

LOWER BIG BLUE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
September 21, 2023
Immediately following budget and levy hearings

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 8:30 a.m.

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

Staff Present: Scott Sobotka, Manager; Tyler Weishahn, Assistant 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.

Others Present: Charles Barr

Directors Absent: Steve Kelley

CONSIDERATION OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

Scott reported that Steve Kelley has asked to be excused from the September 21, 2023 board meeting.

MOTION #1 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Rodney Skleba, to excuse Steve Kelley from the September 21, 2023, board meeting. Motion Carried.

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

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 21, 2023, CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION #2 was made by Duane Parde, seconded by Brent Katz, to adopt the Consent Agenda for the September 21, 2023 board meeting, which includes: adoption of the agenda as submitted, approval of the August 24th, 2023 meeting minutes, financial status report dated August 31, 2023, August 2023 revenues, and expenditures; Beatrice West and Wymore Rural Water financials.

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

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

GROUNDWATER QUANTITY RULES AND REGULATIONS

Doug reported that the water committee minutes from September 7, 2023, were included in the packet. Nick reviewed proposed sub areas and potential controls. He reviewed the process staff has been using to refine sub area boundaries. If a boundary change is desired, staff have been reviewing changes with Olsson to determine which area is most appropriate. Nick also stated that the 2023 crop year will be used to determine historically irrigated acres.

WELL PERMITS, IRRIGATION AGREEMENTS

Tyler reviewed a replacement well permit LBB-1156 for Milton and Stivrins Trust. The permit meets all current rules.

MOTION #3 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Rodney Skleba, To approve the replacement well permit LBB-1156.

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

Tyler presented two low capacity well permits for Barber Farms and Don and Nancy Barber. Each permit is for two wells in series, under 50 gallons per minute to serve two 6,240 head hog confinements. The wells are not to be run simultaneously. These barns require two wells so that there is always a backup water source.

MOTION #4 was made by Brent Katz, seconded by Jason Pohlman to approve the low capacity comingled well permit, LBB-1157.

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

MOTION #5 was made by Larry Barta, seconded by Jason Sand to approve the low capacity comingled well permit, LBB-1158.

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

Ryan presented an irrigation agreement for Charles and Daniel Barr. The 10 year agreement would allow Daniel Barr to use 108 acre feet of water from Mission 6-B located in section 30- 1N-9E to irrigate 124 acres of land in section 19-1N-9E. Charles has obtained approval for the project from a neighboring land owner who has less than 1% of the permanent pool.

MOTION #6 was made by Jason Pohlmann, seconded by Chad Weichel to enter into a 10 year irrigation agreement with Charles and Daniel Barr to irrigate 124 acres in section 19-1N-9E with 108 acre feet of water from Mission 6-B.

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

BLUE BASIN JOINT VOLUNTARY INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT PLAN MEETING

Scott informed the directors that a joint Blue Basin meeting with the Tri-Basin, Lower Big Blue, Little Blue and DNR will be held to review the LBBNRD Voluntary Integrated Management Plan on Friday, September 22nd at the Little Blue NRD in Davenport.

FY 2024 BUDGET APPROVAL

Scott summarized the Budget Hearing that was held prior to the NRD board meeting. Scott presented an updated budget. The FY 2024 budget calls for expenditures of \$3,845,976 as compared to FY 2023 of \$3,407,925. The FY 2024 expenditures include \$185,000 for the Little Indian Watershed Flood Prevention Project, \$80,071 for the Turkey Creek National Water Quality Initiative Land Treatment Program, \$130,000 for the buffer strip program, \$100,000 for NRD land treatment cost-share, \$60,000 for Water Quality Programs, \$50,000 for NRD Small Dams Program, \$100,000 for flood control maintenance work, \$50,000 for P.L. 566 emergency watershed maintenance work, \$62,000 for recreation and wildlife management area Operation and Maintenance, \$460,333 for Water Sustainability Airborne Electromagnetic Surveys, \$15,000 for Cub Creek 12 renovations, \$5,000 for interactive producer portal and \$14,697 for the Blue Basin Groundwater Model. The district has \$900,000 budgeted for office design and construction and \$94,466 for the Urban Conservation Assistance Program. Separate expenditures include \$68,708 for the Beatrice West Public Water Project and \$324,267 for the Wymore Rural Water Project.

Scott reviewed the county valuations for FY2024 and provided a summary of the current sinking fund amounts and expected additions to those funds in FY 2024. Scott asked for a motion to transfer any unused budgeted FY 2024 Operations Land and Building Project Funds and any unused budgeted FY 2024 Operations Emergency Watershed Funds into the designated sinking fund account at the end of the fiscal year.

