and on the District Website at www.lrnrd.org. Vice Chairperson David Bartels called the meeting of the Lower Republican NRD Board of Directors to order at 7:00pm. Director Troy Fletcher opened the meeting with prayer. The vice chair provided notice that the location of the current copy of the statute dealing with public meetings laws is located on the south wall. Guests were asked to sign the attendance roster.

Excused Absences: Clark Andrews, Don Duffy, Marlin Murdoch.

Directors present: David Bartels, Lee Fintel, Troy Fletcher, Matt Harrison, Tim Kahrs, Toby tenBensel, Brad Wulf.

Others present: Dave Gleason, Kearney, John Kaldahl, Hardy, Jack and Cathy Russell, Maywood, Shaina Vincent, NRCS, Peder Jacobsen, Franklin, Mark Steinkrueger, Franklin.

Staff present: Todd Siel, Nick Simonson, Shirlee Poyser.

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

Agenda

LRNRD Board Meeting Minutes, 5/23

LRNRD/RWP Treasurer's Report, 5/23

LRNRD/NRCS Staff Report, 6/23

Comments from the public: Jack Russell, MRNRD, spoke to the board about their metering program, installing the new electronic meters. Jack spoke about the software program Longitude 103 and the app that is being developed.

Motion #1 by Tim Kahrs seconded by Brad Wulf to approve the June minutes as presented. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 3.

Motion #2 by Tim Kahrs seconded by Matt Harrison to approve the LRNRD and Rural Water Treasurer's reports for June. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 3.

NRCS Staff Report: Shaina Vincent, Acting DC, provided the NRCS staff report. A copy of this report is in the minute book.

LRNRD Staff Report: Managers Todd Siel and Nick Simonson gave the NRD staff report. Chris Grams, Upland, responded, indicating interest in the position. Nebraska Game and Parks will no longer have an office at the LRNRD as of June 30th. They have relocated to Funk.

The LRNRD Subdistrict 4 Director vacancy was advertised for two (2) weeks and directors plan to address the opening at the August meeting.

The 2018 pickup was sold on the Adam Marshall Land and Auction sale on June 27th. The pickup brought \$20,000 and the woodchipper sold for \$2,000 minus 8% commission.

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

Motion #3 by Tim Kahrs seconded by Matt Harrison to approve the renewal of League Association of Risk Management (LARM) insurance coverage for three years (2023 – 2025) and to grant authority to the General Manager to sign the FY2024 LARM Renewal Resolution. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0 Absent 3.

Variance Request approvals: Simonson had three (3) different variance requests to present and explained each in detail to the board. A copy of each variance is in the minute book.

Motion #4 by Brad Wulf seconded by Tim Kahrs to approve the P&R Family Farms & Mark Steinkruger's Variance Requests conditional upon an acceptable shared well agreement being signed by all necessary parties. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 3.

Motion #5 by Brad Wulf seconded by Toby tenBensel to approve the Jeff Mans Variance Request conditional upon an acceptable shared well agreement being signed by all necessary parties. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 3.

Motion #6 by Lee Fintel seconded by Troy Fletcher to approve the John Kaldahl and David Gleason variance request, contingent on the relinquishment of 95.1 acres of surface water appropriation. Co-mingled acres will be removed, and the 3 Gleason irrigation wells will be decommissioned or converted to de minimums use. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 3.

Longitude 103: Simonson presented information on Longitude 103, a company that develops software for NRDs to store data and information such as flow meter and chemigation data. This new application would allow producers to access their chemigation and water allocation information through the program. Simonson has a contract ready from Longitude 103. The cost is \$13,500 for the migration and \$13,000 annually for the support and maintenance of the database. Flow meter data, chemigation, static water, and other items will be included. DNR will contribute \$10,000 towards the migration. This system will assist in facilitating the updates needed for telemetry flow meters and producer access applications.

Motion #7 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Lee Fintel to approve funding for the Longitude 103 contract regarding the NRDapp. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 3.

NARD is also working with Longitude 103, and other entities, on the Producers Connect application part of this system. There is a \$240,000 Water Sustainability Fund application going before the Natural Resources Commission. Participating NRDs have been asked to contribute \$5,000 towards the project cost. Simonson is sitting on the committee to assist in developing the app.

Motion #8 Toby tenBensel seconded by Lee Fintel to approve contributing \$5,000 to the NARD for the development of Longitude 103's Producers Connect app. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 3.

Rural Water Update: We do not have an update yet from NDEE on the EPA grant process.

Siel presented the draft FY24 Rural Water budget.

Motion #9 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Matt Harrison to approve the Draft FY2024 Rural Water Budget. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 3.

Republican River Compact Administration: 68,000 acre-feet of irrigation supply was made available to Kansas Bostwick, which helped us to meet our compliance requirements for 2023. Due to the timely rains in June and the high stream flows, we have preliminary indications that we reached the 119,000 acre-feet which is required for a full irrigation supply in Harlan County Reservoir. While the Bureau has not made an official call on the Water Short designation, we remain optimistic that the supply is adequate for both compliance purposes and irrigation needs. Currently, we do not have any compact compliance obligation to Kansas, other than the 860 AF of the remaining compact compliance volume.

Platte to Republican High Flow Diversion Project (PRD) Update: The Nebraska Supreme Court hearing will be held on August 29th at 9:00am in Lincoln. The Attorney General's Office joined our case, and we feel that this will be a significant benefit to our pleading before the Court. Each side will receive 15 minutes to provide oral arguments to the Court and we will share our time with the Attorney General. The appellants will have to split their time among the 5 of them. If you have been watching the news on the Platte River, you will know there has been significant excess flows from the South Platte River. Based on the numbers we have seen and the information from the State, we could have diverted water out of the Platte for a significant portion of June and several days so far in July. The EQIP contract was approved.

PRD FY24 budget was presented but will be approved at the August meeting.

Flag Creek Update: The wells and power are in; Holdrege Electric was able to get them wired up. We have some planning to do on how we want to operate the wells for a test pump. We will be working with Olsson and DNR to get a test pump timeframe and strategy in place.

NCORPE Update: With the recent retirement of Nelson Trambly, the board will need to appoint a representative and alternate to the NCOPRE board of directors.

Motion #10 by Brad Wulf seconded by Toby tenBensel to approve Tim Kahrs as the LRNRD NCORPE Representative and Troy Fletcher as the NCORPE Alternate Representative, due to the retirement of Nelson Trambly. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 3.

The next meeting will be July 19th in Curtis. Kyle Shepherd organized a tour of the NCORPE property, after the board meeting, for directors of the four NRD partners involved in the project

Watershed & Flood Prevention Operations Environmental Assessment Plan and Design (WFPO EA Plan): No update.

WaterSMART Grant: We ordered 100 - 8” meters in June and will be waiting for them to be delivered before we start contacting any producers about installation. We have a meeting with McCrometer on July 18th to go over specifics about the installation and other needs.

NARD Update: Annual Conference is September 25 and 26th.

Other Business: Siel spoke to the board about plans to purchase rock for the parking lot.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be August 10th, 2023, at 7:00pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:48pm.

Secretary

Date