

LOWER BIG BLUE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING  
November 10, 2022, 1:30 P.M.

Notice of the meeting was published in accordance with Section 84-1411, Nebraska Statutes, in the Beatrice Daily Sun and the Wilber Republican. Notice was also sent to Radio Station KWBE, Crete News, and Fairbury Journal-News. In accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act, the Open Meetings Act is posted on the north wall of the meeting room for public viewing.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Jason Pohlmann at 1:30 p.m.

Directors Present: Larry Barta, Ryan Birkett, Steve Kelley, Bob Lorenz, Duane Parde, Jason Pohlmann, Darrell Rains, Dean Roehr, Jason Sand, Rodney Skleba, Doug Stokebrand.

Staff Present: Scott Sobotka, Manager; Ryan Thomas, Resource Specialist; Adam Kimmerling, Administrative Assistant; Scott Theis, Operations Supervisor; Jerry Bucy, Special Projects Coordinator.

Directors Absent: Heidi McClintock, Brent Katz

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 10, 2022, CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION #1 was made by Steve Kelley, seconded by Larry Barta, to adopt the Consent Agenda for the November 10, 2022, board meeting, which includes: adoption of the agenda as submitted, approval of the October 13, 2022, meeting minutes, financial status report dated October 31, 2022, October 2022 revenues, and expenditures; Beatrice West and Wymore Rural Water financials.

**YEA:** Barta, Birkett, Kelley, Lorenz, Parde, Pohlmann, Rains, Roehr, Skleba, Stokebrand. **NAY:** None **ABSTAIN:** None **NOT PRESENT** Katz, McClintock, Sand.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

WATER COMMITTEE REPORT

Ryan Birkett reviewed the minutes of the November 3, 2022, water committee meeting. The minutes are attached as official record to these minutes.

Scott reviewed the process for producers who wish to irrigate out of NRD structures. Owners must enter into an agreement with the Lower Big Blue NRD since the NRD holds the surface water permit with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources.

WELL PERMITS, IRRIGATION AGREEMENTS

Ryan presented two new well permits. Niederklein Farms, Inc. SW ¼ of Section 12-4-1 scored 255 points. William Schwisow SWSE of Section 27-5-2 scored a 230 originally and a 203 based on review of the log by UNL's Conservation Survey Division. Ryan noted that this was the first well to have samples reviewed by CSD. Discussion on which score to use was held. The NRD currently uses UNL's transmissivity calculator as part of the scoring system. It was discussed that CSD would

provide a unbiased third party opinion. It was also mentioned that there is no point in having CSD score the log if the board doesn't use their score.

MOTION #2 was made by Larry Barta, seconded by Rodney Skleba, to approve the well permits for Niederklein Farms and Schwisow Farms. Motion Carried.

**YEA:** Barta, Birkett, Kelley, Lorenz, Parde, Pohlmann, Rains, Roehr, Skleba, Stokebrand. **NAY:** None **ABSTAIN:** None **NOT PRESENT** Katz, McClintock, Sand.

Scott presented an irrigation agreement for James Katz. The 10-year agreement is one of three that expire this year. No changes were proposed to the irrigation agreement. Scott asked for a motion to enter into a new irrigation agreement to irrigate 131.31 acres with 131.31 acre-feet of water impounded by Cub Creek structure 13-C for ten (10) years.

Jason Sand arrived at 2:10 p.m.

MOTION #3 was made by Rodney Skleba, seconded by Duane Parde, to approve the irrigation agreement for James Katz to irrigate 131.31 acres with 131.31 acre-feet of water impounded by Cub Creek structure 13-C for ten (10) years. Motion Carried.

**YEA:** Barta, Birkett, Kelley, Lorenz, Parde, Pohlmann, Rains, Roehr, Skleba, Stokebrand. **NAY:** None **ABSTAIN:** Sand **NOT PRESENT:** Katz, McClintock.

Ryan presented a well registration for Milton Ag Consulting. The well is cased but has not been used in many years. Discussion was held on what should be considered an active irrigation well. Staff asked for guidance on how to handle unregistered wells in the future.

MOTION #4 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Duane Parde, to approve registration of the existing unregistered well for Milton Ag Consulting. Motion Carried.

**YEA:** Barta, Birkett, Lorenz, Parde, Pohlmann, Rains, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Stokebrand. **NAY:** Kelley **ABSTAIN:** None **NOT PRESENT:** Katz, McClintock.

#### LITTLE INDIAN WFPO PROJECT UPDATE

Scott presented an update of the Little Indian WFPO project. The current 25 sites being evaluated provide a cost benefit ratio of 1.2:1. Scott stated that the project has received Water Sustainability Funding in the amount of \$1,788,300.

