



LOWER REPUBLICAN NRD BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Lower Republican NRD Meeting Room, 30 North John, Alma, NE
November 13th, 2025, LRNRD Board Meeting, at 1:30 pm

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 Lower Republican NRD Board of Directors meeting to order with an invitation to prayer at 1:30 pm.

Manager Todd Siel announced that the current copy of the statute regarding public meeting laws is posted on the south wall. Guests were asked to sign the attendance roster.

Excused Absences: Brian Ballou, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Tim Kahrs.

Directors present: Dave Bartels, Don Duffy, Troy Fletcher, Chris Grams, Marlin Murdoch, Toby tenBensel, Brad Wulf.

Staff present: Todd Siel, Nick Simonson, and Shirlee Poyser.

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

Agenda

LRNRD Board Meeting Minutes, 10/25

LRNRD/RWP Treasurer's Report, 10/25

LRNRD Staff Report, 11/25

Public Comments: Miranda Steinkruger, the new NRD employee, introduced herself to the board. She will serve as the Natural Resources Data Specialist.

Motion #1 by Chris Grams, seconded by Dave Bartels, to approve the October minutes as presented. Motion carried. Aye 7, Nays 0, Absent 4, Brian Ballou, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Tim Kahrs.

Motion #2 by Troy Fletcher, seconded by Toby tenBensel, to approve the LRNRD and Rural Water Treasurer's reports. Motion carried. Aye 7, Nays 0, Absent 4: Brian Ballou, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Tim Kahrs.

NRCS Staff Report: Jerry Kovarik, NRCS, provided an update on the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), with the sign-up deadline date set for November 21st.

LRNRD Staff Report: Harlan County Reservoir is currently 58.2% full, 2.7 feet lower than this time last year. The lake numbers indicate that Harlan is holding 27,132 acre-feet less than it was at this time last year. A copy of this report is in the minute book.

The Rural Water Expansion Project: Progress is being made on the Riverton expansion. The VFDs have been installed. We have prioritized the Riverton line to minimize its dependence on a single well. They continue hauling water, and a temporary replacement well has been drilled. The temporary well is expected to be finished and operational for the village by next week. Miller & Associates has completed some surveys for the Riverton pipeline. There will be a meeting with Chris Miller to determine the next steps for that pipeline and other project areas.

NRCA Update: The Nebraska annual forecast meeting is for November 20th, where we will review the compliance requirements for Kansas. Our strategy involves pumping at NCORPE to meet our needs and using additional tools as needed. Although we're confident in fulfilling Kansas's water request, we must consider all water users when augmenting the system.

There has been discussion with Tri-Basin NRD about utilizing their augmentation well for providing compact compliance water. The TBNRD executive committee has drafted an agreement to present to the LRNRD for consideration. Manager Siel asked the board for authority to review and sign the agreement, if it is acceptable.

Motion #3 by Brad Wulf, seconded by Toby tenBensel, to authorize Manager Todd Siel to review and sign an Agreement with Tri-Basin NRD for imported water supply from Tri-Basin NRD's West Turkey Creek augmentation well. Motion carried. Aye 7, Nays 0, Absent 4, Brian Ballou, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Tim Kahrs.

NCORPE: Our upcoming meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday, November 19th, in Alma. We will discuss our capacity for pumping this winter and spring to meet KBID's compliance volume request.

WaterSmart: Over 800 Phase 1 meters have been installed. A second technician was sent last month to assist with installations, which significantly increased the daily installation rate. If this pace continues, we expect to finish Phase 1 in January and then proceed to Phase 2.

NARD Update: The NARD Benefits Committee has added the Roth Elective tax deferral option to the NARD 457 Retirement Plan.

Motion #4 by Don Duffy, seconded by Dave Bartels, to approve adding a Roth Elective tax deferral option to the NARD 457 Retirement Plan. Motion carried. Aye 7, Nays 0, Absent 4: Brian Ballou, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Tim Kahrs.

Maximum Allocation/Hard Cap: The board discussed removing the maximum allocation of 13 acre-inches in Compact Call Years from the Lower Republican NRD Rules and Regulations.

Motion #5 by Brad Wulf, seconded by Don Duffy, to consider the removal of the Maximum Allocation of 13 acre-inches in Compact Call Years from Lower Republican NRD Rules and Regulations. Motion carried. Aye 7, Nays 0, Absent 4: Brian Ballou, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Tim Kahrs.

SBS Farms: Attorney Don Blankenau spoke to the board about the Nebraska Supreme Court decision regarding SBS Farms. Manager Siel advised the board that LRNRD staff recommends we proceed with a Public Hearing for SBS Farms due to violations of district rules.

Motion #6 by Brad Wulf, seconded by Chris Grams, to proceed with a Public Hearing for penalties against SBS Farms for violation of District rules. Motion carried. Aye 7, Nays 0, Absent 4: Brian Ballou, Lee Fintel, Matt Harrison, Tim Kahrs.

Other Business: None.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on December 11th at 1:30 PM.

The meeting concluded at 3:18 pm.

Secretary

Date