

LOWER BIG BLUE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
October 12, 2023
7:00 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 Ryan Birkett at 7:00 P.M.

Directors Present: Larry Barta, Ryan Birkett, Brent Katz, Steve Kelley, Duane Parde, Jason Pohlmann, Dean Roehr, Jason Sand, Rodney Skleba, Doug Stokebrand, Chad Weichel.

Staff Present: Scott Sobotka, Manager; Scott Theis, Operations Supervisor; Adam Kimmerling, Office Administrator; Nick Schroeder, GIS/IT/Data Specialist; Ryan Thomas, Resources Specialist; Brandy Scholl, Gage County NRD Secretary.

Directors Absent: Bob Lorenz, Darrell Rains.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 12, 2023, CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION #1 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Duane Parde, to adopt the Consent Agenda for the October 12, 2023, board meeting, which includes: adoption of the agenda as submitted, approval of the September 21, 2023, meeting minutes, financial status report dated September 30, 2023, September 2023 revenues, and expenditures; Beatrice West and Wymore Rural Water financials.

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

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

WATER COMMITTEE REPORT

Doug summarized the water committee meeting minutes from October 5, 2023, Nick discussed two sub area changes that have been reviewed by Olsson. Sub area boundaries can be altered in the future by Board action if a change is deemed necessary.

Nick reviewed a summary of the roundtable discussion held with neighboring NRD's during the annual conference in Kearney. The discussion was a great opportunity for the Board and staff to learn how other districts manage groundwater.

Nick reviewed the 2023 nitrate sampling results with Directors. He also reviewed the results of Atrazine and Manganese samples taken from several monitoring wells.

Ryan presented a review of the District's current phased management approach including the number of Phase II reports received this year. Staff plans to hold a certification meeting in November.

Nick reviewed progress on the Producer Connect Portal by Longitude 103. The nitrogen dashboard is a collaborative effort between 17 NRDs. Nick is on the steering committee and stated that a beta version of the app should be available for testing in March of 2024.

WELL PERMITS, IRRIGATION AGREEMENTS

Scott noted that a Gage County Supervisors hearing will be held on October 18th for the Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) near Liberty.

Scott stated that staff plan to meet with Charles and Daniel Barr to ensure that dirt work in the channel does not conflict with District easements for Mission 6-B.

2024 NRD TREE PROGRAM REVIEW

Scott reviewed proposed changes to the NRD tree program for 2024. Acreage packages will increase to \$65. No other changes are proposed.

MOTION #2 was made by Dean Roehr, seconded by Rodney Skleba, to approve the tree program for 2024.

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

PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT COMMITTEE

Scott discussed the 2009 Sterling Dump truck with 66,000 miles. The Mercedes motor in the truck needs to be replaced. Scott presented three options including replacing the engine, installing a used engine, or selling the truck as-is. Staff have received an offer of \$5,000 for the truck as-is.

MOTION #3 was made by Dean Roehr, seconded by Chad Weichel, to sell the dump truck for \$5,000.

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

Staff will look for a suitable replacement next year.

Scott mentioned that he has been working with NRCS for possible joint funding for a source water protection employee.

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Dean reviewed progress on the repairs to the current building. Insurance covers the tin on the main building. Estimates of \$3,400.00 from Two Guys Painting and \$3,800.00 from Skyline were received to paint the back shop to match the new tin on the main office.

MOTION #4 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Jason Pohlmann, to accept the bid of \$3,400.00 from Two Guys Painting to paint the shop to match the new tin.

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

LITTLE INDIAN WFPO AND NEW WFPO APPLICATIONS

Scott discussed the impact of wetland determinations on the Little Indian WFPO projects.

NRD ACTIVITIES

Adam reviewed the state range judging and district land judging contests hosted by the Lower Big Blue NRD this year.

The valve installation project on the Wymore rural water project was discussed. The project is currently on hold since the excavated pipe was bowed and also differed from what was shown on the plans.

Adam spoke about the current rate study and rules review on both water projects. Staff hope to meet with advisory committees in November to review and recommend changes. Those changes would then be approved by the Board for implementation in January 2024.

Scott stated that he has been contacted by Nebraska CLASS. The organization is an alternative to the Nebraska Public Agency Investment Trust.

Scott reported that recreation areas will close for the season on October 23rd. Scott also shared that the paybox at Big Indian was broken into again. Staff have installed different locks on the boxes at Big Indian and may look at cameras for next camping season.

Scott reviewed dam hazard class assessments. An assessment completed on Swan 31 recommends a hazard class change due to the low opening of a nearby home. Scott noted the importance of working with county planning and zoning to make sure future homes are not built in the breach area of structures.

AGENCY REPORTS

NRCS

Brandy reported that NRCS staff are busy designing and staking fall jobs. She also stated that more EQIP and CSP funds are expected to be available next year.

EXTENSION OFFICE

No Report

NRC

Steve reported that the next NRC meeting will be November 27th and 28th in Grand Island.

NARD

Steve reported that the committee met at the annual conference in Kearney. Steve reviewed the current financial status of the NARD and NARD Risk Pool.

CONSIDERATION OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

Darrell Rains and Bob Lorenz have asked to be excused from the October 12, 2023, board meeting.

MOTION #5 was made by Larry Barta, seconded by Rodney Skleba, to excuse Darrell Rains and Bob Lorenz from the October 12, 2023, board meeting. Motion Carried.

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

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Oct. 21st - Spooktacular at Willard Meyer
- Oct. 23rd - Recreation Areas Closed for Season
- Nov. 1st-2nd - NRD Managers Meeting
- Nov. 5th-6th - NARD Board Meeting
- Nov. 9th - NRD Meeting 1:30 p.m.
- Nov. 10th - Veterans Day Holiday. – Office Closed
- Nov. 23rd - Thanksgiving Holiday – Office Closed
- Nov. 24th - NRD Office Closed

Being no further business, Chairperson Ryan Birkett adjourned the meeting at 8:47 P.M.

Secretary, Jason Sand

I, the undersigned, Secretary of the Lower Big Blue Natural Resources District, hereby certify that these are true and correct minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors of the District held October 12, 2023, that all of the subjects discussed at the meeting were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the District during normal business hours, and except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda was not altered later than twenty-four (24) hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting; that at least one copy of all reproducible material discussed at the meeting was available at the meeting for examination and copying by members of the public; that the minutes were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days and prior to the next convened meeting for said body; and that all news media requesting notification of the meeting of said body were provided advance notification of the time and place of said meeting and the subjects to be discussed at said meeting.

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