



LOWER REPUBLICAN NRD BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Lower Republican NRD Meeting Room, 30 North John, Alma, NE  
April 9, 2026, at 1:30 pm.

**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](http://www.lrnrd.org).

Chairman Marlin Murdoch called the meeting of the Lower Republican NRD Board of Directors to order with an invitation to prayer at 1:30 pm. The chairman announced that the current version of the statute governing public meetings is posted on the south wall of the boardroom and on the district website.

Excused Absences: Lee Fintel, Toby tenBensel, Brad Wulf.

Directors present at the NRD Office: Brian Ballou, David Bartels, Don Duffy, Troy Fletcher, Chris Grams, Matt Harrison, Tim Kahrs, Marlin Murdoch,

Others present: Jerry Kovarik, NRCS.

Staff present: Todd Siel, Nick Simonson, Kristi Heft, Mary Goebel.

**MATERIAL E-MAILED OUT PRIOR TO THE MEETING & AVAILABLE AT THE MEETING**

Agenda

LRNRD Board Meeting Minutes, 3/2026

LRNRD/RWP Treasurer's Report, 3/2026

NRCS Staff Report, 4/2026

LRNRD Staff Report, 4/2026

**Comments from the Public:** None.

**Motion #1 by Tim Kahrs, seconded by Don Duffy, to approve the March board minutes as presented. Motion carried. Aye 8, Nays 0, Absent 3 Lee Fintel, Toby tenBensel, Brad Wulf.**

**Motion #2 by Dave Bartels, seconded by Chris Grams, to approve LRNRD and Rural Water Treasurer's reports. Motion carried. Aye 8, Nays 0, Absent 3 Lee Fintel, Toby tenBensel, Brad Wulf.**

**NRCS Staff Report:** Jerry Kovarik from Harlan Co. NRCS provided the NRCS update. NRCS has not preapproved any State or Local funded EQIP applications. Nineteen applications are projected to be approved. No applications were preapproved for Water Quality/Water Quantity due to insufficient funding. Instead of pulling \$60,000 from a different category to fund one application, they chose to fund 8 applications across different categories, addressing 5 distinct resource concerns. Additional funds have been requested. The CSP Classic ranking has been extended. NRCS will be out doing field checks for compliance reviews. They will be looking for crop residue after planting. The Office of Management and Budget directed that supplemental information be obtained from USDA records rather than farmer interviews. Therefore, the surveys for CEAPIII are being completed using orthophotography.

**LRNRD Staff Report:** Harlan County Reservoir is currently 67.2% full, 1.9 feet lower than at this time last year. The lake numbers indicate that Harlan is holding 20,630 acre-feet less than it was at this time last year. We did have some rainfall in the last 30 days.

Mary Goebel announced that the LRNRD Post High School scholarships have been awarded. Kayla Faimon from Red Cloud, Carter Trambly from Campbell, and Gage Ely from Guide Rock were this year's recipients. Each student will be awarded a \$2,000 scholarship to the college or university of their choice.

Janell Anderson Ehrke, a candidate for District 38, attended a question-and-answer session.

**Variance Requests:** No variance requests that required approval of the board were presented.

**Rural Water Expansion Project:** Steady progress is being made on the Riverton hookup. The survey and design are in the final stages, and we are getting permits and easements. The project will be advertised for bids soon. The final draft of the Water Purchase Contract will be reviewed with Riverton, Miller & Associates and DWEE

to ensure it meets all requirements of the grant. Once that is finalized, we will execute that agreement and start laying pipe.

**RRCA Update:** Pumping at NCORPE and Rock Creek have been completed but the Holen well is continuing to pump. We hope to have the pumping from that well wrapped up by early May. We do not expect Kansas to agree they have received the water until May 31 when their account holds the amount of water they requested. This is the function of the accounting, the 2016 resolution, and the current weather and inflows.

**NCORPE Update:** Nothing spectacular occurred during the operations this year, but we should remember how spectacular this project is to our area. While we are in a good position for this drought cycle when it comes to compliance, we need to continue to be diligent when it comes to finding additional projects to ensure we remain in compliance for the long term.

**WaterSmart:** Meters are still being installed, with 40-50 remaining under Phase 1. Miranda and Nick are working on getting HydroData and Producer Connect up and running.

**NARD Update:** The newly appointed NARD officers are President Ryan Reuter, Vice President Mason Hoffman, and Secretary/Treasurer Deb VanMatre.

Today is day 58 of the 60-day session. The budget was passed and signed by the Governor. There were cuts to funds we utilize but nothing that we rely on heavily. We will be trying to get more funding restored to the Water Resources Cash Fund and the Water Sustainability Fund in next session.

**Other Business:** The LRNRD discussed the need for additional storage for the meter project. Nick said that we could possibly put a storage container on the cement pad by the outdoor classroom. Discussion was had on the size of the container and where we would purchase or rent one from. The Directors agreed that this was a need and we should research the storage container option further.

**Motion #3 by Tim Kahrs, seconded by Matt Harrison, to direct staff to research the options and prices for a storage container and approval of the purchase of the container if available. Ayes 8, Nays 0, Absent 3, Lee Fintel, Toby tenBensel, Brad Wulf.**

**Motion #4 Matt Harrison, seconded by Tim Kahrs, to move the Board into Closed Session at 4:03 pm to discuss Contractual Negotiations, Imminent Litigation, and Personnel. Motion carried. Ayes 8, Nays 0, Absent 3, Lee Fintel, Toby tenBensel, Brad Wulf.**

**Motion #5 by Matt Harrison, seconded by Tim Kahrs, to move that the Board come out of Closed Session at 4:53 pm 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, Lee Fintel, Toby tenBensel, Brad Wulf.**

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at 1:30 pm, with a virtual option for both directors and the public. Virtual meeting details will be posted on our website.

The meeting concluded at 4:53 pm.

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Secretary

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Date