

LOWER BIG BLUE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
July 09, 2026
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 Chad Weichel at 7:00 p.m.

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

Staff Present: Scott Sobotka, Manager; Tyler Weishahn, Assistant Manager; Adam Kimmerling, Office Administrator;

Directors Absent: Brent Katz, Jason Sand

Others Present: Kelli Evans, NRCS District Conservationist

APPROVAL OF JULY 09, 2026, CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION #1 was made by Duane Parde, seconded by Dean Roehr, to adopt the Consent Agenda for the July 09, 2026, board meeting which includes: adoption of the agenda as submitted, approval of the June 11, 2026, meeting minutes, financial status report dated June 30, 2026, June 2026 bills payable, June 2026 revenues, monthly bank account summary and Beatrice West and Wymore Rural Water Financials. Motion carried.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Lorenz, Parde, Pohlmann, Skleba, Stokebrand, Weichel Weise.

NAY: None. **ABSTAIN:** Roehr. **NOT PRESENT:** Kelley

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

WELL PERMITS, IRRIGATION AGREEMENTS, VARIANCES

Tyler presented the following well permit LBB-1197 – SWNE ¼ Section 32-5N-3E. The permit is in sub-area four.

MOTION #2 was made by Jason Pohlmann, seconded by Larry Barta, to approve well permit LBB-1197 Motion carried.

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

HAY LAND BIDS

Adam reviewed hay land bids received for maintenance. Bid packets were direct mailed to 78 individuals 17 bids were received at the NRD office by July 7th at 3:00 P.M. for 7 of the 9 areas. One additional bid was received on July 9th High bids totaled \$19,107.80. No bid was received for Big Indian and Clatonia Recreation Areas.

MOTION #3 was made by Dean Rohr, seconded by Rod Skleba, to accept the high bid received for each area. Motion carried.

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

FY 2027 BUDGET

Scott reviewed a “Bring Your Own Device to Work Policy” with the Directors. The policy allows for staff to use their own devices while conducting District business. By signing the policy, employees acknowledge that there is no expectation of privacy regarding District content on their device and that it may be reviewed and retrieved as needed by the District. Eligible employees will receive a monthly stipend for the use of their personal device.

MOTION #4 was made by Larry Barta, seconded by Duane Parde, to approve the “Bring Your Own Device to Work Policy” as presented. Motion carried.

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

Scott reviewed items which have been updated in the FY 2027 budget. The insurance line item has been reduced to 59,498.00 due to the cost of Builders Risk policy being reimbursed by Rogge since the project is past its scheduled completion date. Scott noted that this year’s budget has several items which may change moving forward due to the availability of State funds. Staff received notice this week that both NSWCP and WSF funding is frozen pending the outcome of a lawsuit alleging improper transfer of funds from the Nebraska Environmental Trust to fund these programs. The staff expenses line item has increased to \$18,000 to account for the cost of cell phone stipends. Capital expenditures for FY 2027 is expected to be \$3,842,079.91 with total expenditures of \$5,465,464.42.

Scott recommended that the Budget Hearing be set for September 17th at 8:30 A.M., with the Levy and Property Tax Request Hearing immediately following the Budget Hearing.

MOTION #5 was made by Dean Rohr, seconded by Rodney Skleba, to approve the budget as presented and that the District hold a public hearing for the proposed FY 2027 budget with a public hearing for the 2027 Levy and Property Tax Request immediately following on September 17th at 8:30 A.M. at the LBBNRD office, with the NRD board meeting to follow and that legal notices for said public hearings be published once on or before September 10, 2026 in the Beatrice Daily Sun, Crete News, Fairbury Journal News and Pawnee Republican. Motion carried.

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

LITTLE INDIAN WFPO PROJECT UPDATE

Scott stated that the District has requested \$8 million in Congressionally Directed Spending in addition to funding through the WFPO program. The District also has a \$1.7 million Water Sustainability Fund Grant. The plan calls for construction of 24 new dams at an estimated cost of \$29 million. The nonfederal share would be approximately \$1.6 million.

Steve Kelley arrived at 7:47 P.M.

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Dean reported that the building committee is recommending hiring JEO Consulting to provide construction oversight during the repairs to the roof and the installation of the new windows. JEO has provided a proposal for a Project Manager and Architect to be billed hourly at a rate of \$190 and \$185/hr., respectively. The current scope of work is estimated to cost between \$15,000.00 and \$20,000.00.

MOTION #6 was made by Dean Rohr, seconded by Ryan Birkett, to hire JEO consulting at the proposed hourly rates to provide construction oversight. Motion carried.

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

HUSKER HARVEST DAYS

Scott asked for volunteers to attend Husker Harvest Days to work in the NARD booth. Bob Lorenz expressed interest in attending.

MOTION #7 was made by Doug Stokebrand, seconded by Dean Roehr, to authorize per diem and expenses for Bob Lorenz, to work at Husker Harvest Days one day. Motion carried.

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

CONSIDERATION OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

Brent Katz and Jason Sand have requested to be excused from the July 9th board meeting.

MOTION #8 was made by Dean Roehr, seconded by Jason Pohlmann, to excuse Brent Katz and Jason Sand from the July 9th board meeting.

YEA: Kelley, Lorenz, Parde, Pohlmann, Roehr, Skleba, Stokebrand, Weichel, Weise.
NAY: Birkett. **ABSTAIN:** Barta.

NRD ACTIVITIES

Pictures of the new kayak launches at Bear Lake WMA and Big Indian Recreation Area were shown.

Tyler showed well testing apparatuses to the Directors.

Scott stated that Zack will have a booth at the Gage and Saline County Fairs to promote Phase II initiatives and Producer Connect.

AGENCY REPORTS

NRCS

Kelli provided an update on the activities of the Beatrice office including EQIP design CSP contracts and CRP status reviews.

EXTENSION OFFICE

No Report

NRC

Steve reported that the committee will meet to score applications on July 28th.

NARD

Steve reported that the next meeting will be held at the fall conference in Kearney. Scott reported that an amendment allowing Roth conversions will be presented at next months meeting.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| a. July 21 st –23 rd | GMDA, Lubbock, TX |
| b. July 28 th | NRC Meeting, Kearney |
| c. August 27 th | NRD Board Meeting 8:30 a.m. |
| d. August 28 th – Sept. 7 th | Nebraska State Fair, Grand Island |
| e. Sept. 7 th | Labor Day – Office Closed |
| f. September 15 th – 17 th | Husker Harvest Days |
| g. September 17 th | NRD Board Meeting 8:30 a.m. |
| h. Sept. 28 th – 29 th | NARD Conference, Kearney |

Being no further business, Chairperson Chad Weichel adjourned the meeting at 7:59 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 July 09, 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 Lower Big Blue NRD Board of Directors Meeting July 09, 2025 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.

:amk