MOTION #7 was made by Jason Sand, seconded by Dean Roehr, to transfer any unused budgeted FY 2024 Operations Land and Building Project Funds into the designated Land and Building Capital Improvements sinking account at the end of the fiscal year.

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

MOTION #8 was made by Rodney Skleba, seconded by Duane Parde, to transfer any unused budgeted FY 2024 Operations Emergency Watershed funds into the designated Watershed Operation and Maintenance and Emergency Watershed Repair sinking fund account at the end of the fiscal year.

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

MOTION #9 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Dean Roehr, to approve the FY 2024 Lower Big Blue Budget as presented, with total Expenditures of \$3,845,976.54 and Revenues of \$3,474,585.63.

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

FY 2024 LEVY AND TAX REQUEST APPROVAL

Scott summarized the Levy and Tax Request Hearing that was held prior to the NRD board meeting. Revenues from all sources for FY 2024 are expected to be \$3,474,585 as compared to FY 2023 Revenues of \$3,011,813. The District begins FY 2024 with \$147,425 cash on hand and \$261,867 in Nebraska Public Agency Investment Trust. In FY 2024, we expect \$523,804 from state funds (FY2023 \$408,952), including \$276,199 from the Water Sustainability Fund for Airborne Electromagnetic Surveys, \$35,645 from the Water Quality Fund and \$134,000 for buffer strips. Federal funds are estimated to be \$148,688 (FY2023 \$335,100) with \$100,000 for the Little Indian Watershed Flood Prevention Project. Property rent will be \$26,386, customer charges for camping, tree planting, tree protectors and flags is \$67,500; Miscellaneous Revenues, \$163,606; and \$2,595,700 from property taxes. The District has \$205,145 in a P.L. 566 dam operation and maintenance and emergency watershed repair sinking fund, \$1,044,024 in a building sinking fund and \$78,100 in rural water project reserve funds.

MOTION #10 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Dean Roehr, that a resolution be adopted for the Lower Big Blue NRD Fiscal Year 2024 Tax Requirement of \$2,595,700 and a Fiscal Year 2024 Tax Levy of \$0.038029/\$100 valuation, and that said resolution is submitted to the County Clerks on or before October 15, 2023.

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

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Scott reviewed progress on storm damage repairs to the office. He presented a quote from Skyline Construction which includes replacing two windows not covered by insurance, removal of the brick and the installation of wainscot. The total cost to the NRD will be \$2,350.

Door options for the storage building at the new office were discussed. Staff obtained quotes for 20', 24', and 30' wide doors. Brent Katz recommended adding extra support to any north facing doors.

LITTLE INDIAN WFPO AND NEW WFPO APPLICATIONS

Pictures of a tour held on September 6th with NRCS staff of Mud, Plum and Wolf-Wildcat watersheds were shown. Scott stated that NRCS has changed some of the submittal requirements for the Little Indian plan which could add additional cost. Scott plans to meet with NRCS to discuss possible additional funding in light of the additional work due to the changes.

NRD ACTIVITIES

Tyler reported on the installation of valves to isolate the pump house from the Wymore Rural Water line.

Adam is working to secure a NDEE Public Water System Grant for secure sampling sites. The grant will pay \$10,000 of the \$15,000 project. The sites will help reduce false positives for monthly samples.

MOTION #11 was made by Dean Roehr, seconded by Jason Sand, to approve submittal of a grant application to NDEE for secure sample sites. Motion Carried.

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

Scott stated that staff continues to work with The Nature Conservancy on a possible partnership.

Scott reported that the State Auditor has released a report regarding the activities of Five Rivers RC&D.

Scott told the board that Gage County has been monitoring vegetative growth in the right of way. Ditches at Clatonia Public use area were recently cleaned after the county contacted the NRD.

AGENCY REPORTS

NRCS

Brandy reported that CSP contracts have been completed and jobs are being staked in preparation for the fall construction season. There is a possibility that NRCS offices could be temporarily shut down if a federal budget isn't reached by September 30th.

EXTENSION OFFICE

No Report

NRC

No Report

NARD

No Report

UPCOMING MEETINGS

September 22 nd	Blue Basin Vol. Integrated Management Plan Meeting – LBNRD
September 25 th – 26 th	NARD Annual Conference
September 27 th	State Range Judging Contest - LBBNRD
October 4 th	Southeast Regional Land Judging Contest - LBBNRD
October 9 th	Office Closed – Columbus Day
October 12 th	Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Being no further business, Chairperson Ryan Birkett adjourned the meeting at 9:57 a.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 September 21, 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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