

**LOWER BIG BLUE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
January 05, 2023**

The Oath of Office was administered to Larry Barta, Ryan Birkett, Jason Pohlmann, Darrell Rains, Dean Roehr, and Chad Weichel prior to the meeting.

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 Jason Pohlmann at 8:30 a.m.

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

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

Others Present: Russel Fritz

Directors Absent Brent Katz, Rodney Skleba.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 5, 2023 CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION #1 was made by Steve Kelley, seconded by Larry Barta, to adopt the Consent Agenda for the January 5, 2023, board meeting which includes: adoption of the agenda as submitted, approval of the December 08, 2022, meeting minutes, financial status report dated December 31, 2022, December 2022 bills payable, December 2022 revenues, monthly bank account summary and Beatrice West and Wymore Rural Water Financials. Motion carried.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Kelley, Parde, Pohlmann, Rains, Roehr, Sand, Stokebrand Weichel.

NAY: None **ABSTAIN:** None.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2023

Election of officers is conducted by roll call vote for single nominees and secret ballot if multiple nominations are received . Pohlmann appointed Nick Schroeder and Scott Theis to count the ballots.

CHAIRPERSON

Nominations were taken from the floor. Ryan Birkett was nominated for office of chairperson. No other nominations were received. Birkett received 9 votes and will serve as chairperson

Newly elected chairperson Ryan Birkett assumed the responsibilities of the chairperson for the remainder of the meeting.

VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Nominations were taken from the floor. Larry Barta and Jason Sand were nominated for the office of vice-chairperson. Barta received 6 votes and Sand received 4 votes. Barta will serve as vice-chairperson.

SECRETARY

Nominations were taken from the floor. Jason Sand was nominated for the office of secretary. No other nominations were received. Sand received 9 votes and will serve as secretary.

TREASURER

Nominations were taken from the floor. Darrell Rains was nominated for the office of treasurer. No other nominations were received. Rains received 9 votes and will serve as treasurer.

NARD REPRESENTATIVE

Nominations were taken from the floor. Steve Kelley was nominated for the office of NARD representative. No other nominations were received. Kelley received 9 votes and will serve as NARD representative.

ALTERNATE NARD REPRESENTATIVE

Nominations were taken from the floor. Jason Sand was nominated for the office of alternate NARD representative. No other nominations were received. Sand received 9 votes and will serve as alternate NARD representative.

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE VOTING DELEGATE

Nominations were taken from the floor. Ryan Birkett was nominated for legislative conference voting delegate. No other nominations were received. Birkett received 9 votes and will serve as the legislative conference voting delegate.

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE ALTERNATE

Nominations were taken from the floor. Steve Kelley was nominated for legislative conference alternate. No other nominations were received. Kelley received 9 votes and will serve as the legislative conference alternate.

FIVE RIVERS RC&D REPRESENTATIVE

Nominations were taken from the floor. Bob Lorenz was nominated for 5 Rivers RC&D representative. No other nominations were received. Lorenz received 10 votes and will serve as the 5 Rivers RC&D representative.

FIVE RIVERS RC&D ALTERNATE REPRESENTATIVE

Nominations were taken from the floor. Ryan Birkett was nominated for alternate 5 Rivers RC&D representative. No other nominations were received. Birkett received 9 votes and will serve as the alternate 5 Rivers RC&D representative.

Bob Lorenz arrived at 8:53 and was administered the oath of office.

CONSIDERATION OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

Scott reported that Rodney Skleba and Brent Katz have both requested that their absence from the January 5th board meeting be excused.

MOTION #2 was made by Jason Pohlmann, seconded by Larry Barta, to excuse Brent Katz and Rodney Skleba from the January 5, 2023 board meeting. Motion carried.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Kelley, Lorenz, Parde, Pohlmann, Rains, Roehr, Sand, Stokebrand Weichel. **NAY:** None **ABSTAIN:** None.

BLUE BASIN COMMISSION MEMBER RECOMENDATION

Scott reminded the board that the Lower and Upper Big Blue NRDs will meet on Friday January 6th to select a member to serve on the Natural Resources Commission. Discussion was held regarding who to nominate.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Scott reviewed current committee assignments with the directors. Efforts were made to accommodate directors who wished to serve on certain committees. Committee assignments are listed in the table below.

