

**MINUTES OF THE
LOWER ELKHORN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

Lower Elkhorn NRD Office
1508 Square Turn Blvd, Norfolk, Nebraska
7:30 p.m. – Thursday, February 27, 2025

The Board of Directors Meeting of the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District was called to order by Chairman Matt Steffen on Thursday, February 27, 2025 at the Lower Elkhorn NRD, 1508 Square Turn Blvd., Norfolk, Nebraska. Chairman Steffen informed the Board and those attending of the Publication of Meeting Notice in the Norfolk Daily News on February 21, 2025, and of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act information posted on the wall.

Roll call was taken by Administrative Assistant Patty Martens with 13 of 15 Directors present. Members present were Jim Aschoff, Mark Burenheide, Mike Flear, Roger Gustafson, Andy Hrabanek, Lee Klein, Chad Korth, Kris Loberg, Gary Loftis, Jay Reikofski, Melissa Temple, Anthony Wisnieski and Matt Steffen. Jerry Allemann and Scott Clausen were absent from the meeting

Motion was made by Flear and seconded by Wisnieski to excuse the absence of Directors Allemann and Clausen. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Flear, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Loftis and seconded by Korth to adopt the agenda. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Flear, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

At this time, Chairman Steffen opened the floor to public comment. Ryan Zimmerman addressed the Board.

Janel Kaufman and Bob Gregalunas of Houston Engineering presented an update on the Maple Creek WFPO. The WFPO Plan-EA is complete and now awaiting approval by the NRCS National Headquarters. Comments were received by the public.

Motion was made by Loftis and seconded by Burenheide to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2025 Board of Directors Meeting. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Flear, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

The Finance Subcommittee report was given by Anthony Wisnieski. Motion was made by Wisnieski and seconded by Klein to approve income in the amount of \$431,512.44 and expenses in the amount of \$329,419.27 for the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Flear, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Abstain: Loftis. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

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Motion was made by Wisnieski and seconded by Loftis to approve income in the amount of \$82,911.02 and expenses in the amount of \$152,068.78 for the Logan East Rural Water System. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Wisnieski and seconded by Hrabanek to approve income in the amount of \$7,023.14 and expenses in the amount of \$4,703.84 for the Wau-Col Regional Water System. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

The conservation cost share report was given by Assistant General Manager Curt Becker. A copy of the report is attached to the official minutes.

The Nebraska Association of Resources District report was given by Gary Loftis.

The Nebraska Natural Resources Commission report was referenced in Dropbox by General Manager Brian Bruckner as Elkhorn Basin Delegate Chris Dierks was not in attendance. A copy of the report is attached to the official minutes.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service report was given by District Conservationist Robin Sutherland. A copy of the report is attached to the official minutes.

The Nebraska Loess Hills and Northeast Nebraska RC&D meetings were cancelled due to weather.

The Bazile Groundwater Management Area report was referenced in Dropbox by General Manager Brian Bruckner as Lisa Lauver was not in attendance. A copy of the report is attached to the official minutes.

The Administrative Report was given by General Manager Brian Bruckner. A copy is attached to the official minutes.

The Logan East Rural Water System report was referenced in Dropbox by General Manager Brian Bruckner as Logan East RWS Manager Shawn Blahak was not in attendance. A copy is attached to the official minutes.

Motion was made by Loftis and seconded by Gustafson to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2025 Logan East RWS Advisory meeting. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski and seconded by Gustafson to approve the Wau-Col RWS Advisory Committee appointment of Dan Kollars as the Lewis & Clark Natural Resources District representative to the Wau-Col Advisory Committee for the remaining two years of the three-year term that ends in 2027. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

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Motion was made by Reikofski and seconded by Hrabanek to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2025 Wau-Col Advisory meeting. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Fler, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

The Maskenthine Recreation Area proposed Mountain Bike Trail Revitalization project was presented to the Board by Maskenthine Trail Network member Rhonda Wright.

Motion was made by Reikofski and seconded by Korth to accept the \$20,912.50 bid from Cech Excavating for the Maple Creek Reservoir Shoreline Protection Project. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Fler, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski and seconded by Loftis to approve ten Community Forestry Program and one Forestry Incentive for Public Facilities application for a total LENRD cost of \$35,773.38, as presented. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Fler, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried. Details and amounts on page 5.

