



LOWER REPUBLICAN NRD

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Lower Republican NRD Meeting Room, 30 North John, Alma, NE
October 12, 2023, LRNRD at 8am - Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Meeting notices were published in the Harlan County Journal and on the District Website at www.lrnrd.org.

Board of Directors Meeting:

Chairman Marlin Murdoch called the meeting of the Lower Republican NRD Board of Directors to order with an invitation to prayer at 8:00am. The chairman provided notice that the location of the current copy of the statute dealing with public meetings laws is located on the south wall of the board room and on the district website.

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

Agenda 10/23

LRNRD Board Meeting Minutes, 9/23

LRNRD/RWP Treasurer's Report, 9/23

NRCS Staff Report, 10/23

Excused Absences: Don Duffy, Matt Harrison.

Directors present via Zoom: Clark Andrews, David Bartels, Lee Fintel, Troy Fletcher, Chris Grams, Tim Kahrs, Toby tenBensel, Brad Wulf.

Directors present at the NRD Office: Marlin Murdoch.

Others present at the LRNRD office: Jerry Kovarik, NRCS.

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

Comments from the Public: None.

Motion #1 by Tim Kahrs seconded by Troy Fletcher to approve the September minutes as presented. Motion carried. Ayes 9 Nays 0, Absent 2. Don Duffy, Matt Harrison.

Motion #2 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Chris Grams to approve the LRNRD and Rural Water Treasurer's reports for September. Motion carried. Ayes 9 Nays 0, Absent 2. Don Duffy, Matt Harrison.

NRCS Staff Report: The NRCS report was presented by Jerry Kovarik. Jerry reported on Climate-Smart, EQIP, CSP, and the Inflation Reduction Act. EQIP and CSP deadline is November 17, 2023.

Matt Harrison entered via phone during the NRCS report at 8:15am.

LRNRD Staff Report: Managers Todd Siel and Nick Simonson gave the NRD staff report. Updates on district lake levels were provided. Harlan County Lake is 67.8% full or 1937.36', Harry Strunk is approximately 5½' below pool elevation, Lovewell is 60% full. General water conditions and outlook for next year were discussed. Above average inflow will be needed if we wish to avoid a Compact Call Year for 2024.

Nick has been working on digitalizing certified acres and preparing maps for Longitude 103.

Technicians are 35-40% done with meter reading. McCrometer has also been installing new flow meters.

Variance Request approvals: Currently, the NRD have a few acre trades that are being considered for the next meeting.

Rural Water Update: Water usage has become more manageable. Haug Communications set a lag point to where it will automatically turn on the second pump if the first one is fighting to keep up with demand. We continue to work with EPA and NDEE on the expansion project, but it is moving slowly as it will involve the approval of a federal grant.

Republican River Compact Administration (RRCA): Kansas did not call for any of the Remaining Compact Compliance Volume (RCCV) by the October 1 deadline. It appears likely that 2024 will be a Compact Call Year.

Platte Republican High Flow Diversion: The Supreme Court ruling on PRD came sooner than expected. The court determined that none of the objectors could show that they would be harmed by our project, so they had no legal standing to object to our application. The decision to approve the water right is now in the hands of the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources. The LRNRD and Tri-Basin NRD are working on a press release to go out tomorrow or next week.

Flag Creek Update: Simonson has spoken with Holdrege Electric Service about wiring the pumps, and Olsson intends to get a test pump scheduled for November or December.

NCORPE: The next meeting will be on October 18th, in Imperial. Lincoln County held a Zoning regulations meeting. People spoke of their concerns about putting up wind turbines and solar projects in that area. With some of the proposed zoning requirements, according to Invenergy and others, this would effectively kill any renewable projects in Lincoln County. The commissioners tabled this and will decide next month how to move forward on zoning regulations.

Tim Kahrs added that there are 19,000 acres of grassland, and only one quarter is not being grazed because it is being reseeded. This has been good use of the grass with 1,500 pairs and 1,400 yearlings grazing this spring.

Watershed & Flood Prevention Operations Environmental Assessment Plan and Design (WFPO EA Plan):

We will be doing fieldwork on some required wetland activities with the US Army Corp of Engineers. Landowners will be contacted when we start inspecting the land. The assessment will be similar to a sod bust/wetland determination. Olsson is working on the final plans for both Turkey Creek and Thompson Creek.

WaterSmart Grant: Letters were sent out to ground water irrigators in our district, those owners and operators of an irrigation system with a flow meter, informing them of our project to replace existing mechanical flow meters with telemetry enabled, district owned meters. The District was successful in securing over \$3million in Federal and State grants for the NRD owned telemetry flow meters and flow straighteners. This project will implement remote monitoring capabilities to provide water use in near real-time to agricultural water users. Phase 1 of the grant will target the Rapid Response Area wells, wells that impact stream and river flows the most, and then will move accordingly to the meters outside of that area. The district has contracted directly with McCrometer to install and implement these meters according to specifications. Chad Nickel who works for McCrometer, is installing meters in Furnas County, and western Harlan County. A copy of the letter is in the minute book.

NARD Update: Todd, Nick, Shirlee, Kristi, and Mary attended all or portions of the Annual NARD Conference at the end of September. Director Brad Wulf was recognized for his 20 years of service.

Nick, Kristi, and Shirlee attended the session for the Producer Connect App that is going to be a statewide application. The Corn Board is supporting this app along with a few other supporters and would like to see a dashboard for nitrogen. Nick is on the steering committee for developing the Producer Connect app and wants to help develop the water quantity aspect of the app. The goal is to have a beta version ready for review in January and a version for producers to test in June of next year.

Other Business: No other updates at this time.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on November 9th, 2023, at 2pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:54am.

Secretary

Date