

**8Minutes of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources  
Board of Directors Meeting  
April 6, 2026**

The meeting of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources District was called to order by Chairman Lechtenberg at 7:00 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	Brett Fuchtman	Linda Hoffman
Don Holtgrew	Chuck Zegers	Brian Kaczor	Karl Connell
Jack Engelhaupt	Brenda Wendt	Shane Lechtenberg	

**Directors Absent:** J.J. Pritchett, Kevin Randa, Randy Klawitter, Deb Hansen, Dwain Marcellus, Curt Morrow.

**Staff Present:** Wade Ellwanger Connie McCarthy Gary Richardson Britanie Brewster

**Guests Present:** Adam Nolan, Marcus Blunck, Scott Angel, Paul Allen,

**Approval of Agenda:**

Motion was made to approve April 6, 2026, agenda by Zegers and seconded by Engelhaupt, **Aye:** Higgins, Baumeister, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Marcellus, Morrow.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Public Comment:** None

**Approval of March 2, 2026, Minutes:**

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

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Staff and Agency Reports:**

**Manager's Report:** Ellwanger's report was mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting. Ellwanger stated Fischer was excused from the meeting. He reported a summary of the NARD Washington DC conference was included in the meeting packet. He stated we will be having a Personnel and Budget Committee meeting coming up in May. Discussion was held on DWEE IMP, Rules and Regulations, Data Centers in Nebraska and their water use.

**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 reported LNNRD currently has 24 tree plants. Planting will begin as early as this week. McCarthy stated the BGMA is working on a Field for this summer, the extension office has a planned field day for July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026, and the Nebraska State Envirothon will be held April 29, 2026.

**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, we still have producers reaching out to the office to complete the forms, it is a manual process of combing through producer forms to decipher who is missing. He has been working with In-Situ on the troll that went down, they will be replacing the cable we will be replacing the troll. Richard gave an update on Static, Brandon has gotten through the majority of static test should have the remaining completed this week. He stated he has processed four well abandonment cost-shares this month, chemigation have starts streaming in and are being working through.

**Building update:** Richardson reported they have started work on the building, the have unloaded 4 of the 8 truck if not more, have roof trusses and coring holes have been dug. He will be working 19 sub-contractors from the area on bidding for the internal work on the building.

**NARD Association Report:** Ellwanger reported that Hansen was appointed to the NARD executive board. She will be the I&E chairman until March of 2027. There will be a 2% increase in NARD dues, they were able to negotiate them down from 4%.

**West Knox Rural Water Report:** Ebel's report was mailed to directors prior to the Board meeting. Ellwanger stated the advisory board met in March and they discussed the painting of the tank, they will be moving forward with the bid from Maguirewater. They approved Mike Zerbe to do mowing again, and moved to scheduled quarterly meetings set for March, June, September and December.

**Acknowledge Receipt of West Knox Rural Water minutes:**

Motion was made to acknowledge receipt of WKRW Minutes and approve action items by Higgins seconded by Zegers. **Aye:** Higgins, Baumeister, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Marcellus, Morrow.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**BGMA Coordinator Report:** was included in the meeting packet. Marcus Blunck introduced himself to the board and stated he would be working out of Pierce NRCS office, he is currently working on revamping and creating a social media to promote and educate in what the Bazile Groundwater Management Area is.

**Agency Reports:**

**Natural Resources Conservation Service:** Nolan's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Nolan reported they are currently working on EQIP ranking, they have a 25% allocation to regenerative ag practices. He stated he requested an additional \$250,000 EQIP projects in the LNNRD district. Current CRP deadline of May 1, 2026 have been moved to the end of May. The Local Work group meeting with the NRD has been tentatively scheduled for June or July.

**Niobrara Council:** Connell reported meeting was held on March 19, 2026.

**NE RC&D Report:** No report .

**NC RC&D Report:** Connell reported there will be a tire amnesty in Springview with a collection goal of 400 tons. Collection dates are April 28-29, 2026. The Ranch expo will be holding battery recycling drive and trying to figure out an electronic recycling drive.

**Friends of the Missouri:** No Meeting Held.

**Missouri Sedimentation Action Coalition:** Ellwanger reported that gave an update on the bed load collector for sediment. They will be making some changes to the collection process, the CORP has been extremely helpful in the process. Currently they are looking for a market for the sediment collected.

## **Committee Reports and Recommendations:**

**Variance Committee:** Met on March 26, 2026 at the LNNRD Office. To discuss an application involving two quarters sharing one well. Discussed adding a second well for 103 acres. Recommendation was made to approve variance application 2601 with a well cap of 650 gallon per minute. Discussion was held on application 2601.

A motion was made to approve the recommendation to approve variance 2601 by Holtgrew seconded by Zegers. **Aye:** Higgins, Baumeister, Fuchtmann, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Marcellus, Morrow.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Operation Committee:** Met prior to the regularly scheduled board meeting. Discussion was held on the architectural electrical and lighting diagram for \$6,600, and approval for Operation Committee to accept sub-contractors' bids.

A motion was made to approve the recommendation for architectural electrical and lighting diagram for \$6,600 by Baumeister seconded by Higgins. **Aye:** Higgins, Baumeister, Fuchtmann, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Marcellus, Morrow.

**MOTION CARRIED**

A motion was made to approve the recommendation to allow the Operations Committee to approve sub-contractors for building interior by Wendt seconded by Holtgrew. **Aye:** Higgins, Baumeister, Fuchtmann, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Marcellus, Morrow.

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **Additional Business:**

**Tree Planting Agreement:** Ellwanger explained that director Shaun Higgins will be helping with the LNNRD Tree planting program this spring. An agreement has been negotiated and created between the LNNRD and Higgins. The agreement was drafted by Blankenau.

A motion was made to approve LNNRD tree planting agreement by Wendt seconded by Fuchtmann. **Aye:** Baumeister, Fuchtmann, Hoffman, Zegers, Kaczor, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Connell. **Abstain:** Higgins. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Marcellus, Morrow.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Nitrogen Technology Pilot Program Agreement:** Ellwanger reported we have voted to participate in the NTech program, we are now voting to approve all final Nitrogen Technology Pilot Program Agreements. Discussion was had on program and the LNNRD's participation.

A motion was made to approve the Nitrogen Technology Pilot Program Agreements by Holtgrew seconded by Wendt. **Aye:** Higgins, Baumeister, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Marcellus, Morrow.  
**MOTION CARRIED**

### **NSWCP Activities:**

McCarthy reported she one completion, five approvals, two extensions and one amendment. Discussion was had on the total fund approval amount, and remaining balance in the NSWCP fund.

A motion was made to approve contract 2465, 2466, 2471, 2473, and 2474 by Higgins seconded by Engelhaupt. **Aye:** Higgins, Baumeister, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Marcellus, Morrow.  
**MOTION CARRIED**

A motion was made to extend contract 2435, 2455 and amend contract 2452 by Holtgrew seconded by Zegers. **Aye:** Higgins, Baumeister, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Marcellus, Morrow.  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**Treasurer Report:** was presented for file

### **Approval of Expenditures:**

A motion was made to approve April 6, 2026, expenditures by Fuchtman seconded by Wendt. **Aye:** Baumeister, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Engelhaupt, Wendt. **Nay:** Higgins, Connell. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Marcellus, Morrow.  
**MOTION CARRIED**

**Excused absent Directors:** Pritchett, Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Marcellus, Morrow.

Chairman Shane Lechtenberg declared the meeting adjourned at 8:39 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 April 6, 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.

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Larry Baumeister, Secretary