

Minutes of the
Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District
Committee of the Whole
Thursday, May 14, 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 May 8, 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, Andrew Hrabanek, Lee Klein, Kris Loberg, Gary Loftis, Jay Reikofski, Matt Steffen, and Anthony Wisnieski. Roger Gustafson, Chad Korth, and Melissa Temple were absent from the meeting.

2. Public Comment – Mark Hall addressed the Board at this time.

3. Projects and Programs

- a. City of Norfolk 2022 Drainage Study - The City of Norfolk and the Lower Elkhorn NRD partnered in 2022 to evaluate drainage on an approximately 7.8 square mile area of developed and undeveloped property on the east edge of the City. Assistant General Manager Curt Becker gave a recap of the history along with various aspects of the study. Ann Nissen, Water Resources Engineer with JEO Consulting was in attendance via video. Ann provided more insight on the project and detailed how JEO arrived at the figures and recommendations presented on the PowerPoint presentation.
- b. Elkhorn River Cameras - Elkhorn River Cameras - The Papio Missouri NRD, in partnership with the United States Geological Survey has deployed cameras to observe conditions on the Elkhorn River at Winslow and West Point. A request to help fund the annual cost of operation and maintenance of the cameras has been made by the Papio Missouri NRD. Papio Missouri NRD is requesting \$1,587.50 per camera per year for a total of \$3,175 yearly. After a brief discussion, it was concluded that the LENRD would retain the status quo, not to provide financial support for the operation and maintenance costs associated with the cameras.
- c. Budget Planning Pages – Curt Becker presented the following Fiscal Year 2027 budget items: Establish and Preserve Fish and Wildlife Habitat; Agroforestry Incentives Program; Conservation Tree Program; Well Sealing Program; Recreation Area Development Program and Conservation Assistance Program; Community Forestry Incentives Program; Forestry Incentive for Public Facilities; and Conservation Cost-Share and Lands for Conservation Programs. Budget workshops will be held in the near future.

4. Water Resources

- a. LENRD Observation Well Network - Spring 2026 Water Level Report - Water Resources Technician Dallas Dorey provided a report on the groundwater elevation data that has recently been collected.
- b. Vadose Zone Studies Update – Water Resources Manager Doug Hallum provided an update on the Nebraska Environmental Trust project and share additional information gathered from data collected in Cuming, Colfax, and Dodge Counties.
- c. LENRD/LCNRD Source Water Protection Specialist Jim Olson provided a status update on his efforts to connect with landowners and farm operators to establish conservation practices on working lands that intersect with Wellhead Protection Areas.
- d. Budget Planning Pages – Doug Hallum presented the following Fiscal Year 2027 budget items: Groundwater Quantity Monitoring Program; Groundwater Quality Monitoring Program; Groundwater Management Area – Phase areas 2 and 3; Groundwater Management Area – Flow Meters; Wellhead Protection Program; Public Water Supply Test Well Cost-Share Program; Vadose Zone Monitoring Program; Hydrogeologic Study Program; Water Resources Planning; and Stream Gage Program.

5. Administrative

- a. 2026 Senior Scholarship Awards - Communications Specialist Liz Lienemann shared information on the scholarship award recipients and qualifications required. The LENRD received 23 applications of which 10 students were chosen for the \$500 award.
- b. Dana F. Cole Fiscal Year 2026 Auditing Agreement – The Auditing Agreement is expected to be presented to the Board during the May 28, 2026 LENRD Board of Director meeting.

Recommended motion: To approve the Fiscal Year 2026 Auditing Agreement with Dana F. Cole & Company.

- c. Budget Planning Pages – Liz Lienemann presented the following Fiscal Year 2027 budget items: Public Outreach; Water Resources Advertising and Education; Youth and Adult Education; Outdoor Classroom Grants; Forestry Advertising and Education; Scholarship Program; District Awards Program; and Sponsorships.