Minutes of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources
Board of Directors Meeting
September 8, 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	Kevin Randa	Larry Baumeister
Randy Klawitter	Brett Fuchtman	Don Holtgrew	Chuck Zegers
Brian Kaczor	Karl Connell	Jack Engelhaupt	Brenda Wendt
Dwain Marcellus	Curt Morrow	Shane Lechtenberg	

Directors Absent: Deb Hansen, Linda Hoffman.

Staff Present: Wade Ellwanger, Gary Richardson, Britanie Brewster.
Guests Present: Tom Schaaf

Approval of Agenda:
Motion was made to approve September 8, 2026, agenda by Zegers and seconded by Pritchett. **Aye**: Higgins, Pritchett, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Hansen, Hoffman.
MOTION CARRIED

Public Comment: Tom Schaaf: where is the board on AI data centers? Ellwanger stated our current rules state:
12.15. Hydrogeologic evaluation required. Any person who intends to modify any existing groundwater well or construct any new, helper or replacement groundwater well with an annual withdrawal of groundwater greater than 500 acre-feet, such person shall, in addition to the information and requirements for the well permit application in Rule 17.2, 17.3 and 17.4, provide the District with a hydrogeologic evaluation illustrating the impact, if any, from the intended withdrawal on the static water level of the aquifer and on local groundwater users.

Approval of July 6, 2026, Minutes:
Motion was made to approve August 3, 2026, minutes by Engelhaupt seconded by Baumeister. **Aye**: Higgins, Pritchett, Baumeister, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** Randa, Klawitter. **Absent:** Hansen, Hoffman.
MOTION CARRIED

Staff and Agency Reports:

Manager's Report: Ellwanger's report was mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting. Ellwanger stated Chairman Shane Lechtenberg was selected as the recipient of the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts 2026 Nebraska Outstanding Water Conservation award. Ellwanger reported we had 5 applications for our expanded irrigated acres program, 3 new and 2 added acre application totaling 553 acres. He stated they will have a Groundwater Committee Meeting Monday September 21, 2026, at 7:00pm. Ellwanger stated he attended the Manager meeting last week where they met with DWEE Director Jesse Bradley regarding data

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centers and the task force. Senator Hughes has released a document on data centers, water and electrical use which was included in meeting packets. OneRED will be announced at Husker Harvest Days, Britanie is part of the Marketing Committee working on promotion of OneRED. Ellwanger stated there will be 3 resolutions presented at the NARD conference September 27-29, chemigation management and administration being moving to NRD control, granting all NRDs bonding authority, how and how often expenditures are reported. Ellwanger reported Connie has started sampling wells throughout the Ponca Basin with initial nitrate test coming back ranging from under 1ppm to over 35ppm.
Ellwanger reported he had been asked to consider being a board member for the Groundwater Management District Association. There are 16 members in the State of Nebraska which has 3 board members. The GMDA meets twice a year out of state.

GMDA Board Consideration:
Motion was made to approve the GMDA Board Consideration, duties and travel if elected by Marcellus seconded by Holtgrew. **Aye**: Higgins, Pritchett, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Connell. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Hansen, Hoffman.
MOTION CARRIED

Programs Assistant Report: McCarthy's report was mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting. Ellwanger reported 8th Grade Conservation Day will be September 22, 2026, at the Butte Golf Course starting at 9:00am. NSWCP letters were sent out with LNNRD and state information.

Water Resources Report: Richardson's report was mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting. Richardson reported that we still have roughly 60 Phase II reports outstanding. Chemigation letters were sent out to anyone who failed a chemigation inspection and has not reported compliance.
Richardson presented current static water levels, demonstrating where we are this year, discussion was held on water usage and data centers.

Building update: Richardson reported the building concrete is behind schedule they have been fighting mud with our current rain. Framing is one to two days out from being done. He has met with Applied who will be installing all technology.

NARD Association Report: Ellwanger stated the annual NARD conference is scheduled for September 27-29 in Kearney. Hansen recommended Engelhaupt as the LNNRD Annual Conference Delegate and Deb Hansen as the alternate.

Annual Conference Delegate:
Motion was made to approve recommendation for NARD Annual Conference Delegates by Holtgrew seconded by Pritchett. **Aye**: Higgins, Pritchett, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** Engelhaupt. **Absent:** Hansen, Hoffman.
MOTION CARRIED

West Knox Rural Water Report: Ebel's report was mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting. Ellwanger reported Clint Mervicker has resigned to take a full time position elsewhere. Tower painting has been moved to the end of next week.

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BGMA Coordinator Report: Marcus Blunck's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Ellwanger stated he is working on the PIP at this time

Agency Reports:

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

Niobrara Council: Connell reported no meeting was held.

NE RC&D Report: Ellwanger reported there will be a Battery collection in Knox County. They are working on a grant for household waste recycling.

NC RC&D Report: Connell reported 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 donating benches from the tire amnesty to Valentine and Spencer for Veteran Memorial sites. 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:

FY 2026-2027 Budget:
A motion was made to adopt the FY 2026-2027 Budget by Wendt seconded by Holtgrew. **Aye:** Pritchett, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Connell. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Hansen, Hoffman.
MOTION CARRIED

A motion was made to approve FY 2026-2027 Property Tax Request Resolution by Engelhaupt seconded by Pritchett. **Aye:** Pritchett, Randa, Baumeister, Klawitter, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Connell. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Hansen, Hoffman.
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 September 8, 2026, expenditures by Holtgrew seconded by Zegers. **Aye:** Pritchett, Randa, Baumeister, Fuchtman, Holtgrew, Zegers, Kaczor, Engelhaupt, Wendt, Marcellus, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Klawitter, Connell. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Hansen, Hoffman.

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MOTION CARRIED

Excused absent Directors: Hansen, Hoffman

Chairman Shane Lechtenberg declared the meeting adjourned at 8:56 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 September 8, 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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Minutes of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources
Budget Hearing
September 8, 2026

The meeting of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources District was called to order by Chairman Lechtenberg at 6:00 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	Brett Fuchtman	Don Holtgrew
Chuck Zegers	Brian Kaczor	Karl Connell	Brenda Wendt
Dwain Marcellus	Curt Morrow	Shane Lechtenberg	

Staff Present: Wade Ellwanger, Britanie Brewster.
Guests Present: Tom Schaaf

Ellwanger stated the following public notice is hereby given, in compliance with the provisions of State Statute Sections 13-501 to 13-513, that the governing body will meet on the 8 day of September 2026, at 6:00 o'clock PM, at Butte Community Center for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions or observations of taxpayers relating to the following proposed budget. The budget detail is available at the office of the Clerk during regular business hours.

Public Comment:
Tom Schaaf asked questions regarding spending and the increase of the budget that was published in the paper. Discussion was held.

Meeting adjourned at 6:25 PM

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Staff Present: Wade Ellwanger, Britanie Brewster.
Guests Present: Tom Schaaf

Ellwanger state the following public notice is hereby given, in compliance with the provisions of State Statute Section 77-1632, that the governing body will meet on the 8 day of September 2026, at 6:30 o'clock PM, at Butte Community Center for the purpose of hearing support, opposition, criticism, suggestions or observations of taxpayers relating to setting the final tax request.

Public Comment:
Tom Schaaf asked questions regarding the levy set by the LNNRD. Discussion was held.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM

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