Minutes of the
Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District
Committee of the Whole
Thursday, November 12, 2026 – 7:00 p.m.
Lower Elkhorn NRD
1508 Square Turn Blvd, Norfolk, Nebraska

1. Chairman Matt Steffen informed the Board and those attending of the Publication of Meeting Notice in the Norfolk Daily News on November 6, 2026, and of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act information posted on the wall.

   Directors in attendance were Jerry Alleman, Jim Aschoff, Mark Burenheide, Scott Clausen, Andrew Hrabanek, Lee Klein, Chad Korth, Kris Loberg, Gary Loftis, Jay Reikofski, Matt Steffen, and Anthony Wisnieski. Mike Fleer, Roger Gustafson, and Melissa Temple were absent from the meeting.

2. Public Comment – There were no comments from the public at this time.

3. Projects and Programs

   a. Update on North Fork Elkhorn River WFPO and Maple Creek WFPO design phase contracts – Assistant General Manager Curt Becker reported that the final contracts are not complete yet like he had hoped. He is hoping that at least one, if not both, will be ready by Board Meeting.

4. Water Resources

   a. Discussion regarding the establishment of groundwater allocation amounts, for the 2027 growing season, for irrigation wells located in the Lower Elkhorn NRD Quantity Management Subareas that are currently subject to annual groundwater allocations – General Manager Brian Bruckner reviewed the quantity management subareas with the Board and recommended no change.

      **Recommended motion: To set the 2027 allocation amounts for the Lower Elkhorn NRD Quantity Management Subareas at: 18 inches per irrigated acre for gravity/flood systems, 13 inches per irrigated acre for subsurface drip irrigation systems, and 14 inches per irrigated acre for all other irrigation systems in the Eastern Madison County Quantity Management Subarea; and 17 inches per irrigated acre for gravity/flood irrigation systems, 12 inches per irrigated acre for subsurface drip irrigation systems, and 13 inches per irrigated acre for all other irrigation systems in the Wayne County Quantity Management Subarea**

   b. Discussion regarding a scoring miscalculation for a Standard Variance Application for New Irrigated Acres from the 2025 Standard Variance signup period – Water Resources Manager Doug Hallum noted that during the 2026 Standard Variance signup, a producer called attention to a discrepancy between his 2024 and 2025 applications. Staff discovered they had made a

typographical error on the 2025 application that resulted in the loss of 75 points. Without the error, the application would have been approved Staff recommend correcting the score and approving the 2025 variance application. It would add 67 acres to the Non-1050 Area for 2025.

**Recommended motion: To instruct staff to amend the final total score for LENRD Standard Variance ID #25-111, due to a scoring miscalculation and to amend the motions that pertain to the Non 10/50 Area Standard Variances that were approved at the January 22, 2026 Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District Board of Directors meeting to reflect the corrected number: 3,896.88 new groundwater irrigated acres.**

c. Update and Inventory of the Standard Variance Applications Received during the October 1 – 30, 2026 sign-up period – Water Resources Manager Doug Hallum provided a table detailing the breakdown of the 136 applications for 12,051 acres that were received in the 2026 sign-up.

d. LENRD Grant Funded Project Updates – Water Resources Manager Doug Hallum provided updates on the Groundwater for Public Health project and the Observing Water and Nutrient Mobility in the Vadose Zone project. He also noted that the LENRD is hosting the Nebraska Geological Society Fall Field Trip on Monday and Tuesday.

5. Administrative

a. LENRD Office Equipment - Copier Bids – General Manager Brian Bruckner presented 3 bids received to replace the copier machine. Staff recommend purchasing a copier from Bishop Business due to the established relationship with them.

**Recommended motion: To authorize staff to purchase a Toshiba E-Studio 4525ac Color from Bishop Business for $5,549.00 as quoted.**

b. Discussion regarding a potential funding arrangement between the Lower Elkhorn NRD and Wau Col Regional Water System to assist with the expenses associated with the SCADA system upgrades – General Manager Brian Bruckner provided a background of the updates to the Wau Col Water System and additional expenses that were incurred during the project. The cost of the project would cause a significant depletion of Wau Col's available cash. The Wau Col Advisory committee is recommending and requesting a $100,000.00 loan from the LENRD to be repaid over 8 years at 0% interest on an annual payment schedule. Similar agreements have been utilized in the past.

**Recommended motion: To provide a loan in the amount of $100,000 to be repaid over an 8 year term at 0% interest to the Wau Col Regional Water System to be used to offset the cost of SCADA system improvements and to instruct staff to facilitate the transfer of funds from the LENRD to the Wau Col RWS.**

c. Fiscal Year 2026 Audit – The fiscal year audit will be presented at the December 22, 2026 Board of Directors meeting. General Manager Brian Bruckner noted that Donita Pokorny will join the December Board Meeting virtually as has been done in the past to present the annual audit.