

Minutes of the
Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District
Committee of the Whole
Thursday, June 11, 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 June 5, 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, Roger Gustafson, Andrew Hrabanek, Lee Klein, Chad Korth, Kris Loberg, Gary Loftis, Jay Reikofski, Matt Steffen, and Anthony Wisnieski. Mike Fleer 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. Colfax County Streambank Stabilization Project – Assistant Manager Curt Becker presented a project 3 miles east and 8-9 miles south of Howells that would protect a county road bridge that was replaced in 2018. There has been erosion in the curve of the stream that could potentially threaten the bridge if it continues, and they want to stabilize the streambank with rip rap. Colfax County is wondering if the District would assist financially. The District made a policy in 2019 that requires public infrastructure to be at risk and another government entity is a partner for any streambank stabilization project requests. This project would follow that policy. Colfax County Commission Chairman Carl Grotelueschen answered additional questions about the project that they anticipate to cost around \$250,000, with oversight around \$60,000. Engineer Jordan Wachal was also available online. They are requesting 50% support from the District but would be appreciative of any amount. The Board requested further confirmation from the Army Corps of Engineers that there was no available funding for this project, and Becker will communicate with them.

Recommended motion: to authorize the Chairman of the Board to sign the Interlocal Agreement with Colfax County as presented for the Colfax County Streambank Stabilization project.

- b. City of Battle Creek/LENRD Meeting to Discuss Flood Mitigation Options – General Manager Brian Bruckner presented an email summary of the meeting that was held on Monday, June 1, 2026 between the City of Battle Creek representatives and the Lower Elkhorn NRD subcommittee. Chad Korth and Andy Hrabanek attended the City of Battle Creek Council Meeting and updated the Board that the City had tabled the discussion out of a desire for more information and a more accurate cost estimate. Curt Becker has a meeting scheduled with the

Army Corps of Engineers on Monday, June 15.

- c. Northeast Weed Management Area – NET Funding and NRD Match Funding from the Lewis and Clark, Upper Elkhorn, and Lower Niobrara NRD’s – General Manager Brian Bruckner updated the Board on this matter that had previously been voted down by the Board. After the LENRD Board voted, the LCNRD, UENRD, and LNNRD voted in support. Bruckner wanted to report these facts and determine if the Board wished to revisit the issue. It was decided to bring it back to be voted on again at the June Board meeting.

Recommended motion: to provide financial assistance to the Northeast Nebraska Weed Management Area, not to exceed \$6,000.00 annually, for FY27 and FY28, to be used as matching funds for a 3-year grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET). Extension of the \$6,000.00 is contingent on successful procurement of the NET grant and will only be expended on lands within the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District.

- d. Budget Planning Pages – Assistant Manager Curt Becker presented budget numbers related to Flood Control and Prevention Projects and NRD-owned Recreational Areas.

4. Water Resources

- a. Water Resources Field work – Water Resources Manager Doug Hallum provided an update on summer field work and upcoming field work including beach sampling; Willow Stream sampling; Groundwater for Public Health sampling project; domestic sampling; Cuming, Colfax, and Dodge summer irrigation sampling; statewide sampling; chemigation inspections; variances, acre certification, and transfers; meter maintenance in Colfax, Platte, and Stanton counties; NET Vadose Zone Study. Management area reporting is down to 16 producers/60 fields; monitoring well telemetry is installed and waiting for everything to go online; NE Geological Society field trip will be in the Lower Elkhorn this fall; and multiple staff are completing additional educational training.
- b. Central Plains Drinking Water Quality and Rural Health Symposium – Source Water Protection Specialist Jim Olson provided an update on his attendance at the Symposium. His breakout discussions centered on Community Engagement and Policy. He also gave a short update on his outreach efforts.
- c. Budget Planning Pages – Water Resources Manager Doug Hallum presented proposed budget numbers related to water resources. He noted an increase in expenses, but there will be grant reimbursements that will help offset some of the increased expenses.

5. Executive Board

- a. Fiscal Year 2027 Wage Adjustments – General Manager Brian Bruckner informed the Board of the upcoming consideration of the Fiscal Year 2027 wage increase.

Recommended motion: to approve the salary living adjustment of 3.5% and to approve the step and grade changes proposed by management for Fiscal Year 2027.

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

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