

MINUTES

LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

March 26, 2026

Ord, Nebraska

The March meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lower Loup Natural Resources District was held at the Headquarters Office, 2620 Airport Drive, Ord, Nebraska, on March 26, 2026. Vice Chairman R. Vlach called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Directors in attendance:

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer
Robert L. Bauer
Jeremy Eschliman
Justin W. King
Gary A. Kruse
Todd Nitsch
Chad J. Podolak
Rick Vlach, Vice Chairman

Timothy E. Bartak
Colton R. DeBower
Randy Kauk
Thomas L. Knutson
Larry Mohrman, Secretary
Alan Petersen
Gerald Smith

Directors absent:

James Eschliman
Henry J. Thoene, Chairman

John Shadle
Alexander L. Vlach

Staff in attendance:

Russell G. Callan, General Manager
Irene Kreifels, Administrative Assistant
Alan Bartels, I & E Coordinator
Dell Harris, Water Resources Specialist
Kevin Gustafson, District Engineer
Ann Freeman, Water Programs Secretary
Mike Lorenz, Agronomist

Tylr Naprstek, Assistant General Manager
Kim A. Lyons, Financial Secretary
Brant Bechtold, I & E Specialist
Makenzi Woollen, Financial Assistant
Jason Moudry, Water Programs Specialist
Aron Lewis, District Conservation Forester

Guests in attendance:

Miles Anderson, NRCS, DC East
Jess Milby, Fullerton
Rob Ita, Ericson

Clifford Sterner, Merna
Jeremy Hoefler, Elgin

VERIFICATION OF MEETING NOTICE AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Vice Chairman R. Vlach asked for verification of the meeting notice. General Manager Russ Callan stated that the agenda was current, and that the meeting notices were properly published in all newspapers, posted at the NRD Headquarters office in Ord, on the NRD website, and in the eight field office locations.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

R. Vlach stated that Directors Thoene and A. Vlach had asked to be excused. Callan added that Shadle asked to be excused.

Smith motioned, seconded by Kruse, to excuse absent directors Shadle, Thoene, and A. Vlach. Motion carried by electronic vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Bartak, Bauer, DeBower, King, Knutson, Mohrman, Nitsch, Petersen, Smith, R. Vlach. Directors not present for vote: Jeremy Eschliman, Kauk, Kruse, Podolak. Directors absent: James Eschliman, Shadle, Thoene, A. Vlach.

MINUTES

R. Vlach asked for corrections and/or additions to the February 26, 2026, Board meeting minutes. None being heard, R. Vlach announced that the minutes will stand approved as presented.

Jeremy Eschliman arrived at 4:03 p.m.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Russell Callan, General Manager, highlighted expenditures of \$2,628.00 to MTech, Inc. for hose supplies for the Nebraska Forest Service. Callan also highlighted additional expenditures of \$69,915.00 to Gateway Motors, Inc. for a new Suburban, adding that it was in the budget last year, however, there was no government discount available; \$90,381.25 to Downey Drilling, Inc. for the Nance County wells; \$56,055.39 total cost-share payments made to multiple producers and \$105,249.37 total Spring buffer strip payments made to multiple producers.

Bartak motioned, seconded by Knutson, to approve the March 26, 2026, Treasurer's Report. Motion carried by electronic vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Bartak, Bauer, DeBower, Jeremy Eschliman, King, Knutson, Nitsch, Petersen, Smith, R. Vlach. Directors abstaining: Mohrman. Directors not present for vote: Kauk, Kruse, Podolak. Directors absent: James Eschliman, Shadle, Thoene, A. Vlach.

The Treasurer's Report Approval Policy states that the approved expenditures are to be published and each director who has per diem and/or reimbursement of expenses included in such financial reports abstains from voting for the approval of his or her own per diem and/or expense reimbursement.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

R. Vlach asked for public comments, none heard.

CEASE AND DESIST

Callan reported on an intent to issue a cease and desist order to Jeremy Hoefler. He added that he has gone through this process in the past, creating and complying with a *Plan of Schedule of Compliance*, stating that he has had trouble getting his manure and soil samples from the facilities that he is working with. The past year he has once again been out of compliance. Callan stated that because of that, an intent to cease and desist order was set up for approval at this meeting. Callan added that Hoefler had taken the plan that we had sent him and modified it to allow him a 15-day window to get back to us, which Callan did not sign because he did not agree to the modification.

Callan stated that a signed document was never received. Callan's recommendation is to work with Hoefler to get a *Plan of Schedule of Compliance* signed and then issue a cease and desist later if Hoefler fails to report again.

Podolak arrived at 4:08 p.m.

Jeremy Hoefler arrived at 4:08 p.m.

Jeremy Eschliman added that he thought it would be good to give Hoefler the benefit of the doubt and give him a chance to bring his reporting back into compliance.

Callan added that it makes sense to him not to issue the cease and desist and produce a *Plan of Schedule of Compliance* that works going forward.

Jeremy Hoefler commented, "Only as good as the information that we agreed on four years ago. You're only as good as the people you have around you, and who you work with."

Bauer commented that he thinks it would be more than reasonable to hold off on the issuance of the cease and desist.

R. Vlach asked if we would proceed with a cease and desist if we do not receive information from Hoefler going forward. Callan replied yes.