Motion was made by Reikofski and seconded by Klein to accept the \$8,943.00 bid from Carhart Kitchen and Bath for the purchase and installation of new cabinets and countertops for the Willow Creek Recreation Area superintendent home. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Fler, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: Korth. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski and seconded by Loftis to instruct staff to budget and provide funding in the amount of \$10,000 annually for the next 5 fiscal years to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for the operation and maintenance of Willow Creek State Recreation Area. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Fler, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: Korth. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski and seconded by Loberg to instruct the General Manager to develop a contract with Houston Engineering to complete the Willow Creek Floodplain Management Plan and authorize the General Manager to sign said contract for an amount not to exceed \$25,903.00. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Fler, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski and seconded by Korth to instruct staff to prepare and issue cease and desist orders to landowners who have failed to comply with the submittal of flow meter readings as required by Sections 11.2.2 and 11.11 of the LENRD Groundwater Management Area Rules and Regulations. Aye: Burenheide, Fler, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: Aschoff. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski and seconded by Korth to instruct staff to prepare and issue notice of violation letters to farm operators who have failed to comply with the submittal of

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Phase 2 and 3 Management Area Annual Reports as required by Section 12.2.2.5 of the LENRD Groundwater Management Area Rules and Regulations. Aye: Burenheide, Fler, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: Aschoff. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski and seconded by Korth to instruct staff to draft a cooperative agreement between the LENRD and City of Norfolk to facilitate the provision of annual financial support for the cost of disposal of product received at the Household Hazardous Waste Facility from households outside the City of Norfolk. Aye: Burenheide, Fler, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Steffen. Nay: Aschoff, Wisnieski. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski and seconded by Steffen to oppose LB695 which would require the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District to construct a dam in the Battle Creek Watershed on the premise that the legislation (if enacted) would create an unfunded mandate for the Lower Elkhorn NRD and circumvents local control.

Discussion Followed.

Motion was made by Temple and seconded by Klein to amend the original motion to read: to oppose LB695 which would require the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District to construct a dam in the Battle Creek Watershed on the premise that the legislation (if enacted) would create an unfunded mandate for the Lower Elkhorn NRD and circumvents local control. In addition, the LENRD Board will provide assurances that after the study, the Board will move forward with the recommendations. Aye: Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loftis, Temple. Nay: Aschoff, Burenheide, Fler, Gustafson, Loberg, Reikofski, Wisnieski, Steffen. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion failed.

Vote on original motion. Aye: Aschoff, Burenheide, Fler, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Korth, Loberg, Reikofski, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Abstain: Klein, Loftis, Temple. Absent: Allemann, Clausen. Motion carried.

Recreation Area Superintendent Tyler Warren addressed the Board with regard to improvements to the Pilger Recreation Area. There are members of the Public who would like to see improvements implemented. Future discussions are planned.

Motion was made by Aschoff and seconded by Burenheide to adjourn the meeting at 11:01 p.m.

Others present and speaking were Jarett Doernemann, Gerald Kratochvil, Chuck Hamernik, Gary Ullery, Steve Baumert, John Bomar, John Klein, and Matt Johnson.

COMMUNITY FORESTRY INCENTIVE Fiscal Year 2026			
APPLICANT	DESCRIPTION	PROJECTED COST	TOTAL FUNDING REQUESTED
Pender Public Schools	Pendragon Sports Complex Landscaping	\$6,650.00	\$4,987.50
City of Norfolk	Whitewater Park Tree Planting	\$4,394.50	\$3,295.88
City of West Point	West Point, NE 2025 Tree Program	\$5,121.62	\$3,841.21
Village of Leigh	Centennial Park Lake Trees	\$4,375.00	\$1,000.00
Northeast Community College	Northeast Community College Urban Farm Orchard	\$4,090.00	\$3,067.50
City of Wakefield	Plant 2025	\$12,366.00	\$5,000.00
Village of Pilger	2025 Pilger Tree Recovery	\$1,575.05	\$1,181.29
City of Wisner	City of Wisner 2025 Citywide Planting Project	\$7,400.00	\$5,000.00
City of Lyons	"Project City of Trees" Phase 4	\$5,890.00	\$4,000.00
Village of Wausa	Village of Wausa-Softball/Park Shade Project	\$8,000.00	\$3,200.00
FORESTRY INCENTIVE FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES Fiscal Year 2026			
Rich Charipar Memorial Golf Course	Club 91 Re-Tree 25	\$2,452.85	\$1,200.00
	TOTAL:	\$62,315.02	\$35,773.38