Minutes of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources
Board of Directors Meeting
June 1, 2026

The meeting of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources District was called to order by Chairman Lechtenberg at 7:03 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	Kevin Randa	Larry Baumeister	Randy Klawitter
Deb Hansen	Brett Fuchtman	Linda Hoffman	Don Holtgrew
Karl Connell	Jack Engelhaupt	Brenda Wendt	Dwain Marcellus
Curt Morrow	Shane Lechtenberg		

Directors Absent: J.J Pritchett, Chuck Zegers, Brian Kaczor.

Staff Present: Wade Ellwanger, Connie McCarthy, Gary Richardson, Brandon Fischer, Britanie Brewster.
Guests Present: Jesse Poessnecker, Marcus Blunk.

Approval of Agenda:
Motion was made to approve June 1, 2026, agenda by Hansen and seconded by Klawitter, **Aye**: Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers, Kaczor.
MOTION CARRIED

Public Comment: Recognized Jesse Poessnecker.

Approval of May 4, 2026, Minutes:
Motion was made to approve May 4, 2026, minutes by Marcellus seconded by Wendt **Aye**: Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** Klawitter, Engelhaupt. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers, Kaczor.
MOTION CARRIED

Staff and Agency Reports:

Manager's Report: Ellwanger's report was mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting. Ellwanger stated we had 45 Nitrogen Use Efficiency applications totaling 4,100 acres. Ellwanger reported we held several interviews for opening positions in our office. We hired a water resource intern, a communication intern and 2 work study students. Ellwanger stated we held several committee meeting this month, Groundwater, Budget and Personnel all met.

Programs Assistant Report: McCarthy's report was handed out in the meeting packet. McCarthy reported she attended the Groundwater Festival in Grand Island, there she presented awesome aquifer to fifth grade students. McCarthy stated that the tree planting season has wrapped up they machine planted 11,725 trees, laid 46,844 feet of mulch, and hand planted 281 trees. She received one community forestry grant application from the Village of Spencer, an ACE camp scholarship application and two Reverse Osmosis system applications.

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Water Resources Report: Richardson's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Richardson reported that we sent out 128 Notice of Violation and intent to Cease and Desist Letters to outstanding producers, we had producers call, stop in the office we worked with the majority of the producers who were sent letter and forms are being completed.

Building update: Richardson reported all contractors have been contacted regarding their bid, currently working with legal on official contracts for those who were awarded bids.

NARD Association Report: Hansen reported they will be meeting Sunday and Monday during the basin tour in North Platte. Hansen reported the benefits committee met last week and voted to keep all insurance premiums at the current rate.

West Knox Rural Water Report: Ebel's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Ellwanger stated they have had serval new hook up request, since the install of the new meters they have seen an increase in water sold and leak detections.

7:45 Kaczor arrived

BGMA Coordinator Report: Marcus Blunck's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Blunck reported that he had been working out of the NRCS Pierce field office, has been working on several on-field practices. BGMA is hosting a field day on July 17th near Randolph. Flyer will be available.

UNL Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Extension Educator Position: Ellwanger stated that the MOU for the Extension Educator has come due, ask the board to consider funding for the position which works with the BGMA and WKRW well head protection area. Discussion was had on the position and its merits to the district.

Motion was made to support the UNL MOU for the Extension Educator Program by Marcellus seconded by Morrow. **Aye**: Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawiter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers. **MOTION CARRIED**

Agency Reports:

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Nolan's report was handed out in the meeting packet.

Niobrara Council: Connell reported no meeting was held, will meet again on June 18, 2026.

NE RC&D Report: Hansen reported they met last week, the NET weed money has been released, they had a great turn out for the grant write workshop that was held on May 5, 2026.

NC RC&D Report: Connell reported they met on May 12, 2026. The NC RC&D will hold a tire amnesty in O'Neill; they are working on the paper shredding truck that will be going down HWY 12 and 20 in September and October. They will be hosting a batter recycling at the Sandhills Ranch Expo in Bassett June 17-18. The next meeting is scheduled for July 8, 2026.

Friends of the Missouri: No Meeting Held.

Missouri Sedimentation Action Coalition: No Meeting Held

Additional Business:

Participation in One Red Grants Program: Ellwanger stated that the One Red Grant Program is used to promote cost share programs provided through the Nebraska Department of Water Energy and Environment (DWEE).

