

Minutes of the  
Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District  
Committee of the Whole Meeting  
Thursday, March 12, 2026 – 5:00 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 March 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, Mike Fleer, Roger Gustafson, Andrew Hrabanek, Lee Klein, Chad Korth, Gary Loftis, Jay Reikofski, Matt Steffen, Melissa Temple, and Anthony Wisnieski. Kris Loberg was absent from the meeting.

2. Public Comment - There were no comments from the public at this time.
3. Projects and Programs

- a. Community Forestry Program and Forestry Incentive for Public Facilities Applications for Fiscal Year 2027 - Todd Stewart provided applicant information to the Board. There are 4 applicants for the Community Forestry program and 1 applicant for the Forestry Incentive for Public Facilities program.

**Recommended motion: To approve four Community Forestry and one Forestry Incentive for Public Facilities applications for a total LENRD cost of \$13,840.25, as presented.**

- b. City of Pierce Levee System Accreditation Preliminary Design Funding Request – The City of Pierce will be working on the preliminary design and US Army Corps of Engineers 408 approval to modify the Pierce Levee System. The city is requesting funding assistance for the portions of the preliminary design that are not covered by the WFPO program. – Assistant Manager Curt Becker presented information on the certification process which includes the feasibility study (completed), preliminary design, final design, construction and certification, and lastly FEMA levee accreditation. Costs are estimated to be around \$540,000 with \$97,010 (funds received) carried over from the plan phase. The remaining local costs of \$442,990 will be split 50/50 between the City of Pierce and the Lower Elkhorn NRD. There is a possibility of an approval for design funds of \$226,990 from the federal government which would decrease local funds to around \$216,000 or \$108,000 from each entity. Pierce City Administrator Chad Anderson was also present and spoke to the Board.

**Recommended motion: To approve the interlocal cooperation agreement with the City of Pierce for the preliminary design of the Pierce Levee improvements as presented and authorize the General Manager to sign said agreement.**

#### 4. Water Resources

- a. Discussion Regarding the Development of a Process and Policy to Address Requests for New Uses of Groundwater that would be Classified as “Large Water Uses” - Staff will periodically receive inquiries about the local policies that govern new uses of groundwater – specifically for industrial and/or commercial use. – General Manager Brian Bruckner informed the Board of a conversation he had with representatives from Geronimo Power, a Minnesota based company. The representatives evaluate possible locations for the development of data centers. The water used would be for a source of cooling needed in the plant. Because of inquiries from entities like Geronimo Power, Bruckner noted the importance of developing a *large water use* policy at the LENRD for new, large water users in our District. Hallum presented some considerations for large water user rules.
- b. Status Update on Submittal of Phase 2 and 3 Management Area Reports (which are now due January 15th of each year) – Connor Baldwin estimated there were around 350 reports that have not yet been turned in. More efforts will be made to get the remaining reports.

**Recommended motion: To instruct staff to issue Notices of Violation to farm operators who have failed to submit annual field reports as required by Section 12.2.2.5 of the LENRD Groundwater Management Area Rules and Regulations.**

- c. Status Update on Compliance with Submittal of Season Ending Flow Meter Reports (due December 1st of each year) – Curt Becker noted that all reports have been received.
- d. Nitrogen Certification – As of date, 15 producers have yet to be recertified. Producers need to be certified once every four years. Classes have been provided by the LENRD to help producers in fulfilling their certification requirement.

**Recommended motion: To instruct staff to issue Notices of Violation to farm operators who have failed to obtain Nitrogen Certification as required by Section 12.2.2.2 of the LENRD Groundwater Management Area Rules and Regulations.**

- e. Report on the Groundwater Management Districts Association conference held in Roswell, NM from March 2-5 – Doug Hallum and Director Chad Korth provided the Board with an overview of the event.

#### 5. Administrative

- a. Discussion on Purchase of Truck for Water Resources (previously authorized in November 2025) - After being notified by Norfolk Motor Company that they could no longer get the truck previously agreed upon, Bruckner investigated other options for purchasing a truck. After settling on a purchase from a different entity and presenting a motion at the February board meeting, Bruckner was notified by Norfolk Motor Company that they could get the truck, and at a lower cost than originally presented. A motion will be brought forward at the March board meeting to purchase the truck for the amount of \$39,735.

**Recommended motion: To accept the bid from Norfolk Motor Company for the purchase of a 2026 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 in the amount of \$39,735.00.**