#### TRUCK BIDS

Scott reviewed truck bids. Requests for bids were sent to 4 dealers in the District for the purchase of two ¾ ton trucks, trading one 2017 regular cab truck with 30,388 miles. Bids were received from two dealers. Zoellner Ford bid the outright purchase only in the amount of \$61,590.00. Premier Chevrolet submitted a bid for both trucks at \$58,000 outright and \$22,000 with a trade allowance of \$36,000.

MOTION #5 was made by Dean Roehr, seconded by Darrell Rains, to approve low bids from Premier Chevrolet for \$58,000 outright and \$22,000 with trade. Motion Carried.

**YEA:** Barta, Birkett, Kelley Lorenz, Parde, Pohlmann, Rains, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Stokebrand.  
**NAY:** None **ABSTAIN:** None **NOT PRESENT:** Katz, McClintock.

#### TURKEY CREEK NWQI PROJECT UPDATE

Jerry gave the board an update on the Turkey Creek NWQI project. The project aims to address E. Coli, Atrazine and Nitrate concerns over 75,000 acres. An advisory council meeting has been scheduled for November 30<sup>th</sup>. Jerry stated that funding through Nebraska Environmental Trust will expire June 30<sup>th</sup>. Staff plans to ask for an extension of the funding due to delays caused by the pandemic early in the project.

#### BUILDING COMMITTEE

Dean summarized the building committee meeting held October 25, 2022. The minutes are attached as official record to these minutes.

Scott discussed the warranty options on the new roof. The product comes with a 15-year warranty on labor and materials. For an additional \$1,565, the warranty can be extended to 20 years.

MOTION #6 was made by Dean Roehr, seconded by Darrell Rains, to purchase the additional warranty for \$1,565. Motion Carried.

**YEA:** Barta, Lorenz, Parde, Rains, Roehr, Skleba, Stokebrand. **NAY:** Birkett, Kelley, Pohlmann, Sand **ABSTAIN:** None **NOT PRESENT:** Katz, McClintock.

#### NRD ACTIVITIES

Ryan spoke about a recent Burchard Fire meeting he attended. Plum 4-F was discussed including the letter sent to the NRD earlier this year.

Scott reported election results. Chad Weichel has been elected in subdistrict two. Incumbents were reelected to all other open seats.

Scott spoke about playground equipment. The set at Big Indian was destroyed during this springs storm and needs to be replaced. Scott has reached out to several companies and received a price of \$14,191 for a commercial metal and rigid plastic set. The set retails for \$29,382 and is currently half price. Scott asked for a motion to purchase the set for \$14,191.

MOTION #7 was made by Jason Sand, seconded by Larry Barta, to approve purchase of a playground set for \$14,191. Motion Carried.

**YEA:** Barta, Birkett, Kelley Lorenz, Parde, Pohlmann, Rains, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Stokebrand.  
**NAY:** None **ABSTAIN:** None **NOT PRESENT:** Katz, McClintock.

Scott reviewed a diesel emissions grant which would provide funding to convert diesel irrigation to electric.

Scott talked about work at Wolf Wildcat 12A to remove invasive Autumn Olive.

Pictures of the Spooktacular camping event at Willard Meyer were shown.

Adam spoke about the tree planting at the Wilber Arboretum. A hybrid Osage Orange was planted in recognition of 50 years of NRD's and 150 years of Arbor Day. The Wilber Arboretum was also dedicated as an affiliate site of the Nebraska statewide arboretum.

NRD PERSONELL AND STAFF UPDATE

Scott stated that management continues to work on personnel policy updates. Scott also mentioned that he is advertising for additional administrative support staff.

AGENCY REPORTS

NRCS

A report was distributed to the directors.

FIVE RIVERS R C & D

Bob reported that they had a meeting today and continue to work on grant funding for household waste and electronics recycling.

EXTENSION OFFICE

A report was distributed to the directors.

NRC

Steve expressed interest in serving as the District representative on the Natural Resources Commission. The Lower Big Blue and Upper Big Blue alternate members. The two boards will meet in January and caucus to elect a representative.

NARD

Steve reported on the current fiscal position of the insurance pool.

CONSIDERATION OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

Scott reported that Brent Katz has asked to be excused from the November meeting. He had not heard from Heidi as of the start of the meeting.

MOTION #8 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Duane Parde, to excuse Brent Katz and Heidi McClintock from the November 10, 2022, board meeting. Motion Carried.

**YEA:** Barta, Birkett, Kelley Lorenz, Parde, Pohlmann, Rains, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Stokebrand.

**NAY:** None **ABSTAIN:** None **NOT PRESENT:** Katz, McClintock.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

- November 11<sup>th</sup> - Veterans Day
- November 24<sup>th</sup> - Thanksgiving
- November 25<sup>th</sup> - NRD Office Closed for Holiday
- December 8<sup>th</sup> - NRD Meeting, 8:30 A.M
- January 6<sup>th</sup> - Board meeting 8:30 A.M. Caucus 10:30 A.M.