2023 Committee Assignments				
Ryan Birkett, Chair - Attends all committee meetings				
Programs and Projects	Personnel and Equipment	Information and Education	Water	Building
Larry Barta	Steve Kelley	Brent Katz	Doug Stokebrand	Darrell Rains
Jason Pohlmann	Jason Sand	Chad Weichel	Chad Weichel	Steve Kelley
Bob Lorenz	Dean Roehr	Duane Parde	Steve Kelley	Jason Pohlmann
Darrell Rains	Rodney Skleba	Doug Stokebrand	Rodney Skleba	Dean Roehr
			Jason Pohlmann	Rodney Skleba

Discussion about separate water quality and quantity committees was held.

Scott mentioned that mileage has increased 3 cents to 65.5 cents per mile and per diem has increased from \$65 to \$70.

WATER COMMITTEE REPORT

Ryan Birkett summarized the minutes of the December 14th water committee meeting. The minutes are attached as official record to these minutes.

Nick spoke about potential changes to the current groundwater rules and regulations.

Scott told the board that staff have been in contact Olsson to possibly help delineate management areas as part of the new rules.

Scott reported that producers have asked about limiting expansion of irrigated acres within a section. Several had projects started prior to the stay which would increase irrigated acres. Discussion on how to handle those projects was held.

MOTION #3 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Jason Pohlmann, to allow the expansion of irrigated acres within a section if the project was initiated prior to January 5, 2023. Motion carried.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Kelley, Lorenz, Parde, Pohlmann, Rains, Roehr, Sand, Stokebrand Weichel. **NAY:** None **ABSTAIN:** None.

WELL PERMITS, IRRIGATION AGREEMENTS

None

PL 566 O.M. PROJECTS

Scott Theis spoke about a proposed lining project on Big Indian 6E. Scott has received a bid from Subsurface Inc. to install a cured in place liner in the dam. The liner is fed through the tube and cured with Ultraviolet light. The bid received would be done in conjunction with several Nemaha NRD projects to save the Lower Big Blue on mobilization costs.

MOTION #4 was made by Dean Roehr, seconded by Larry Barta, to accept the bid from Subsurface Inc to line Big Indian 6E for \$44,136.54. Motion carried.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Kelley, Lorenz, Parde, Pohlmann, Rains, Roehr, Sand, Stokebrand Weichel. **NAY:** None **ABSTAIN:** None.

NRD ACTIVITIES

Tyler presented a year end summary of NRD programs to the board.

A crop clinic is planed for January 12th. This will be free to producers in the Turkey Creek watershed as part of the NWQI project.

Phase II reports are due to the NRD by March 1st.

Scott mentioned that the Blue Basin report shows that the basin is not fully appropriated.

Pictures of a recent hunt at Willard Meyer were shown. Scott discussed the partnership with Saline County Pheasants Forever.

Scott stated that preliminary designs for the new building have been received.

Scott shared a letter from Sheryl Kastanek regarding the Wilber tree planting.

Tyler spoke about the series of articles from the Flatwater Free Press about Nitrates.

Agency reports were distributed to directors.

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

Directors have been registered for the conference.

PERSONELL SERVICES

Scott reported that he received a letter from Gage County NRCS clerk LaRita Sudik informing him that she plans to retire March 31st

Scott stated that he plans to conduct performance reviews in January.

Scott still hopes to hire additional staff to lessen the workload on current employees.

Additional planned revisions to the personnel policy will be taken up again at a later date.

Announcements, Upcoming Meetings & Activities

- January 4th - 108th Legislative 90 Day Session Begins
- January 12th - UNL Crop Production Clinic - Beatrice
- January 24th - NRD Managers Meeting/NARD Meeting - Lincoln
- January 24th - 25th - Legislative Conference - Lincoln
- February 9th - NRD Board Meeting, 8:30 a.m.
- February 22nd - Southeast Nebraska Farm Show – Saline Center

Being no further business, Chairperson Ryan Birkett adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Secretary, Jason Sand