

**MINUTES OF THE
LOWER ELKHORN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING**
Lower Elkhorn NRD Office
1508 Square Turn Blvd, Norfolk, Nebraska
7:30 p.m. – Thursday, January 22, 2026

The Board of Directors Meeting of the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District was called to order by Board Chairman Matt Steffen on Thursday, January 22, 2026 at the Lower Elkhorn NRD, 1508 Square Turn Blvd., Norfolk, Nebraska. Steffen informed the Board and those attending of the Publication of Meeting Notice in the Norfolk Daily News on January 16, 2026, and of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act information posted on the wall.

Roll call was taken by Programs Coordinator Kristie Freudenburg with 15 of 15 Directors present. Members present were Jerry Allemann, Jim Aschoff, Mark Burenheide, Scott Clausen, Mike Fleer, Roger Gustafson, Andy Hrabanek, Lee Klein, Chad Korth, Kris Loberg, Gary Loftis, Jay Reikofski, Matt Steffen, Melissa Temple, and Anthony Wisnieski.

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

There were no comments from the public at this time.

Motion was made by Clausen and seconded by Hrabanek to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2025 board of directors meeting. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Motion carried.

The Finance Subcommittee report was given by Treasurer Jerry Allemann. Motion was made by Allemann and seconded by Klein to approve income in the amount of \$705,524.33 and expenses in the amount of \$443,008.64 for the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Reikofski, Temple, Steffen. Nay: None. Abstain: Hrabanek, Loftis, Wisnieski. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Allemann and seconded by Loftis to approve income in the amount of \$83,309.42 and expenses in the amount of \$48,810.99 for the Logan East Rural Water System. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Allemann and seconded by Korth to approve income in the amount of \$8,865.17 and expenses in the amount of \$4,857.05 for the Wau-Col Regional Water System. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Motion carried.

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

The Nebraska Association of Resources District – Director Loftis reported there was discussion on the new software, Producer Connect, which is used for producer reporting.

The Nebraska Natural Resources Commission – No report available.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service - 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&Ds – The Loess Hills RC&D report is attached to the official minutes. There was nothing to report for the Northeast Nebraska RC&D.

The Bazile Groundwater Management Area Project – The BGMA report was given by Marcus Blunck. A copy of the report is attached to the official minutes.

At this time Nathan Kush, the newly hired Conservation Planner, along with Source Water Protection Specialist Jim Olson gave reports on their job roles.

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

Logan East Rural Water System - Logan East RWS Manager Shawn Blahak was not in attendance although a copy of his report is attached to the official minutes.

Motion was made by Loftis and seconded by Gustafson to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2026 Logan East RWS Advisory meeting. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski seconded by Aschoff to approve the Wau-Col RWS Advisory Committee appointment of Ken Bloomquist, Wausa; Tod Voss, McLean; and Harold Reynolds, At-Large; to three-year terms on the Wau-Col Committee ending in 2029. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski seconded by Clausen to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2026 Wau-Col RWS Advisory meeting. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski seconded by Allemann to approve the Wau-Col Advisory Committee recommended 7.5% increase to the water use rate and base rate, effective April 1, 2026. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski seconded by Korth to approve the Change Order for the Wau-Col Regional Water – East System SCADA Upgrade for \$11,408.00 with MicroComm as

recommended by the Wau Col Advisory Committee. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Steffen. Nay: Wisnieski. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Fleer seconded by Loftis to approve resolution 2026-01, which approves the Battle Creek Watershed Agreement and authorize the General Manager and Chairman to sign both resolution 2026-01 and the Battle Creek Watershed Agreement. Aye: Fleer, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loftis, Temple. Nay: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Gustafson, Loberg, Reikofski, Wisnieski, Steffen. Motion failed.

