

LOWER BIG BLUE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
August 27, 2026, 8:30 A.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 Duane Parde at 8:30 a.m.

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

Staff Present: Scott Sobotka, Manager; Tyler Weishahn, Assistant Manager; Adam Kimmerling, Office Administrator; Nick Schroeder, GIS/IT/Technical Specialist, Brandy Scholl, NRD Secretary Ryan Thomas, Resources Specialist, Scott Theis, Operations Supervisor.

Directors Absent: Brent Katz

Others Present: Kelli Evans, Gage County NRCS

Chairman Weichel acknowledged that Brent Katz has submitted a letter of resignation to the Board. The vacancy will be advertised with applications due back by September 8th. The Board will review applications and appoint an individual to fill the vacancy in Sub District 6 at the September Board meeting.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 27, 2026, CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION #1 was made by Duane Parde, seconded by Steve Kelley, to adopt the Consent Agenda for the August 27, 2026, board meeting which includes: adoption of the agenda as submitted, approval of the corrected July 9, 2026, meeting minutes, financial status report dated July 31, 2026, July 2026 bills payable, July 2026 revenues, monthly bank account summary and Beatrice West and Wymore Rural Water Financials. Motion carried.

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

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

WELL PERMITS, IRRIGATION AGREEMENTS

The following permits received this month meet all District rules and regulations:

- LBB-1198 – SW ¼ Section 19-8N-1E. The permit is in Sub Area One and is a replacement well. It was approved by staff as it was received during the growing season.
- LBB-1199 – NE ¼ Section 4-7N-4E. The permit is in Sub Area One.
- LBB-1200 – NENW ¼ Section 1-7N-1E. The permit is in Sub Area One.
- LBB-1201 – NWSW ¼ Section 1-7N-1E. The permit is in Sub Area One.

MOTION #2 was made by Jason Pohlmann, and seconded by Rodney Skleba, to approve well permits LBB-1198, LBB-1200 and LBB-1201. Motion carried.

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

MOTION #3 was made by Doug Stokebrand, and seconded by Larry Barta, to approve well permit LBB-1199. Motion carried.

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

Nick shared pictures of a recent pump test.

LITTLE INDIAN WFPO PROJECT UPDATE

Scott shared that the Little Indian project has been selected to receive \$8.3 million in design funding through the WFPO program. The agreements will be presented to the Board at the next meeting.

Director Weise arrived at 8:59 A.M.

REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM APPLICATION

Scott shared that staff have prepared a RCPP application for the Big Indian Watershed. The application would provide \$701,580.00 in funding to address corrugated tubes on 11 structures. The application also provides for \$154,000 to the in NRCS in technical assistance. The District would contribute \$33,000 over the five year project for project management.

MOTION #4 was made by Jason Sand, and seconded by Dean Roehr, to guarantee \$33,000 in matching funds to the project if awarded. Motion carried.

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

DEPARTMENT OF WATER ENERGY ENVIRONMENT AND ONE RED AGREEMENT

Scott reviewed the ONE RED Ag Data Bank program. The program would provide \$230,000 to the Lower Big Blue NRD for producer enrollment and assistance of the program.

MOTION #5 was made by Steve Kelley, and seconded by Rodney Skleba, to authorize the Manager to sign the sub award agreement. Motion carried.

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

Scott would like to schedule a Programs and Projects committee meeting to discuss the program in detail.

FY 2027 BUDGET

Scott reviewed changes to the budget since the last meeting. Scott told the Directors that with the Little Indian WFPO project moving forward, those funds have been accounted for in the budget. The District may need a short term operating loan to account for the time between the expenditure of funds and the reimbursement from the WFPO program. Scott has talked to Security First Bank, and they have indicated that they would provide an operating note at 1% over the prime rate.

The current budget calls for expenditures of \$7,226,966.42 and revenues of \$5,976,667.38. Scott reviewed valuations received from each county. Valuations increased approximately 6% over last year. Currently, the District expects to decrease its levy from 3.2155 cents to 3.0316 cents.

Scott noted that the Clatonia 319 application is almost ready to submit to EPA.

MOTION #6 was made by Ryan Birkett, and seconded by Duane Parde, to approve the FY 2027 budget as presented with expenditures of \$7,226,966.42 and revenues of \$5,976,667.38. Motion carried.

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

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Dean reviewed the August 26th and September 18th Building Committee meetings and discussed issues with the building including the roof, windows, sidewalk elevations and drainage. The Committee continues to work with Jarred Meyer, Fakler Architects and Rogge to correct the issues and move forward with finishing the project.

The new sign was installed by Precision Sign and Graphics this week.

NARD CONFERENCE VOTING DELEGATE AND ALTERNATE

Discussion was held regarding the appointment of our voting delegate and alternate for the 2026 NARD Annual Conference.

MOTION #7 was made by Duane Parde, and seconded by Dean Roehr, to appoint Chairman, Chad Weichel, as the voting delegate and NARD Representative, Steve Kelley, as the alternate voting delegate for the LBBNRD for the 2026 NARD Annual Conference. Motion carried.

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

NARD RESOLUTIONS

Tyler reported on three resolutions which were discussed at the most recent Managers' meeting.

NARD 457 DEFERED COMPENSATION PLAN ROLLOVER AMMENDMENT

Scott stated the NARD Board has approved allowing in plan rollovers and transfers to the Roth portion of the 457 plan.

MOTION #8 was made by Bruce Weise, and seconded by Steve Kelley, to adopt the resolution allowing in plan Roth rollover contributions and in plan Roth rollover transfers in the NARD 457 plan. Motion carried.

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

NRD PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES REPORT

The audit was conducted July 29th and 30th. Scott noted that no new findings were presented in the preliminary report.

Scott Theis reported on haying progress at recreation areas.

Scott reported that the District currently has \$10,915.00 in NSWCP applications which have not been paid due to an injunction on expenditure of funds related to the Nebraska Environmental Trust. There is an additional \$65,000 in land treatment projects which are on hold at this time.

Scott stated that staff are working to order flow meter seals and will begin inspecting and sealing required meters this fall.

Cub Creek is now off health alert for blue green algae.

The Districts IMP meeting will be held October 7th.

Pictures of dumping at Walnut Creek recreation area were shown, staff have installed bilingual no dumping and video surveillance signs.

AGENCY REPORTS

NRCS

Kelli Evans talked about the activities of her office including EQIP contracts and CSP documentation letters. The NRD part time secretary will start in the NRCS office on September 1st.

EXTENSION OFFICE

No Report

NRC

Steve reported that the next meeting will be September 29th during the NARD conference.

NARD

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UPCOMING MEETINGS

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| a. August 28 th – September 7 th | Nebraska State Fair |
| b. September 7 th | Labor Day |
| c. September 15 th – 17 th | Husker Harvest Days |
| d. September 17 th | Budget Hearing 8:30 a.m. followed by levy hearing |
| e. September 17 th | NRD Board Meeting following hearings |
| f. September 28 th – 29 th | NARD Annual Conference |

Being no further business, Chairperson Chad Weichel adjourned the meeting at 10:38 a.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 August 27 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 August 29, 2024 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.