



LOWER REPUBLICAN NRD

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Lower Republican NRD Meeting Room, 30 North John, Alma, NE

March 14th, 2024, at 1:30pm

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:

Meeting notices were published in the Harlan County Journal and on the District Website at www.lrnrd.org. Chairperson Marlin Murdoch called the meeting of the Lower Republican NRD Board of Directors to order with an invitation to prayer at 1:32pm. The chairperson 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: Tim Kahrs.

Directors present: Clark Andrews, David Bartels, Don Duffy, Lee Fintel, Troy Fletcher, Chris Grams, Matt Harrison, Marlin Murdoch, Toby tenBensel, Brad Wulf.

Others present: Jerry Kovarik, NRCS, Sasha Hahn, TBNRD.

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, 2/24

LRNRD/RWP Treasurer's Report, 2/24

LRNRD/NRCS Staff Report, 3/24

Comments from the Public: none.

Motion #1 by Chris Grams seconded by Troy Fletcher to approve the February minutes as presented. Motion carried. Ayes 10 Nays 0, Absent 1.

Motion #2 by David Bartels seconded by Toby tenBensel to approve the LRNRD and Rural Water Treasurer's reports. Motion carried. Ayes 10 Nays 0, Absent 1.

NRCS Staff Report: Jerry Kovarik gave the NRCS report. Jerry reported on EQIP, CSP and RCPP. A full report is in the minute book.

LRNRD Staff Report: Managers Todd Siel and Nick Simonson gave the NRD staff report. They reported on the RRCA Forecast, the Flag Creek Project, Platte Republican Diversion (PRD) and the WaterSMART Grants. A complete copy of the report is in the minute book.

Manager Todd Siel presented the board with two (2) bids for a 2024 Chevy Pickup. Only two of the three dealerships contacted submitted proposals: Tripe Motor - Alma, and Faws Garage - Cambridge.

Motion # 3 by Clark Andrews seconded by Brad Wulf to accept the 2024 pickup bid from Tripe Motor. Motion carried. Ayes 10 Nays 0, Absent 1.

Variance Request approvals: Nick Simonson discussed two (2) variance requests (acres trades) with the board. Jesse Koch (Massey) and Clark Andrews.

Red Cloud Dam: The City of Red Cloud is applying for a Water Sustainability Fund Grant, with JEO Consulting Group assisting in the process. The grant will help pay for repairing the dam located to the northwest of the city. Todd Siel asked the board to consider assisting the City of Red Cloud financially.

Motion #4 by Brad Wulf seconded by David Bartels to pay \$15,000 to the City of Red Cloud for use in pursuing and administering a Water Sustainability Fund Grant that will be used for rehabilitation of the watershed dam located northwest of Red Cloud, Nebraska in the NW¼ of Section 35, Township 2, Range 11W in Webster County. Motion carried. Ayes 10 Nays 0, Absent 1.

Manager Todd Siel discussed the LRNRD becoming a member of the Groundwater Management Coalition in Nebraska.

Motion #5 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Chris Grams to give our General Manager the authority to review and sign an Addendum, consenting to the membership requirements of the Groundwater Management Coalition in Nebraska, and paying \$3,000 required for the initial dues contribution. Motion carried. Ayes 10 Nays 0, Absent 1.

Rural Water Update: The system is getting back to normal after locating and fixing the major leaks in Guide Rock and Inavale. They are still working on solutions to get the livestock tanks in compliance.

Republican River Compact Administration (RRCA): We continue to monitor the lake levels closely and try to guess where we will end up in terms of supply. In a recent meeting with several entities charged with managing the water within the basin we are still in a position much like last year where we could end up being a little short to get out of a water short year. Hopefully, we get enough spring moisture to avoid the water short designation. The good news is that Harry Strunk Lake is about full, and the river has been charged up all winter and flows should be good once Strunk starts to spill.

Platte Republican High Flow Diversion: We are expecting a decision sometime this summer on the project. We continue to have conversations on what we need to do to be ready to move forward once DNR reaches a decision.

Flag Creek Update: We were finally able to do a pump test at the Flag Creek site in late February, early March. Olsson gathered the data they needed to develop the regional sub-model that will give us the information we need to ensure that we are not going to harm the local aquifer by augmenting the streamflow in Flag Creek. Once we have that information back from Olsson, we will plan to have a meeting with DNR to develop the next phase of the project.

NCORPE: The next NCORPE meeting will be at the LRNRD office on Wednesday, April 17th, at 10am.

Watershed & Flood Prevention Operations Environmental Assessment Plan and Design (WFPO EA Plan): A request for an extension has been submitted.

WaterSmart Grant: Nick submitted the grant for the second phase of the meter project. After some stressful moments with the online submission process, Nick received confirmation that the documents had been received and will be reviewed by the Bureau.

NARD Update: The caps that are being suggested for political subdivisions could have a significant impact on our budgeting and levy authority. There was a Natural Resources omnibus bill that received first round approval, but it was mostly dealing with issues that would not directly affect the LRNRD. Outside of the budget bill, we are just hoping they fix the meeting notice requirement that would solve the issue of whether to postpone a meeting if the paper did not print the notice.

The NARD is still working with the NRDs on the proposed changes to the 414(h)-retirement program. The NARD is asking each NRD to consider increasing both the employee and employer contributions by 1%. Discussion will be held again at the managers meeting and the NARD board meeting in June.

Other Business: Matt Harrison wanted to revisit the recent change to the board meeting time. Discussion was held but no action was taken. Matt requested that an agenda item be placed on the agenda for next month.

Motion #6 by Clark Andrews seconded by Toby tenBensel to move that the Board go into Closed Session at 3:44pm to discuss Contractual Negotiations, Imminent Litigation and Personnel. Motion carried. Ayes 10 Nays 0 Absent 1.

Motion #7 by Clark Andrews seconded by Toby tenBensel to move that the Board come out of Closed Session at 4:24pm and declare that no actions of the board, official or unofficial, were taken during said Closed Session. Motion carried. Ayes 10 Nays 0 Absent 1.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on April 11th, 2024, at 1:30pm.

The meeting adjourned at 4:24pm.

Secretary

Date

Recorded and distributed by: Shirlee Poyser, Administrative Assistant
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