Minutes of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources
Board of Directors Meeting
August 3, 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	J.J. Pritchett	Larry Baumeister	Randy Klawitter
Deb Hansen	Brett Fuchtman	Linda Hoffman	Don Holtgrew
Chuck Zegers	Brian Kaczor	Karl Connell	Jack Engelhaupt
Brenda Wendt	Dwain Marcellus	Curt Morrow	Shane Lechtenberg

Directors Absent: Kevin Randa.

Staff Present: Wade Ellwanger, Connie McCarthy, Gary Richardson, Brandon Fischer, Britanie Brewster, Gracie Kaup, Adrien Baer.
Guests Present: Brandon Peterson.

Approval of Agenda:
Motion was made to approve August 3, 2026, agenda by Hansen and seconded by Pritchett, **Aye**: Higgins, Pritchett, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Randa.
MOTION CARRIED

Public Comment: None.

Approval of July 6, 2026, Minutes:

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

Staff and Agency Reports:

Manager's Report: Ellwanger's report was mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting. Ellwanger stated he had received questions about data centers, he reached out to our legal counsel for guidance, our current rules and regulations require large water users who use 250 million gallons or more to submit a hydrological report. He reported the Governor has removed tax incentives for data centers and created a Data Center Task force. Ellwanger stated the new committee placements were included in the meeting packets. He shared that they are moving forward with ONE RED more information will be released at Husker Harvest Days. Ellwanger reported there have been no changes with frozen NWCP funds.

Programs Assistant Report: McCarthy's report was handed out in the meeting packet. McCarthy reported the BGMA Bus Tour scheduled for August 5-7th was canceled. She has been scheduling chemigations. McCarthy

DRAFT

stated FSA has approved ECP an emergency drought program designed to help with ponds, solar panels, and other practices.

Water Resources Report: Richardson's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Richardson reported that he will presenting a static water level report in September allowing for a more complete picture by including August. Richardson introduced Adrien Baer, the water inter who worked at the LNNRD this summer, entering data and collecting water samples.

Building update: Richardson reported the building schedule has been completed, the concrete was set to start on July 27th they are now looking at an August 4th start date.

Water Technician Report: Fischer reported chemigation has been going smoothly they have completed 462 inspections, leaving 182 to be completed. They have 36 rechecks and 12 that have started to pump air.

Marketing Intern Report: Gracie Kaup presented a power point demonstrating what she did this summer, she discussed the social media and website audit she completed and was mailed in the director's packets, she talked about the marketing plan. She showcased the changes that have been proposed for the website, videos and marketing that she created along with the results that were generated.

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

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

NARD Association Report: Hansen reported Longitude 103 is working through requested updates. The annual NARD conference is scheduled for September 27-29 in Kearney.

West Knox Rural Water Report: Ebel's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Ellwanger stated the West Knox is getting ready for the tank painting project slated for mid-August. Ellwanger reported that with the new meters they have a more accurate reading paired with the heat and drought conditions they are seeing an increase in water sales resulting in the largest month of water sales WKRW has seen.

BGMA Coordinator Report: Marcus Blunck's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Ellwanger stated SDSU reached requesting partnership on a multi-state nitrogen program.

Agency Reports:

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Peterson's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Peterson reported they were working on contracts through the Spencer office. The staff is currently certifying contracts and practices.

DRAFT

Niobrara Council: Connell reported no meeting was held. The next meeting will be on August 20th.

NE RC&D Report: Hansen reported they met last week; they are currently paying out the NET weed contracts. They are looking at hosting and electronic recycling and alkaline battery recycling at multiple locations. Hansen stated that Madison County has added 2 bus tours for this fall.

NC RC&D Report: Connell reported they met on July 8, 2026. Connell stated the Springview tire amnesty collected 353 tons, and the O'Neill tire amnesty collected 508 tons. They did a battery collection at the Sandhills Ranch Expo. They donated one bench from the tire amnesty and will be raffling off the second bench. They are planning a Paper Shredding truck for Hwy 12 and Hwy 20. Hwy 20's shredding truck will be September 24, 2026, The Hwy 12 shredding truck will be in October. They are looking at new grants for tire amnesty; they contacted Boyd County. They will meet on August 19, 2026.

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

Additional Business:

Committee Reports and Recommendations:

Budget Committee: Ellwanger stated that the Budget Committee met on July 15th, and 29th at the LNNRD office. He reviewed this year's tax asking and budget, presenting a power point showing a breakdown on the 2026-2027 budget asking and state forms. Recommendations were made to approve 1% Board Approved Restricted Fund Increase and FY 26-27 Draft Budget.

Marcellus departed at 8:24pm
Klawitter departed at 8:35pm

A motion was made to accept the recommendation to approve 1% Board Approved Restricted Fund by Baumeister seconded by Engelhaupt. **Aye:** Higgins, Pritchett, Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Randa, Klawitter, Marcellus.
MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to accept the recommendation to approve FY2026-2027 Draft Budget by Hansen seconded by Hotlgrew. **Aye:** Pritchett, Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Connell. **Abstain:** Higgins. **Absent:** Randa, Klawitter, Marcellus.
MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to accept the recommendation to schedule the Budget Hearing for September 8, 2026 from 6:00 pm to 6:30 pm at the Butte Community Center by Higgins seconded by Kaczor. **Aye:** Higgins, Pritchett, Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Randa, Klawitter, Marcellus.
MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to accept the recommendation to schedule the Levy Hearing for September 8, 2026 from 6:30 pm to 6:55 pm at the Butte Community Center by Baumeister seconded by Morrow. **Aye:** Higgins,

DRAFT

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

Operation Committee: Ellwanger reported the Operations Committee met at 6:00 p.m. prior to the board meeting. Discussion was held on the building door trim package and concrete curb work. Richardson reported that they are looking at a concrete change of $25,000 to create trench drain and curb sidewalks, and a $1,800 door trim package.

A motion was made to accept the recommendation to approve $26,800 change order for concrete and door trim package by Higgins seconded by Zegers. **Aye:** Higgins, Pritchett, Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Randa, Klawitter, Marcellus.
MOTION CARRIED

NSWCP Activities:

No activity due to current litigations.

Treasurer Report: was presented for file

Approval of Expenditures:
A motion was made to approve August 3, 2026, expenditures by Wendt seconded by Marcellus. **Aye:** Pritchett, Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Connell. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Ranada, Klawitter, Marcellus.
MOTION CARRIED

Excused absent Directors: Randa

Chairman Shane Lechtenberg declared the meeting adjourned at 8:59 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 August 3, 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

DRAFT