

**Minutes of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources
Board of Directors Meeting
March 2, 2026**

The meeting of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources District was called to order by Chairman Lechtenberg at 2:00 P.M. at the Butte Community Center. Chairman Shane Lechtenberg called attention to the Open Meeting Law and statement of advertisement throughout our district.

Director's Present:

Shaun Higgins	Larry Baumeister	Randy Klawitter	Deb Hansen
Brett Fuchtman	Don Holtgrew	Chuck Zegers	Brian Kaczor
Karl Connell	Brenda Wendt	Dwain Marcellus	Curt Morrow
Shane Lechtenberg			

Directors Absent: J.J. Pritchett, Linda Hoffman, Jack Engelhaupt.

Staff Present: Wade Ellwanger Connie McCarthy Gary Richardson Brandon Fischer Britanie Brewster

Guests Present: Stacy Fletcher, Angela Schaecher.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion was made to approve March 2, 2026, agenda by Wendt and seconded by Zegers, **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

Public Comment:

Klawitter asked about WKRW new billing system for ACH.

Approval of February 2, 2026, Minutes:

Motion was made to approve February 2, 2026, minutes by Baumeister seconded by Wendt **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** Klawitter. **Absent:** Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

Staff and Agency Reports:

Manager's Report: Ellwanger's report was mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting. Ellwanger informed the board of the 2026 NRD Candidates that filed as of Friday February 27, 2026. He stated they held a stakeholder meeting on February 25, 2026. Ellwanger reminded the board that regularly scheduled board meeting move to 7:00 p.m. starting April 6, 2026.

Programs Assistant Report: McCarthy's report was mailed to directors prior to the Board meeting. McCarthy reported she is currently working on tree plans; she has 11,000 trees sold. She has been doing school visits, she has visited Veridgre and Niobrara. McCarthy state the NRD exploration destination for the LNNRD has changed from Monowi, to Hull Lake. She stated we have had two new reverse osmosis cost share applications that were approved.

NSWCP Activities:

McCarthy reported she has thirteen applications to approve eight tree plans, five additional plans.

A motion was made to approve contract 2449, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2462, 2463 by Holtgrew seconded by Klawitter. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to extend contract 2431, 2409 by Randa seconded by Wendt. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to amend contract 2444 by Wendt seconded by Hansen. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

Water Resources Report: Richardson's report was mailed to directors prior to the Board meeting. Richardson reported he has received 1200 of the ruffly 1700 Phase II reports. Richardson stated he is sending out Chemigation reports, all reports will sent by next week.

Building update: Richardson reported the LNNRD signed off on the building color and windows the Village of Butte has signed off on the building permit with variances. Morton plans have been sent to the architect.

NARD Association Report: Hansen reported the NARD board will meet March 9, 2026 in Lincoln. The Legislature is still in session currently watching a couple bills in the Legislature regarding, the Noxious Weed Board, NE Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Water, Environment and Energy.

West Knox Rural Water Report: Ebel's report was mailed to directors prior to the Board meeting. Ellwanger stated they met with Viking with a quote of the painting of West Tank. The West Knox Rural Water Advisory Board will meet the week of March 16th.

BGMA Coordinator Report: was included in the meeting packet.

Agency Reports:

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Nolan's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Angela Schaecher reported the NRCS is currently working on EQUIP applications, the RPP deadline is March 6, 2026, CRP applications are open until March 20, 2026.

Niobrara Council: Connell reported no meeting held

NE RC&D Report: Hansen reported they met last week, discussed dues, and by laws. Will be holding a Grant writing seminar in May in Plainview.

NC RC&D Report: Connell reported they have grant funds available for recycling programs. They will be doing a tire amnesty in Springview March 28th and 29th.

Friends of the Missouri: No Meeting Held.

Missouri Sedimentation Action Coalition: No Meeting held.

Additional Business:

West Knox Rural Water; Water Sustainability Fund Application: Ellwanger explained that we would like to apply for a Water Sustainability Fund Grant to cover the preliminary engineering process for a projected well project at West Knox Rural Water

A motion was made to approve the staff request to apply to the WSF for WKRW by Wendt seconded by Morrow.

Aye: Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of Computer Purchase: Ellwanger discussed the computer purchase for Richardson and Fischer. Requesting to purchase new GIS capable computers at the cost of \$5,126.22.

A motion was made to approve the purchase of two computers by Holtgrew seconded by Hansen. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of NUE and NTech Programs: Discussion was held on the participation of the LNNRD in the NUE and NTech program.

A motion was made to approve the participation in NUE and NTech programs by Randa seconded by Zegers.

Aye: Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Connell. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

Committee Reports and Recommendations:

Erosion and Sediment Control Plan Approval:

A motion was made to approve the erosion and sediment control plan ESCA 2501 as presented by Marcellus seconded by Zegers.

A motion was made to amend the erosion and sediment control plan ESCA 2501 by striking "or a portion" by Wendt seconded by Higgins. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers,

Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

Vote taken on the main motion as amended. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

Bylaws Update: Copies of the bylaw changes we were mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting, color copies were handed to directors prior to the board meeting. Discusses was had on by law changes

A motion was made to approve the Bylaw Updates as presented by Marcellus seconded by Holtgrew. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Connell. **Abstain:** Klawitter. **Absent:** Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

Personnel Committee: Report was included in meeting packet. Ellwanger reported that the personnel committee met on February 25, 2025. Discussed overtime data, NRD salary survey, and additional staff positions.

A motion was made to approve the recommendation to update the personnel policy as presented by Holtgrew seconded by Klawitter. **Aye:** Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Zegers, Kaczor, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Connell. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

Baumeister departed: 4:18pm

A motion was made to approve the recommendation to authorize staff positions of a full-time secretary, summer intern and to participate in the Boyd County work study program by Wendt seconded by Hansen. **Aye:** Randa, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Klawitter, Connell. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Baumeister, Hoffman, Engelhaupt. **MOTION CARRIED**

Variance Committee: Recommendation was made to approve variance 2602, Thies Farms North, LLC.

A motion was made to approve the recommendation to approve variance 2602 by Wendt seconded by Klawitter. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Baumeister, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

Treasurer Report: was presented for file

Approval of Expenditures:

A motion was made to approve March 2, 2026, expenditures by Marcellus seconded by Zegers. **Aye:** Randa, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Klawitter, Connell. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Baumeister, Hoffman, Engelhaupt.

MOTION CARRIED

Excused absent Directors: Pritchett, Hoffman, Engelhaupt

Chairman Shane Lechtenberg declared the meeting adjourned at 4:34 P.M.

I, the undersigned Secretary of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources District, hereby certify the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the proceedings had and done by the Board of Directors on March 2, 2026, that all subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to the meeting. The minutes of the Chairman and Board of Directors were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days and prior to the next convened meeting of said body. All news media requesting notification of the time and place of said meeting and the subjects to be discussed at said meeting were notified.

_____ Larry Baumeister, Secretary

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