



LOWER REPUBLICAN NRD  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Lower Republican NRD Meeting Room, 30 North John, Alma, NE  
November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 1:30pm

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:**

Meeting notices were published in the Harlan County Journal, posted in the District NRCS Office's and on the District Website at [www.lrnrd.org](http://www.lrnrd.org).

Vice Chairperson Dave 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: Don Duffy, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Marlin Murdoch.

Directors present at the NRD Office: Clark Andrews, Dave Bartels, Troy Fletcher, Chris Grams, Tim Kahrs, Toby tenBensel, Brad Wulf.

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

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, 10/24

LRNRD/RWP Treasurer's Report, 10/24

NRCS Staff Report, 11/24

**Comments from the Public:** Brian Ballou was introduced as the newly elected director in Subdistrict 1, replacing Clark Andrews in January.

**Motion #1 by Toby tenBensel seconded by Chris Grams to approve the October minutes as presented. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 4. Don Duffy, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Marlin Murdoch.**

**Motion #2 by Tim Kahrs seconded by Brad Wulf to approve the LRNRD and Rural Water Treasurer's reports. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 4. Don Duffy, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Marlin Murdoch.**

**NRCS Staff Report:** The NRCS report was emailed out prior to the meeting. A copy of this report is in the minute book.

**LRNRD Staff Report:** Simonson gave the NRD manager's report. Simonson spoke about the lake levels and Nitrogen Reduction Incentive Act (NiRIA).

Lower Republican Natural Resources District (LRNRD) and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NeDNR) are partnering in a new program to incentivize the reduction of nitrogen fertilizer inputs. Earlier this year, the Nebraska Legislature passed LB 1368, establishing the Nitrogen Reduction Incentive Act (NiRIA). This state funded program encourages producers to reduce the use of commercial fertilizers by offering financial incentives. To qualify, producers must verify a reduction in their nitrogen application by the lesser of 40 lbs./acre or 15% of their baseline rate.

**Annual Audit:** Karen Labenz, CPA, Dana F. Cole, LLC, took a position outside of public accounting.

**Variance Request approvals:** The NRD approved one contiguous acre trade request for Tom Schluntz in Harlan County.

**Rural Water Update:** Water sample tests have revealed a presence of Coliform bacteria, indicating potential contamination. Chlorination in the system is being administered and a follow up test will be taken next week. Manager Siel is scheduled to meet with Miller and Associates next week regarding the Riverton Expansion Project. Their goal is to identify potential locations north of Red Cloud for the well and tower site.

**RRCA Forecast:** The annual forecast and basin wide plan meetings took place on November 13<sup>th</sup> in Imperial. It was discussed that 2025 will be a Compact Call Year unless there is a significant change in the weather pattern.

**Platte Republican High Flow Diversion:** Our focus is still on the approval of the application by NeDNR, but that decision appears unlikely until NeDNR hires a new director.

**Flag Creek Update:** No update.

**NCORPE:** Staff and directors are exploring lease options, and a meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup> in North Platte. Both Tim Kahrs and Troy Fletcher should be able to attend.

**Watershed & Flood Prevention Operations Environmental Assessment Plan and Design (WFPO EA Plan):** We received comments back from National Watershed Office on Turkey Creek. Olsson is reviewing the comments and will meet with NRCS, then submit extensions and requests for more funding.

**WaterSMART Telemetry Meters:** The installation of meters has been slowed this week due to wind and rain. Manager Simonson is working on the second grant and will submit budget information. He will be asking for an extension on the first grant this fall to finish it up.

**HydroData/Producer Connect:** Manager Simonson provided an update regarding the HydroData/Producer Connect app. He highlighted its potential as a valuable tool for producers, enabling them to conveniently access and review their fields, wells and flow meter information.

**NARD Update:** Siel reported that January 27-29, 2025, is the Legislative Conference in Lincoln. Governor Pillen was at the Managers meeting in Nebraska City and he discussed his idea of combining DNR and NDEE.

**Other Business:** None.

**Motion #3 by Clark Andrews seconded by Chris Grams to move that the Board go into Closed Session at 3:15pm to discuss Contractual Negotiations, Imminent Litigation and Personnel. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 4. Don Duffy, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Marlin Murdoch.**

**Motion #4 by Clark Andrews seconded by Toby tenBensel to move that the Board come out of Closed Session at 4:32pm and declare that no actions of the board, official or unofficial, were taken during said Closed Session. Motion carried. Ayes 7 Nays 0, Absent 4. Don Duffy, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Marlin Murdoch.**

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on December 12<sup>th</sup> at 1:30pm, at the LRNRD office.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:32pm.

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Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date