Motion was made by Reikofski seconded by Clausen to approve resolution 2026-02, which approves the North Fork Elkhorn River Watershed Agreement and authorize the General Manager and Chairman to sign both resolution 2026-02 and the North Fork Elkhorn River Watershed Agreement. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: Clausen, Klein, Temple. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski seconded by Hrabanek to instruct staff to submit the letter of request as presented to NRCS to extend the expiration date and amend funds from planning work to preliminary design work for the North Fork Elkhorn River WFPO Grant. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski seconded by Steffen to authorize the general manager to sign the contract amendment with JEO Consulting Group to incorporate preliminary design work for the North Fork Elkhorn River WFPO Watershed Plan-EA contract as presented contingent on NRCS approval of fund amendment for the North Fork Elkhorn River WFPO Grant. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski seconded by Klein to adopt the final ranking of applications for Standard Variances as presented by District staff in the Excel spreadsheets titled “Exhibit A – 10/50 Area”, “Exhibit B – Non 10/50 Area”, and “Exhibit C – LENRD Quantity Management Subarea.” Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski seconded by Korth to allow up to 332.64 new groundwater irrigated acres in the LENRD Quantity Management Subarea, in accordance with the District’s Rules 13, 15, and 17, and to authorize staff to issue variances for the recommended applications contained in Exhibit A, subject to the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District Conditions for Approval Policy. Approval of this motion will simultaneously instruct Staff to prepare correspondence to notify all non- approved applicants of the outcome and inform them of possible opportunities to reapply in the future. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski seconded by Korth to allow up to 3,694.69 new groundwater irrigated acres in the District’s Non 10/50 area, in accordance with the District’s Rule 15, and to authorize staff to issue variances for the recommended applications contained in Exhibit B, subject

to the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District Conditions for Approval Policy. Approval of this motion will simultaneously instruct staff to prepare correspondence to notify all non-approved applicants of the outcome and inform them of possible opportunities to reapply in the future. Aye: Allemann, Aschoff, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Abstain: Gustafson. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski seconded by Korth to allow up to 386.38 acre-feet of new peak-season streamflow depletions for the District's 10/50 area, in accordance with the District's Rule 13, and to authorize staff to issue variances for the recommended applications contained in Exhibit C, subject to the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District Conditions for Approval Policy. Approval of this motion will simultaneously instruct staff to prepare correspondence to notify all non-approved applicants of the outcome and inform them of possible opportunities to reapply in the future. Aye: Allemann, Burenheide, Clausen, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Reikofski, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: None. Abstain: Aschoff. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Reikofski seconded by Korth to instruct staff to send out notice of intent to issue letters as presented to entities that have not submitted flow meter readings by January 30th. Aye: Allemann, Burenheide, Fleer, Gustafson, Hrabanek, Klein, Korth, Loberg, Loftis, Temple, Wisnieski, Steffen. Nay: Aschoff, Clausen, Reikofski. Motion carried.

The upcoming meetings and conferences are: NARD Legislative Conference, Jan 27-28, 2026 in Lincoln, NE; NACD 80th Annual Meeting, February 15-19, 2026 in San Antonio, TX; GMDA Winter Meeting, March 2-5, 2026 in Roswell, NM; and the NARD Washington, D.C. Conference, March 28-April 1, 2026 in Washington, D.C.

Nominated for Treasurer were Anthony Wisnieski and Mike Fleer. After ballots were gathered and counted, it was announced that Director Anthony Wisnieski was elected Treasurer for 2026-2027. (Wisnieski – 9, Fleer – 5).

Others present and speaking: Rex Volk, Jeremy Grant, James Geyer, Jim Kaufman, John Dittrich, John Bomar, Andy Colvin, Nick Schafer, Mark Hall, Doug Nelson.

The meeting adjourned at 10:38 p.m.

I, the undersigned Secretary of the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the proceedings had and done by the Board of Directors on January 22, 2026 that all of the subjects included in the foregoing proceedings were contained in the agenda for at least twenty-four hours prior to said meeting, the minutes of the Chairman and the Board were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days and prior to the next convened meeting of said body, that all news media requesting notification of the time and place of said meeting and the subjects to be discussed at said meeting.

Kris Loberg, Secretary