Minutes of the Lower Niobrara Natural Resources
Board of Directors Meeting
October 5, 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	Randy Klawitter	Deb Hansen
Brett Fuchtman	Linda Hoffman	Brian Kaczor	Karl Connell
Brenda Wendt	Curt Morrow	Shane Lechtenberg	

Directors Absent: J.J. Pritchett, Kevin Randa, Don Holtgrew, Chuck Zegers, Jack Engelhaupt, Dwain Marcellus.

Staff Present: Wade Ellwanger, Gary Richardson, Connie McCarthy, Brandon Fischer, Britanie Brewster.
Guests Present: Angela Schaecher.

Approval of Agenda:
Motion was made to approve October 5, 2026, agenda by Hansen and seconded by Morrow. **Aye**: Higgins, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Holtgrew, Zegers, Engelhaupt, Marcellus.
MOTION CARRIED

Public Comment: None

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

Staff and Agency Reports:

Manager's Report: Ellwanger's report was mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting. He reported that Election Day is November 3, 2026, with new terms beginning in January 2027; the NET grant application was submitted on September 8, 2026; and the LNNRD budget was submitted to the state. He also stated the secretary add was reran, meeting packets have handout with OneRed information. Ellwanger reported the NARD conference was held the 27th-29th of September, a lot of really good information was presented. Ellwanger stated the LNNRD is looking at doing a director retreat in February.

Brewster reported that we have been seeing a lot of really good feedback with promotional videos that have been shared on facebook with the two 8th Grade conservation day videos reaching over 9000 views. The LNNRD will be sending out a newletter this quarter and working to have it sent out quarterly to those throughout the district.

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Programs Assistant Report:
McCarthy's report was mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting. McCarthy reported that she presented at Husker Harvest Days, where she did an interview with Pure Nebraska. She also presented at the Wonderful World of Water and Mud Fest this month. She will be attending Forestry Field Day in Valentine, Halsey Client Day, and the I&E meeting at the end of the month.
McCarthy reported that 8th Grade Conservation Day was a success, with 6 schools and 95 students present. They listened to and learned from presenters from several areas of conservation, including Senator Barry DeKay.

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.

Building update: Richardson reported that completed building work includes concrete, framing, data lines, and NPPD. Prouty will be doing the final grade on the building site. HVAC work is finishing up, and electrical lines will be run through the attic. Three exterior trench drains will need to be installed over the downspouts. Richardson reported that he found a used tree cooler.

NARD Association Report: Hansen reported the NARD conference was held September 27-29th in Kearney, lots of information. Hansen reported three resolutions came out of conference. Dean Edison NARD Executive director announced his resignation as of December 31, 2026.

West Knox Rural Water Report: Ebel's report was mailed to the directors prior to the board meeting. Ellwanger reported WKRW Advisory Board met on September 15, 2026. Minutes were included in meeting packets

Acknowledge Receipt of Minutes and Approve Action Items of West Knox Rural Water:
Motion was made to acknowledge receipt of minutes and approve actions items of WKRW Advisory Board by Higgins seconded by Klawitter. **Aye**: Higgins, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Holtgrew, Zegers, Engelhaupt, Marcellus.
MOTION CARRIED

BGMA Coordinator Report: Marcus Blunck's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Ellwanger stated the NACC conference will be December 15, 2026.

Agency Reports:

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Peterson's report was handed out in the meeting packet. Schaecher reported they hired a DC for the Spencer office he will be starting on November 1, 2026. Currently the NRCS office is working on EQIP modifications, and CSP review process. They will be implementing new work flow, they will be attending a state wide training in Norfolk. The NRCS does have a new phone number the Spencer office can be reached at 531-220-8825.

Niobrara Council: Connell reported no meeting was held. Next meeting will be October 15, 2026.

NE RC&D Report: Hansen reported they met on September 22, 2026, they are processing weed grant distributions, the NERCD will be doing a battery collections, placing collection boxes at 14 locations to collect normal batteries. They will be holding an AI workshop November 9, 2026 in Norfolk.

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NC RC&D Report: Connell reported they met on September 9, 2026 their next meeting will be October 14, 2026. The paper shredding truck was on Hwy 20 on September 24, 2026 and Hwy 12 on September 12, 2026. They are currently holding a battery collection with location in Atkinson a flyer was handed out in the meeting packets. They had two benches that were created from tire amnesty collection, those benches will be donated as Veteran Memorials in Spencer and Valentine.

Friends of the Missouri: No Meeting Held.

Missouri Sedimentation Action Coalition: No Meeting Held

Additional Business:

Committee Reports and Recommendations:

Operations Committee: The Operations committee met on October 5, 2026, prior to the regular scheduled board meeting. Discussion was held on used cooler to be purchased from Barr Refrigeration and drain covers, metal work and gravel through Bernts Welding. Operation Committee Recommendations to purchase used cooler from Barr Refrigeration and use Bernt Welding to complete metal work, drain covers and gravel were forwarded to the board.

Operations Committee Recommendations:
Motion was made to approve the Barr Refrigeration used cooler quote for $23,691.08 and authorize downpayment by Hansen seconded by Hoffman. **Aye**: Higgins, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Holtgrew, Zegers, Engelhaupt, Marcellus.
MOTION CARRIED

Motion was made to approve the Bernt Welding quote for $5,709.40 to complete metal work, drain covers and gravel as presented by Klawitter seconded by Higgins. **Aye**: Higgins, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Holtgrew, Zegers, Engelhaupt, Marcellus.
MOTION CARRIED

Groundwater Committee: The Groundwater committee met on September 21, 2026 at the LNNRD office to discuss new, and additional irrigated applications, and variance applications. Recommendation to approve irrigated application 26-05 for 160 acres and variance application 26-06 for 40 acres were forwarded to the board.

Motion was made to approve expanded irrigated acres application number 26-05 by Morrow seconded by Fuchtman. **Aye**: Higgins, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Morrow. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** Lechtenberg. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Holtgrew, Zegers, Engelhaupt, Marcellus.
MOTION CARRIED

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Motion was made to approve variance application number 26-06 by Higgins seconded by Fuchtman. **Aye**: Higgins, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Holtgrew, Zegers, Engelhaupt, Marcellus.
MOTION CARRIED

Potential of Hull Lake WMA:
Discussion was held on giving the LNNRD General Manager permission to negotiate solutions with Nebraska Game and Parks over the maintenance and potential of Hull Lake WMA, reviewed images and looked and creating a outdoor recreational area within the LNNRD.

Motion was made to give LNNRD General Manager permission to negotiate Hull Lake WMA options with Nebraska Game and Parks by Klawitter seconded by Fuchtman. **Aye**: Higgins, Baumeister, Klawitter, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Kaczor, Connell, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Holtgrew, Zegers, Engelhaupt, 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 October 5, 2026, expenditures by Morrow seconded by Wendt. **Aye:** Baumeister, Hansen, Fuchtman, Hoffman, Kaczor, Wendt, Morrow, Lechtenberg. **Nay:** Higgins, Klawitter, Connell. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Pritchett, Randa, Holtgrew, Zegers, Engelhaupt, Marcellus.
MOTION CARRIED

Excused absent Directors: Hansen, Hoffman

Chairman Shane Lechtenberg declared the meeting adjourned at 8:43 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 October 5, 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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