Minutes of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources
Board of Directors Meeting
July 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	Kevin Randa	Randy Klawitter	Deb Hansen
Brett Fuchtman	Linda Hoffman	Don Holtgrew	Chuck Zegers
Brian Kaczor	Karl Connell	Brenda Wendt	Dwain Marcellus
Curt Morrow	Shane Lechtenberg		

Directors Absent: J.J Pritchett, Larry Baumeister, Jack Engelhaupt.

Staff Present: Wade Ellwanger, Connie McCarthy, Gary Richardson, Brandon Fischer, Britanie Brewster.
Guests Present: Steven Boshart, Brandon Peterson.

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

Public Comment: Recognized Steven Boshart.

Baumeister entered 7:08 pm

Approval of June 1, 2026, Minutes:

Motion was made to approve the June 1, 2026, minutes by Wendt seconded by Fuchtman.
Discussion was held.

Motion was made to amend the June 1, 2026 minutes to correctly reflect Connell's vote on the Change of Banking and Line of Credit Motions by Fuchtman seconded by Kaczor. **Aye**: Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Engelhaupt.
MOTION CARRIED

Vote was then held on the amended main motion to approve the June 1, 2026, minutes. **Aye**: Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Kaczor, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** Zegers, Connell. **Absent:** Pritchett, Engelhaupt.
MOTION CARRIED

Staff and Agency Reports:

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Manager's Report: Ellwanger's report was mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting. Ellwanger stated on July 1, 2026, it was the 54th anniversary of the NRD. Ellwanger reported that the LNNRD has been asked to present at the Nebraska Water Conference this fall. Ellwanger stated that the LNNRD was notified today that all funding for NSWCP and Water Sustainability Fund projects has been frozen and a hold placed on funds due to a lawsuit that was filed against the transfer of Environmental Trust Funds. Ellwanger stated there is an article in the meeting packets discussing Data Centers where Holt County was quoted as being one of the counties that are willing to allow data centers. Discussion was held on NRBA surface water stream flow appropriations and the Fully Appropriated Basin Analysis.

Programs Assistant Report: McCarthy's report was handed out in the meeting packet. McCarthy reported that we had one student attend ACE camp through an LNNRD Scholarship. McCarthy read the letter that was submitted by our ACE participant. McCarthy stated they have completed 219 Chemigations and 29 have failed. The BGMA is hosting a 3-day bus tour that will be on August 5-7th with pickup in Spencer for anyone interested.

Water Resources Report: Richardson's report was handed out in the meeting packet.

Building update: Richardson reported that he has been working on sub-contractors' contracts, they will be starting with plumbing next week followed by electrical and cement on July 27, 2026.

Water Technician Report: Fischer reported they have been working on chemigation, averaging 15 to 22 inspections a day. Currently we are seeing a 24% fail rate due to equipment failures.

NARD Association Report: Hansen reported the NARD met during the Basin Tour out of North Platte. The tour was held on June 6-8th and enjoyed by those that attended. Hansen reported that the NARD has requested a 457 ROTH resolution amendment.

Motion was made to approve the 457 Amendment Resolution by Kaczor seconded by Hansen. **Aye**: Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Engelhaupt.
MOTION CARRIED

West Knox Rural Water Report: Ebel's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Ellwanger stated the West Knox Advisory Board met on June 16, 2026. He reported this was the largest water sale month on record. They held Bi-annual elections, wage reviews were completed and a new micro-computer was purchased.

Motion was made to acknowledge receipt and approve the action items of the West Knox Rural Water Advisory Board meeting minutes by Randa seconded by Wendt. **Aye**: Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Engelhaupt.

BGMA Coordinator Report: Marcus Blunck's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Ellwanger stated a BGMA Field Day would be held July 17th in Randolph.

Agency Reports:

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Nolan's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Brandon Peterson reported he would be overseeing the Spencer office for the time being. Peterson reported the O'Neill

office has completed 9 contracts for $534,000 and the Spencer office completed 21 contracts for $1,077,826 within the Lower Niobrara NRD. Peterson stated the Local NRCS and NRD workgroup will meet in Butte on July 8, 2027, at 10:00 a.m. as advertised.

Niobrara Council: Connell reported the Niobrara Council met June 18, 2026. Discussion was held on expenditures, NGPC gave an update on fish sampling and bathroom facilities, updated were given by the LNNRD and MNNRD. The next meeting will be on August 20, 2026.

NE RC&D Report: Hansen reported they met last week, they are looking at holding an AI workshop. They will being doing tours this fall through Knox Co.

NC RC&D Report: Connell reported no Metting Held. The next meeting will be held on July 8, 2026.

Friends of the Missouri: No Meeting Held.
Missouri Sedimentation Action Coalition: No Meeting Held

Additional Business:

Committee Reports and Recommendations:

Groundwater Committee: Ellwanger reported the groundwater committee met at 5:00 p.m. prior to the regular scheduled board meeting. Discussion was held over direction and content of rules changes, data centers and chemigation. Ellwanger reported that we should have an additional stakeholders meeting, followed by presentation to the full board during the September meeting.

Operation Committee: Ellwanger reported the Operations Committee met at 6:00 p.m. prior to the board meeting. Discussion was held on the Tree Program, NET Grant applications, chemigation program, pickup purchase and Field Day contributions. Recommendations were made to apply for an NET grant for tree planting equipment and grass drill equipment. Recommendation was made to purchase a used three quarter ton, gas pickup to be used for chemigation inspections and tree program, with less than 70,000 miles and under $50,000.00.

A motion was made to accept the recommendation to apply for an NET Grant for tree planting equipment by Marcellus seconded by Zegers. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Engelhaupt.
MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to accept the recommendation to apply for an NET Grant for grass drill equipment by Hansen seconded by Klawitter. **Aye:** Randa, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Baumeister, Connell. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Engelhaupt.
MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to accept the recommendation to purchase a used three quarter ton, gas pickup, with less then 70,000 miles, under $50,000.00 by Marcellus seconded by Holtgrew. **Aye:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister,

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Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Engelhaupt.
MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to sponsor a tent for Regenesis Acres Field Day up to $1500.00 by Wendt seconded by Hansen. **Aye:** Hansen, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Connell, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hoffman, Zegers, Kaczor, Marcellus. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Engelhaupt.
MOTION FAILED

NSWCP Activities:

McCarthy reported due to current freeze on all 2026 and 2027 NSWCP funds no contracts would be considered.

Treasurer Report: was presented for file

Approval of Expenditures:
A motion was made to approve July 6, 2026, expenditures by Holtgrew seconded by Marcellus. **Aye:** Randa, Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Connell. **Abstain:** Klawiter. **Absent:** Pritchett, Engelhaupt.
MOTION CARRIED

Excused absent Directors: Pritchett, Engelhaupt.

Chairman Shane Lechtenberg declared the meeting adjourned at 8:54 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 July 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.

_____Larry Baumeister, Secretary

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