



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:

Meeting notices were published in the Harlan County Journal, posted in the District NRCS Offices, and on the district website at www.lrnrd.org.

Chairman Marlin Murdoch called the meeting of the Lower Republican NRD Board of Directors to order at 1:30 PM, inviting everyone to join in prayer. He noted that the current copy of the statute regarding public meeting laws is posted on the south wall of the boardroom and is available on the district website.

Excused Absences: Chris Grams, Toby tenBensel.

Directors present at the NRD Office: Brian Ballou, Dave Bartels, Don Duffy, Lee Fintel, Troy Fletcher, Matt Harrison, Tim Kahrs, Marlin Murdoch, Brad Wulf.

Others present: John Thorburn, TBNRD, Quinn Barnas, Furnas Co. NRCS, Tyson Brown, NRCS.

Staff present: Nick Simonson and Shirlee Poyser.

MATERIAL E-MAILED OUT BEFORE THE MEETING & AVAILABLE AT THE MEETING

Agenda

LRNRD Board Meeting Minutes, 6/25

LRNRD/RWP Treasurer's Report, 6/25

NRCS Staff Report, 7/25

LRNRD Staff Report, 7/25

Comments from the Public: None.

Motion #1 by Dave Bartels, seconded by Lee Fintel, to approve the June minutes as presented. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2, Chris Grams, Toby tenBensel.

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

NRCS Staff Report: The NRCS report was emailed out before the meeting. Quinn Barnas, Furnas County NRCS, updated the board on the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and the Food Security Act (FSA) Compliance Status Reviews. Tyson Brown, NRCS, introduced himself to the board and talked about his responsibilities at NRCS. A copy of this report is in the minutes book.

LRNRD Staff Report: Furnas County held its first tire recycling event as a member of the Trailblazer RC&D on July 8th. Harlan County Reservoir is currently at 71.9% capacity. Inflows from April and May are the lowest they've been in a long time. A copy of this report is in the minute book.

League Association of Risk Management (LARM): The LRNRD insurance coverage through LARM is up for renewal.

Motion #3 by Troy Fletcher, seconded by Matt Harrison, to approve the renewal of League Association of Risk Management (LARM) insurance coverage and to authorize the General Manager to sign the LARM Renewal Resolution. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2, Chris Grams, Toby tenBensel.

Variance Requests: LRNRD staff is working on a variance request for Steve Sindt.

Rural Water Update: We remain hopeful that the expansion project will pass the review process now that the Big Beautiful Bill has been passed. Siel has prepared the FY2026 draft Rural Water budget for the board's review.

Motion #4 by Brad Wulf, seconded by Don Duffy, to approve the Draft FY2026 Rural Water Budget. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2, Chris Grams, Toby tenBensel.

RRCA Forecast: As expected, the total irrigation supply for the Bostwick IDs did not reach 119,000 acre-feet by June 30, resulting in a water-short year. We will now use a two-year average for our forecast until we meet specific requirements to exit this status. No official updates have been received at this time, but we expect to receive some numbers soon.

Platte Republican High Flow Diversion: Simonson reviewed the Platte Republican High Flow Diversion Project budget for the board. Manager Siel prepared the draft FY2026 PRD budget for the board to review.

Motion #5 by Don Duffy, seconded by Brad Wulf, to approve the Draft FY2026 Platte Republican High Flow Diversion Project budget. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2, Chris Grams, Toby tenBensel.

Flag Creek Project: A meeting is scheduled with DWEE to discuss this project and the options regarding moving to Phase II.

NCORPE: The next scheduled meeting is on Wednesday, August 20th, with the location to be determined. An email was sent out regarding the tornado damage at Kason.

Watershed & Flood Prevention Operations Environmental Assessment Plan and Design (WFPO EA Plan): We received notice that our additional funds were approved pending review by DOGE.

WaterSmart: We are currently working on installing meters and integrating the information into our database system to ensure everything works seamlessly and efficiently.

NARD Update: Budgets and contracts have been set for the new fiscal year.

Telephone upgrade: Nick discussed the transition to Voice-over-Internet with Eakes. Eakes will install a new phone system, allowing us to access the latest features and forward calls to staff.

Motion #6 Matt Harrison, seconded by Tim Kahrs, to move the Board into Closed Session at 3:03 pm to discuss Contractual Negotiations, Imminent Litigation, and Personnel. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2, Chris Grams, Toby tenBensel.

Motion #7 by Matt Harrison, seconded by Toby tenBensel, to move that the Board come out of Closed Session at 4:13 pm and declare that no actions of the board, official or unofficial, were taken during said Closed Session. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2, Chris Grams, Toby tenBensel.

FY2026 Budgeting: Nick discussed hiring an individual for a Natural Resources Coordinator position and highlighted the importance of bringing on a qualified person. It's a positive step toward strengthening the LRNRD team and ensuring effective management practices.

Motion #8 by Tim Kahrs, seconded by Lee Fintel, to set the FY2026 Budget Hearing date and time for August 14th at 1:45 pm. Motion carried. Ayes 9, Nays 0, Absent 2, Chris Grams, Toby tenBensel.

Other Business: No other updates

The next board meeting is scheduled for August 14th, 2025, at 1:30 PM, at the LRNRD office.

The meeting concluded at 4:32 PM.

Secretary

Date