



LOWER REPUBLICAN NRD

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Lower Republican NRD Meeting Room, 30 North John, Alma, NE  
June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 1:30pm

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:**

Meeting notices were published in the Harlan County Journal and on the District Website at [www.lnrnd.org](http://www.lnrnd.org). Vice-Chair David Bartels called the meeting of the Lower Republican NRD Board of Directors to order at 1:30pm. The vice 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: Chris Grams, Tim Kahrs, Marlin Murdoch.

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

Others present: Jerry Kovarik, NRCS.

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, 5/24

LRNRD/RWP Treasurer's Report, 5/24

LRNRD/NRCS Staff Report, 6/24

**Comments from the Public:** none.

**Motion #1 by Matt Harrison seconded by Troy Fletcher to approve the May minutes as presented. Motion carried. Ayes 8 Nays 0, Absent 3.**

**Motion #2 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Lee Fintel to approve the LRNRD and Rural Water Treasurer's reports. Motion carried. Ayes 8 Nays 0, Absent 3.**

**NRCS Staff Report:** Jerry Kovarik gave the NRCS report. Jerry reported on EQIP, RCP Cover Crop, Grassland CRP. 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, NDEE appointed a new interim director - Thad Fineran, and Lake Levels. A complete copy of the report is in the minute book.

**Tree Planting:** Tree planting wrapped up in the district on May 17<sup>th</sup>. Even with all the rain, things went smoothly. There was a total of 5 planting days on 31 sites across the district. Between machine planting and hand plants, we planted approximately 15,700 trees this season. Nick noted that the help from staff was amazing, as always. The field office secretaries always coordinate the plans and are the first in line with producers. Mary does a great job keeping the orders straight and a whole list of other things. The technicians lead the planters around so they could make it to the correct location. While there are always a few curveballs, it was another successful planting season for trees.

**Variance Requests:** There are a few pending Contiguous Trades being considered at this time. Shad Ingram, Robb Rutt, Kevin Biskup and Greg Christensen.

**Rural Water Update:** Letters of Request for Qualifications were sent out to six engineers for the RWD expansion project. All RFQ's have been received. There is a required scoring procedure to select an engineering firm. Managers Siel and Simonson will follow the procedure and select the engineering firms to be interviewed.

**Republican River Compact Administration (RRCA):** We have been watching the lake level at Harlan County Lake all spring with anticipation that inflows would meet the initial storage target of 68,000 acre-feet for KBID. On May 31<sup>st</sup>, we were a little bit short but may be able to get across the line in early June with one more good rain. With the June inflows, we have not only reached the 68,000 acre-feet for KBID, but also reached the

initial storage target for NBID. This means that we will not have an obligation to provide any additional volume of water to Kansas in 2024 and will use 5-year averaging instead of two-year averaging for our accounting.

Although we were able to reach the targets through inflows alone, it was an opportunity to learn more about the needed capacity in the lake. It was also great to collaborate with the Bureau of Reclamation and all the Nebraska entities that have a stake in meeting these storage targets and work collectively towards that goal.

**Platte Republican High Flow Diversion:** NeDNR held a public hearing in Bertrand, NE on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Testimonies were heard, with nothing new coming from those who were opposed.

**Flag Creek Update:** Update meeting with Olssons will be held June 18<sup>th</sup>.

**NCORPE:** No update.

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

The Turkey Creek Plan will be submitted to the National office later in June or July.

**WaterSmart Grant:** Chad is continuing with the installation of new meters. There is no grant update.

**NARD Update:** The NARD board met on June 10<sup>th</sup> in McCook. The NARD Basin Tour that followed was a success and all who attended enjoyed the tour.

The NARD Committee also approved a 1% increase in the 414(h) retirement plan. NARD Stop/Loss Committee recommended no change for Medical and Dental premiums for FY2024-2025. In addition, the board recommendation from the committee is to change claims processing, network access, and administrative services from Mid-American Benefits to Blue Cross Blue Shield Nebraska (BCBSNE), effective January 1, 2025.

**Twin Valley Weed Management:** We recently found out that the TVWMA grant funding from the Nebraska Department of Agriculture was not being renewed. We are discussing what avenues there are available for future funding.

**Other Business:** None.

**Motion #3 by Clark Andrews seconded by Brad Wulf to move that the Board go into Closed Session at 3:07pm to discuss Contractual Negotiations, Imminent Litigation and Personnel. Motion carried. Ayes 8 Nays 0 Absent 3.**

**Motion #4 by Clark Andrews seconded by Brad Wulf to move that the Board come out of Closed Session at 4:28pm and declare that no actions of the board, official or unofficial, were taken during said Closed Session. Motion carried. Ayes 8 Nays 0 Absent 3.**

**Motion #5 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Clark Andrews to approve the FY2025 salaries as presented. Motion carried.**

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be on July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 1:30pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.

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Secretary

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Date