

LOWER BIG BLUE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING  
October 13, 2022, 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 Jason Pohlmann at 7:00 p.m.

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

Staff Present: Scott Sobotka, Manager; Tyler Weishahn, Assistant Manager; Adam Kimmerling, Administrative Assistant; Nick Schroeder, GIS/IT/Data Specialist.

Others Present: Beth Schuster, Sheryl Thimm, Jaqueline Couillard, Tim Bottoms, Dennis Hagymasi, Kenneth Meyers.

Directors Absent: Rodney Skleba

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 13, 2022, CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION #1 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Ryan Birkett, to adopt the Consent Agenda for the October 13, 2022, board meeting, which includes: adoption of the agenda as submitted, approval of the September 20, 2022, meeting minutes, financial status report dated September 30, 2022, September 2022 revenues, and expenditures; Beatrice West and Wymore Rural Water financials.

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

CONSIDERATION OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

Scott reported that Rodney Skleba has asked to be excused from the October meeting

MOTION #2 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Duane Parde, to excuse Rodney Skleba from the October 13, 2022, board meeting. Motion Carried.

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

## OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

Beth Schuster addressed the board regarding potential well interference issues with her domestic well. The well drilled in 2018 is pumping sand. Beth asked the Directors to make decisions now to regulate pivots because the water is everyone's.

Sheryl Thimm spoke, stating that she lives just south of Beth and has also experienced water issues this summer. Her well is pumping air. She stated that she has tried working with a neighboring irrigator to regulate pivot use. She asked the Board to make decisions now so that there is water for her children and grandchildren.

Scott briefly reviewed the District's groundwater management efforts.

Kenney Meyers of Water Systems and Service spoke about well issues he has seen in his 40+ years in the well industry. He told the board that regulation like meters is needed because groundwater is being depleted.

Jaqueline Couillard spoke about flood control structure Plum 4-F. She acknowledged the long history with the dam, stating they have been unable to remove the structures in the emergency spillway and breach routing areas. She asked that enough water be kept in the lake to enjoy it.

Tim Bottoms and Dennis Hagymasi spoke asking that the structure be filled for firefighting purposes. They summarized the Plum 4F Emergency Action Plan. Dennis referenced the 2012 board vote to allow the structure to be filled if the trailers below the dam were removed.

## WELL PERMITS, IRRIGATION AGREEMENTS

Tyler presented a transfer permit for Michael Pesek. Michael is seeking to transfer water from the NE ¼ of Section 24-5N-2E to the NW ¼ of Section 19-5-3. The source section well irrigates 76.15 acres, and the transfer section will have 60.16 irrigated acres.

MOTION #3 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Larry Barta, to approve the transfer permit from Michael Pesek. Motion Carried.

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

Tyler presented a replacement well permit for Waldo Farms. The applicant is seeking to replace a well which has historically irrigated a neighboring tract. The proposed replacement well would require a variance to the current rules since the location of the proposed replacement well would cross a section line. The project would include the conversion of flood to a pivot irrigation system. The difference in ownership of the property of the existing water well and the ownership of the property which the replacement well would be located and has been historically irrigated was discussed. Since the permit does not meet current rules and a variance would need to be approved several directors discussed that the permit should be denied.

MOTION #4 was made by Heidi McClintock, seconded by Brent Katz, to deny the replacement well permit from Waldo Farms. Motion Carried.

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

2023 TREE PROGRAM

Adam reviewed the proposed 2023 tree program. Recommended changes include raising the price per seedling from \$1.15 to \$1.25 and the cost of tree packages from \$55 to \$60. Adam noted that current pricing has been in place since 2018.

Steve Kelley commented that bundles of twenty-five trees is to many for urban planters. Discussion was also held on providing cost share for tree plantings.

MOTION #5 was made by Brent Katz, seconded by Duane Parde, to approve the 2023 tree program as presented.