Motion was made to participate in the One Red Grants Program by Engelhaupt seconded by Holtgrew. **Aye**: Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawiter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers.
MOTION CARRIED

Official Change of Banking and Line of Credit from Butte State Bank to Tri County Bank (TCB) due to acquisition.

Motion was made to change our financial institute from Butte State Bank to Tri County Bank (TCB) due to acquisition by Connell seconded by Hansen. **Aye**: Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins . **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers.
MOTION CARRIED

Motion was made to change our financial institute from Butte State Bank to Tri County Bank (TCB) due to acquisition for line of credit for new building and offices of 1.4 million by Connell seconded by Klawitter. **Aye**: Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Fuchhtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Hansen, Marcellus. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers.
MOTION CARRIED

Jesse Poessnecker Field Day Information and Request: Jesse Poessnecker is holding an on farm field day on Saturday July 18th starting at 8:30 AM. They will have several on-site speakers and presentations followed by a locally grown meal.

Committee Reports and Recommendations:

Budget Committee: Ellwanger reported the Budget Committee met on Wednesday May 27, 2026 at the LNNRD office at 7:00 PM. The committee reviewed where we were year to date, discussed future grants, equipment, conferences, BGMA extension educator, and audit proposals. Audit engagement proposals were R.J. Meyer & Associates for $9,350.00 and Dana F. Cole & Associates for $17,500.00

A motion was made to accept the audit proposal of R.J. Meyer by Baumeister seconded by Holtgrew. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawiter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers.
MOTION CARRIED

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Personnel Committee: Ellwanger reported the Personnel Committee met on May 19, 2026 at the LNNRD office and at 6:30 PM June 1, 2026 prior to the regular scheduled LNNRD board meeting, the summary of the May 19, 2026 meeting was mailed out in packets, final recommendations from the June 1, 2026 meeting were handed out during the regular scheduled LNNRD board meeting. Discuss was held proposed personnel policy changes, staff wage adjustments and General Manager employment agreement amendment.

A motion was made to accept the Personnel Committee recommendation on proposed change to Personnel Policy No. 27 Vacation, by Marcellus seconded by Klawitter. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawiter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers.
MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to accept the Personnel Committee recommendation on proposed change to Personnel Policy No. 13 Employment of Family Members, by Klawitter seconded by Hansen. **Aye:** Randa, Baumeister, Klawiter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Connell. **Abstain:** Higgins. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers.
MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to accept the Personnel Committee recommendation on proposed staff wage adjustments as presented, by Marcellus seconded by Holtgrew. **Aye:** Randa, Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Connell. **Abstain:** Klawiter, Hoffman. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers.
MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to accept the Personnel Committee recommendation on proposed General Managers employment agreement amendment as presented by Futchman seconded by Holtgrew. **Aye:** Randa, Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Connell. **Abstain:** Klawiter, Engelhaupt. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers.
MOTION CARRIED

Groundwater Committee: Ellwanger reported the Personnel Committee met on May 19, 2026 at the LNNRD office and at 5:45 PM June 1, 2026 prior to the regular scheduled LNNRD board meeting, the summary of the May 19, 2026 meeting was mailed out in packets, final recommendations from the June 1, 2026 were discussed during the regular LNNRD board meeting.

A motion was made to accept the Groundwater Management Committee recommendation to delete number 7 and all of number 8 except item G on the acre ranking score sheet, points for 8G would offset points lost in number 6. by Holtgrew seconded by Marcellus. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawiter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers.
MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to accept the Groundwater Management Committee recommendation to allow an irrigated acre program in 2026, with number of acres to be determined prior to the regular scheduled October LNNRD board meeting. by Ranada seconded by Holtgrew. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawiter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers.

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NSWCP Activities:

McCarthy reported she had contracts for approval 2439, 2441, 2448, 2457, 2478.

A motion was made to approve contract 2439, 2441, 2448, 2457 and 2478 by Hansen seconded by Morrow. **Aye:** Randa, Baumeister, Klawiter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** Higgins, Engelhaupt, Marcellus. **Absent:** Pritchett, Zegers.
MOTION CARRIED

Treasurer Report: was presented for file

Approval of Expenditures:
A motion was made to approve June 1, 2026, expenditures by Marcellus seconded by Engelhaupt. **Aye:** Randa, Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Connell. **Abstain:** Higgins, Klawiter. **Absent:**
MOTION CARRIED

Excused absent Directors: Pritchett, Zegers.

Chairman Shane Lechtenberg declared the meeting adjourned at 9:18 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 June 1, 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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