Being no further business, Chairperson Jason Pohlmann adjourned the meeting at 3:22 P.M.

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*Secretary, Jason Sand*

# Water Committee Meeting Minutes

November 3, 2022, 8:30AM

Lower Big Blue NRD Office

Committee Members Present: Ryan Birkett (Chair), Rodney Skleba (Vice-Chair) ,Jason Pohlmann, Doug Stokebrand

Others Present: Scott Sobotka, Tyler Weishahn, Ryan Thomas, Nick Schroeder

## Minutes from last meeting

Scott reviewed the minutes from the previous water committee meeting on February 25, 2022. Jason made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Rodney seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

## Irrigation Agreements

Scott reviewed the surface water agreements with our structures. The first new Surface Water Agreements are coming up for renewal. In 2012 the NRD enacted a change in the length of new Surface Water Agreements to a ten-year term. The Committee discussed and voted to move forward with the same rules and regulations in addition to a \$200 renewal fee. Doug made a motion to move forward with the same rules and regulations and include a \$200 renewal fee. The motion was approved.

## Phase II Reporting

Scott presented a publication from the Manager's Meeting in Wahoo called *Our Dirty Water*. This publication is a four-part series about contaminants in Nebraska's drinking water. It covers nitrates and the way they react with atrazine and uranium. Ryan went over the Groundwater Management Area Phases. Discussion was held about the poor reporting in the Phase II Area and what direction the NRD needs to go to get more participation with the mandatory reporting. Ryan informed the Committee that he only received about 15 reporting forms last year. The Committee discussed more education since we have a new generation of farmers starting to farm in the area. Tyler talked about how Covid-19 stopped our last in person producer meeting from happening. The Committee recommended having an in-person producer meeting in early 2023. There was also discussion of a strategy to provide education opportunities to the rest of the district to try and get ahead of a future Phase II area.

## Replacement and Transfers

Tyler led discussion on Dean Ternes' well situation. The Committee reviewed the transfer and variance replacement well rules as they pertain to historically irrigated acres.

## Test Log Verification

Tyler explained to the Committee that he was present and collected samples at a test hole drilling near Western. Tyler and Nick took those samples and the test log from a well driller up to Lincoln to have the samples assessed by CSD. Tyler said that there were some discrepancies in what the Well Driller and CSD representative called the material. Tyler was at two more test hole drillings up by Courtland on November 2. The NRD is going to continue to collect samples from test holes in marginal areas and ask CSD to review the material.

**Well Registrations**

Tyler discussed an unregistered irrigation well on a Producer's property that may have been replaced in the 1970s. The alleged replacement well is registered active. The unregistered well is not currently being used but the Producer would like to register the well. Concerns are that the unregistered well can be registered and then replaced in a more convenient location to be used to irrigate.

Building Committee Meeting  
Tuesday October 25, 2022 11:15 A.M.  
Lower Big Blue NRD Office

Directors Present: Steve Kelley, Darrell Rains, Dean Roehr, Rodney Skleba.

Staff Present: Scott Sobotka, Manager; Scott Theis, Operations Supervisor; Nick Schroeder, GIS Data Specialist; Tyler Weishahn, Assistant Manager

Others Present: Anthony Thiner, Skyline Construction

The meeting was called to order by committee chair Dean Roehr at 11:15 A.M.

Anthony Thiner with Skyline Construction presented repair options. He recommended a roof retrofit where the rib of existing panels is filled with insulation board and then covered with a PVC membrane. This eliminates exposed fasteners which can leak over time, adds "R" value to the roof and carries a 15-year manufacturer's warranty. The other option would be to remove the existing metal sheets and replace it with the same material.

Anthony stated that additional warranty and maintenance agreements are available and would add value to the property since the agreements are transferable should the building ever be sold. He also stated that they would nail a furring strip to the outside to tie the membrane to and provide structure to reattach gutters.

The committee reviewed the estimate to repair the storm damage to the NRD office building and garage. The committee members discussed building roof options and the itemized list of repairs to the NRD buildings.

MOTION #1 was made by Rod Skleba, seconded by Steve Kelley, to recommend the installation of the TPO Metal Retrofit Roof and Liner on the NRD office building and to replace the metal roof on the NRD garage.

**YEA:** Kelley, Rains, Roehr, Skleba. **NAY:** None **ABSTAIN:** None

Building Committee Tour: November 15<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup>

Other Business:

Replacement well permits and drilling of test well logs was discussed.

Being no further business, Chairperson Dean Roehr adjourned the meeting at 12:15 P.M.