

LOWER BIG BLUE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
May 14, 2026
5:30 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 Chad Weichel at 5:30 P.M.

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

Staff Present: Scott Sobotka, Manager; Tyler Weishahn, Assistant Manager; Adam Kimmerling, Office Administrator; Nick Schroeder, GIS/Data Specialist; Scott Theis, Operations Supervisor; Brandy Scholl, Gage County NRD Secretary and Programs Assistant. Zack Zimmerman; Water Resources Protection Coordinator.

Others Present: Kelli Evans, Gage County NRCS; Kennon Meyer, Woods Aiken, Jared Abraham, Aqua Geo Frameworks; Jared Jannesn, Brad Hogan.

APPROVAL OF MAY 14, 2026 CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION #1 was made by Duane Parde, seconded by Larry Barta, to adopt the Consent Agenda for the May 14, 2026, board meeting which includes: adoption of the agenda as submitted, approval of the April 09, 2026, meeting minutes, financial status report dated April 30, 2026, April 2026 bills payable, April 2026 revenues, monthly bank account summary and Beatrice West and Wymore Rural Water Financials. Motion carried.

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

Director Roehr arrived at 5:34 p.m.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

Zack Zimmerman introduced himself to the Board. Zack joined the NRD May 1st as the new Water Resources Protection Coordinator.

AQUA GEO FRAMEWORKS LLC AIRBORNE ELECTROMAGNETIC (AEM) 2025 SURVEY REPORT

Jared Abraham with Aqua Geo Frameworks presented the final report of findings from last years' flight, reviewing several maps and graphics of the data interpretations with the

board. Jared noted that the data has been uploaded to google earth so that staff can review available data when answering questions from the Board and the Public.

Jared then presented information on the next flight which will be conducted if funding is received from the Water Sustainability Fund. Data acquisition is scheduled for July or August of 2027. This project will focus on an area between Daykin and Beatice. Approximately 450-line miles are planned. This project would be done in conjunction with a project in the Little Blue NRD which would result in cost savings and possibly facilitate additional bonus miles.

WATER COMMITTEE REPORT

Nick presented results of spring water level measurements.

Sub areas two and eight have reached Phase II status. Twenty two flow meter applications have been received.

MOTION #2 was made by Jason Pohlmann, to lift the moratorium on the expansion of irrigated acres district wide effective May 20, 2026. Motion failed for lack of second.

Discussion was held on lifting the district wide moratorium on the expansion of irrigated acres.

MOTION #3 was made by Jason Pohlmann, seconded by Steve Kelley to lift the moratorium on the expansion of irrigated acres in sub areas 2,3,7,8, and 9 effective May 20, 2026. Motion failed.

YEA: Birkett, Pohlmann, Stokebrand, Weise **NAY:** Barta, Katz, Kelley, Lorenz, Parde, Sand, Skleba, Weichel. **ABSTAIN:** Roehr.
Director Pohlmann left at 7:19 p.m.

WELL PERMITS, IRRIGATION AGREEMENTS

The following well permits received this month are in the remaining area (area 0) and are currently under moratorium for the drilling of new wells:

- LBB-1194 – SWNW ¼ Section 17-4N-7E. The permit is in sub-area zero.
- LBB-1195 – SENWSE ¼ Section 17-4N-7E. The permit is in sub-area zero.

An application has been received to expand irrigated acres in the NE ¼ Section 30-6N-6E. The acres are in sub-area 3. The applicant wishes to add 16.27 acres.

Discussion was held on the well permits and application for certified expanded acres. No action was taken on the permits or application due to the current moratorium on the drilling of new wells and expansion of irrigated acres in their respective sub areas.

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Dean updated the Board on the building project, The Committee met three times since the April 9th Board meeting – April 17th, April 29th and May 13th.

Dean discussed several items the committee is addressing including needed concrete replacement, window installation and securement for the board desk. The correct soffit is on its way and will be installed as soon as possible. The Architect is still awaiting a response from the engineer on the best way to install the vaulted ceiling in the lobby since the ductwork has already been installed. There have been two recent change orders totaling \$7,284.00 for a door on the north side of the covered storage area and brackets to seal between the exterior lights and metal panel.

The Committee asked for a timeframe on project completion, and the Contractor is still planning on June 15th.

NRD PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES REPORT

Scott reported on the Blue River compact meeting held May 6th. Jason Pohlmann was recently appointed by Governor Pillen as the Nebraska Advisor for the Blue River Compact Administration.

Adam presented results of the state Envirothon.

Tyler shared pictures of the recent water quality day held at the Homestead. The event hosted eighth graders from area schools.

Scott spoke about tree plantings. Approximately 10,000 trees were sold this year including 21 machine plant jobs. Staff have one job left to complete.

Scott updated the Board on funding for the Little Indian WFPO project. The project has made Senator Fischer's list for congressionally directed spending.

Scott discussed installation of the CO2 pipeline progress at several structures. Scott also shared that he has been contacted by Northern Natural Gas about a possible pipeline project which may impact NRD easements.

Scott reviewed local election results.

Scott shared that DWEE beach watch will start in May.

Scott presented rock bids received from three area firms for 510 tons of rock to be delivered to six areas. The low bid was received from Armstrong Rentals for \$20,400.00.

MOTION #4 was made by Dean Roehr, seconded by Duane Parde, to accept the low bid from Armstrong Rentals for \$20,400.00. Motion carried.

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

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Scott reported on items of interest in the Nebraska Legislature.

AGENCY REPORTS

NRCS

Kelli Evans reported on the activities of the Gage County NRCS office including EQIP applications, CSP assessments and ranking and status reviews.

EXTENSION OFFICE

No Report

NRC

Steve reported that NRC met April 29th in Kearney. He shared that 11 apps were submitted to the Water Sustainability Fund.

NARD

Steve reported that their next meeting will be during the basin tour in June.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, UPCOMING MEETINGS & ACTIVITIES

- May 25th - Memorial Day – Office Closed
- June 8th - 9th - NARD Basin Tour – North Platte
- June 11th - NRD Board Meeting 7:00 P.M.

Being no further business, Chairperson Chad Weichel adjourned the meeting at 8:24 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 May 14, 2026 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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