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

MASTER PLAN REVIEW

Adam reviewed the updated Master Plan with the Board. The 10-year plan is part of the state statutes governing NRD's. Updated plans are required to be eligible for state funding. Adam noted that revisions were requested by October 4<sup>th</sup>. No proposed changes were received.

MOTION #6 was made by Darrell Rains, seconded by Jason Sand, to approve the 2022-2032 Master Plan as presented and submit approved plan to the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources as required by State statute.

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

WFPO UPDATE

Scott updated the board on progress to date on the Little Indian WFPO project. He shared a news article with the Directors which highlighted the project at a recent Board of Supervisors meeting. A current map of the proposed project was reviewed. A tour of the project with the NRCS is planned for the end of October.

NRCS/NRD MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Scott spoke about the tour and meeting with local NRCS staff, the new Nebraska State Conservationist, Rob Lawson and the NRD. Several programs were discussed including NWQI project, WFPO projects, P.L. 566 O&M operation and maintenance, and the small dams program. Staffing position and duties of NRCS and NRD were discussed. The memorandum of agreement

provides for the partnership between NRD's and NRCS. Scott also mentioned the annual update of the civil rights acknowledgement between the two agencies.

### NRD ACTIVITIES

Nick showed the directors pictures of weather station installations on two properties.

Scott reviewed primary election results and noted that the general election is November 8<sup>th</sup>. Seven positions are up for reelection. Four of those are unopposed.

Scott noted that work on preparations for the building continue. The beans on NRD property were recently harvested. Staff will work with the farmer to split bushels and pay him for his expenses. Scott hopes to tour other NRD offices in the near future.

Adam reviewed land judging results from this year's contest held October 6<sup>th</sup> in Pawnee County.

Nick and Tyler shared pictures of the current Snaptite projects. Concrete was poured Tuesday and grouting of the tube is scheduled for the end of the week.

Adam spoke about plans for a rate study on the Beatrice West and Wymore Rural water projects. He also presented a letter to the Gage County Supervisors asking that they consider the water projects for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

Spooktacular is planned for next Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> at Swan Lake. Recreation areas will close for the season on October 25<sup>th</sup>.

Tyler spoke about his presentation to the Crete Rotary Club.

### NPAIT

Scott stated with the retirement of Dave and Teresa that a new administrator of NPAIT must be approved. Scott asked for a motion to appoint the Manager as administrator on the NPAIT accounts.

MOTION #7 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Heidi McClintock, to approve the Manager as NPAIT administrator.

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

### NRD PERSONELL AND STAFF UPDATE

Scott stated that management continues to work on personnel policy updates. He also plans to advertise for additional administrative support staff.

### AGENCY REPORTS

#### NRCS

A report was distributed to the directors.

EXTENSION OFFICE

No Report

FIVE RIVERS R C & D

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

NARD

Steve reported on the current fiscal position of the insurance pool. He spoke about the sustainable farming resolution and stated that it failed 60-50. Steve also reviewed several upcoming important dates.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

- |  |   |                                    |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| Oct. 22 <sup>nd</sup>                    | - | Spooktacular at Willard Meyer      |
| - Oct. 25 <sup>th</sup>                  | - | Recreation Areas Closed for Season |
| - Nov. 8 <sup>th</sup>                   | - | Election Day                       |
| - Nov. 1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup>  | - | NRD Managers Meeting, Wahoo        |
| - Nov. 6 <sup>th</sup> - 7 <sup>th</sup> | - | NARD Board Meeting, Wahoo          |
| - Nov. 10 <sup>th</sup>                  | - | NRD Meeting 1:30 p.m.              |
| - Nov. 11 <sup>th</sup>                  | - | Veterans Day                       |
| - Nov. 24 <sup>th</sup>                  | - | Thanksgiving                       |
| - Nov. 25 <sup>th</sup>                  | - | NRD Office Closed                  |

Being no further business, Chairperson Jason Pohlmann adjourned the meeting at 8:57 P.M.

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*Secretary, Jason Sand*