

**LOWER BIG BLUE NATURAL RESOURCES  
DISTRICTBOARD MEETING  
May 11, 2023**

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, Fairbury Journal-News and Wymore Arbor State. 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, Steve Kelley, Brent Katz, Robert Lorenz, Duane Parde, Jason Pohlmann, Darrell Rains, Dean Roehr, Jason Sand, Doug Stokebrand, Rodney Skleba, Chad Weichel.

Staff Present: Scott Sobotka, Manager; Tyler Weishahn, Assistant Manager, Adam Kimmerling, Office Administrator; Nick Schroeder, GIS/IT/Data Specialist; Brandy Scholl, NRD Clerk, Gage County.

CONSIDERATION OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

None.

APPROVAL OF MAY 11, 2023, CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION #1 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Duane Parde, to adopt the Consent Agenda for the May 11, 2023, board meeting which includes: adoption of the agenda as submitted, approval of the April 13, 2023, meeting minutes, financial status report dated April 30, 2023, April 2023 bills payable, April 2023 revenues, monthly bank account summary and Beatrice West and Wymore Rural Water Financials. Motion carried.

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

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

WATER PERMITS, IRRIGATION AGREEMENTS

None

WATER COMMITTEE REPORT

Scott reported that Olsson hopes to have maps for review next week. A water committee meeting will be scheduled to review the maps.

Scott stated that staff have received a report of expansion of acres during the stay. A corner system was recently added to the pivot. The producer and pivot dealer have been contacted. They have agreed to render the corner system inoperable on expanded irrigated acres.

A public hearing will be held May 18, 2023, at the DeWitt community building to hear public

comments on the extension of the current stay.

Nick reviewed the public hearing procedure with the board.

A meeting will need to be held before the current stay is set to expire on June 6<sup>th</sup>. Discussion was held on whether to have a special meeting before the regular board meeting or move the regular board meeting.

MOTION #2 was made by Jason Pohlmann, seconded by Duane Parde, to hold the June board meeting on Monday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 6:00 P.M.

Motion carried.

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

#### WFPO UPDATE

Scott updated the board on the Little Indian WFPO project. A 90% agency meeting is scheduled for May 17<sup>th</sup>.

#### BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Scott reviewed dates for budget committee meetings and committee assignments. The I&E committee meeting was held prior to tonight's board meeting. The personnel and equipment committee is scheduled to meet May 16<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 A.M. and the programs and projects committee is scheduled to meet May 25<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 A.M.

Scott also reviewed the current water quality cost share practices and asked the directors to think about cost share practices they would like to see.

#### LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Scott updated the board on the current Legislative session.

#### NRD PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES REPORT

Nick showed pictures of staff installing a pedestal on a monitoring well at the City of Beatrice well field. The well was used for testing and was no longer needed by the City.

Scott stated that amenities at Cub Creek are almost complete. Staff installed fence along the North property line this week and will install boundary fence on the west property line in the next few months.

Scott talked about the Blue River Compact Meeting in Manhattan, KS that he and Tyler attended.

Adam gave a brief history of Big Indian 6E. The dam was lined with a cast in place liner this week.

Scott gave an update on trees. Sixteen of 23 jobs have been completed.

The annual fishing derby will be held at Willard L. Meyer Recreation Area on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

Director Kelley arrived at 7:36 P.M.

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Dean reviewed the building committee minutes from May 2, 2023. Those minutes are attached as official record to these minutes.

Scott discussed the current floor plan. He also reviewed the geothermal assessment from Geary Engineering. The assessment shows that the cost savings from geothermal would offset the increased initial cost in approximately 9 years. Discussion on the system was held.

MOTION #3 was made by Larry Barta, seconded by Doug Stokebrand, to proceed with building design using a geothermal system. Motion carried.

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

AGENCY REPORTS

NRCS

A report was distributed, and Brandy updated the directors on NRCS activities.

EXTENSION OFFICE

No Report

NRC

Steve reported that they have not met since the last board meeting.

NARD

Steve reported that their next meeting will be at the basin tour hosted by Central Platte NRD on June 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>.

Announcements, Upcoming Meetings & Activities

- a. May 16<sup>th</sup> Personnel & Equipment Committee 8:00 a.m.
- b. May 18<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing 7:00 p.m., DeWitt
- c. May 20<sup>th</sup> NRD Fishing Derby
- d. May 25<sup>th</sup> Programs and Projects Committee 8:00 a.m.
- e. June 12-13<sup>th</sup> NARD Basin Tour- Central Platte NRD
- f. June 5<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting and Extension of Stay

Being no further business, Chairperson Ryan Birkett adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

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*Secretary, Jason Sand*

# **Building Committee Meeting Minutes**

**May 2, 2023, 7:30 A.M.**  
**Lower Big Blue NRD Office**

Committee Members Present: Steve Kelley, Darrel Rains, Dean Roehr, Rod Skleba

Others Present: Scott Sobotka, Tyler Weishahn, Nick Schroeder, Adam Kimmerling, Michael Fakler, Fakler Architects

Committee Members Absent: Jason Pohlmann

## **Skyline Construction June Storm Damage Update, Anthony Thiner**

Anthony presented options for the existing building and explained what funds are available for future work. He noted that all four sides of the building are now included in the estimate and fleshed out ideas for updating the front of the building (i.e., EIFS/ETICS, brick/masonry, metal, etc.) and replacing metal on the other three sides. He also asked the Committee to consider what they would prefer to do regarding the interior estimates for carpet and ceiling tile replacement, noting the large percentage of depreciation included in the estimate and the value there might be in replacing those items. In discussing all of the options, the Committee asked Anthony to reach out for estimates on replacing interior items since there is so much depreciation being held back on the carpet and ceiling tile. The Committee also asked Anthony to obtain estimates on options for the front of the building, including EIFS (“stucco-like” Exterior Insulation Finishing System), brick/stone or faux brick/stone portions, replacement metal and renderings for a more modern awning and roofline. Finally, the Committee asked for estimates on painting the south shop exterior metal. Anthony plans to have most of those quotes in a few weeks. He will also forward 20-year warranty paperwork for the roof replacement, as well as bills for the roof and gutter repairs to the office. Information will be available for sharing with the Committee, but Anthony will be unavailable to meet in-person until June. Skyline will also replace the door handle on the west door to the board room, as well as replace the tarp on the front window with clear plastic until it can be repaired as part of the overall building repairs.

## **Building Design Schedule Update**

Scott presented and reviewed the geothermal feasibility assessment completed by Geary Engineering, Inc. for the new building. Staff followed up with Ron Geary regarding clarification of which portions of the new building were included in the assessment. As it was discovered only the office space was included, staff requested updating the assessment with a second option that also includes the attached shop. Scott reviewed the cost estimates and anticipated energy savings (baseline system cost: \$80,000, geothermal heat pump system plus the cost of 24 wells totals \$220,000, which represents an increase of \$140,000 over the cost of the rooftop units; energy investment tax credit of 40% would equal about \$88,000 and energy cost savings of \$5,900 per year represent a simple payback of 8.8 years or 23 years without the credit. The Committee discussed the value in moving forward being contingent on receiving that tax credit, as well as the need to assess potential floorplan changes to incorporate the space required for heat pump units inside the building.

Scott also provided a brief funding update after exploring an option through First National Capital Market-First National Bank of Omaha. This option would have given the NRD a loan at an interest rate roughly half the current conventional lending rate, however it appears as though the NRD is not eligible for this funding after all. Central Platte NRD is also looking into this option, so the Committee recommended reaching out to them for input, as well as exploring any other options that might be available. Scott and staff have already reached out to SENDD for potential funding options. Additionally, the Committee recommended continuing to budget for the building as much as possible to reduce the amount borrowed when the time comes for the project to move forward.

The Committee then moved to the building site to look at the staked layout of the floorplan and get a better feel for the design. Further discussion on the geothermal feasibility assessment was held with Michael Fakler who met the Committee at the site. Michael is continuing to work with Geary Engineering, Inc. to

finalize the staff request for including the shop.

**Other Business**

Steve informed the Committee he will likely not be present at the June board meeting.