Jeremy Eschliman asked what the timeline for the process would be. Callan stated that it is just paperwork between him and us, adding that we have the samples, we just need the reports along with a plan. Callan stated that going forward does not have anything to do with getting information put in, so he will not have to wait on us.

It was decided to table further discussion until later.

FORESTER'S REPORT

Aron Lewis, Conservation Forester, reported that so far 41,429 trees and 7,841 coco mats have been ordered across the various field offices. He added that April 1st is the deadline for ordering machine plants and that hand plant orders will be accepted until inventory runs out, adding that there are still quite a few trees available. He stated that there are 44 machine plant plans put into Phoenix, stating that last year there were 72, but some of the plans are larger this year. He added that he is planning to begin planting the 2nd or 3rd week of May. He added that he will be picking up handplant trees on April 8th and machine plant trees on the 10th. He stated that the hand plants will be bundled and handed out before they move into machine plants. Crews are hoping to start machine planting on April 13th.

Lewis reported that he spent 4 days on the Morrill fire, adding that it burned 642,029 acres and was the largest wildfire in Nebraska history. He stated that it is now 100% contained.

Lewis reported that the Cottonwood fire, south of Brady, burned 129,103 acres and is currently 98% contained, adding that there are still a lot of green pockets and some active fire under the cedar trees, so they are watching so it does not re-ignite.

Lewis reported that the Road 203 fire at Halsey burned 35,892 acres and is now 100% contained, adding that the nursery is fine and that the fire burned some of the same area and south of the previous Bovee fire. He added that it was a prescribed burn that got out of control.

Lewis reported that the Anderson Bridge fire, by Kilgore, burned 17,229 acres and is 100% contained.

Lewis reported that the Ashby fire re-ignited and made it into town and burned down homes and structures; however, there were no injuries or deaths. He added that there have been 34,641 acres burned and it is 0% contained; however, it is headed toward the Morrill fire, so it should stop when it hits there.

Lewis reported on the minor fire approximately 5 miles south of Hyannis, is 15,000 acres and is 0% contained and that Hyannis was evacuated; however, they ended up moving that back due to a change in wind direction.

Lewis added that there is a new fire started south of Interstate 80 near Paxton and there was no further update on it.

Lewis reported that next Monday and Tuesday he will be in Brown and Rock Counties, adding that they both got \$10 million for Community Wildfire Defense grants for hazardous fuels removal and public hearings will be held on those days.

Lewis reported that the NRD will host an Arbor Day program April 20th at 10:00 a.m. at the Ord Elementary School to replace a tree that died.

Podolak asked about the Sandhills sand blowing and grass ability to grow back after the fires. Lewis replied that he does not expect normal regrowth, adding that because of the lack of rain, there will be more blowouts. He stated if we get rain, it could come back, but if not, it will keep blowing everywhere.

Bartak asked the cause of the Cottonwood fire. Lewis replied that he did not know, adding that the Morrill fire was caused by a power line, Halsey was a prescribed burn, he did not know about Anderson bridge, but the ones today were dry lightning.

Jeremy Eschliman stated that fires help to kill overgrowth of cedar trees, but usually fires stunt big cedars but may not kill them. Lewis added that with less cedar trees, grass will be able to grow again which will bring back mule deer, etc.

Jeremy Eschliman asked if he had any context on the controlled burn in Halsey and Lewis replied that they were burning on a red flag warning day. He said that the burn ban has been extended for 2 weeks but he expects it to be longer if there is no rain.

Mohrman asked if there was a lot of lost livestock. Lewis replied that there was a lot and that people were cutting their fences to let the animals go in order to save them.

Jeremy Eschliman asked if the NRD should be doing something to help. Lewis stated that the NRD paid for equipment with money budgeted for prescribed burns that they have been able to use. Callan added that when money was put aside, it was not restricted to just the LLNRD so that equipment purchased with those funds can be used by others as well.

Jeremy Eschliman asked if, due to all the lost trees, there is any interest in providing 100% cost-share to rebuild tree losses. Lewis stated that the Nebraska Forest Service has a Landscape Scale Restoration grant specifically for planting in burn scars. He stated that they are replanting in the northern part now and then will focus on Halsey and the other areas. Lewis added that the NRD also does windbreak renovations that can help to recover after fire.

R. Vlach asked if other NRDs have Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMP) and how that could affect the burn areas. Callan stated that sometimes equipment is purchased with federal cost-share dollars and added that it is one of the first things that is asked for on grants and that the HMP is needed to qualify for most of the grants. We are a large district so we, as an NRD, have implemented the HMP for our 16 counties. In some other areas of the state, the counties have implemented an HMP.

NRCS REPORT

Miles Anderson, NRCS, DC East, reported that the USDA announced a wildfire assistance program through EQIP. He added that it is an act-now version, which allows producers to fill out applications and not have to wait for sign-up or ranking; they can just be funded if they qualify. He stated it can be used for cover crops, emergency animal mortality management, fence, mulching, deferment, annual forages for grazing systems, and can pay to plant cover crops for cows to graze. He stated that signup started on March 25th and runs till May 30th.

Anderson reported that staff is working to finalize conservation plans that have been turned in as well as work with the regenerative ag program. He added that Nebraska has used its allotment; however, there may be funding from other states not using it. He said that there is \$650,000 in the Lower Loup East that could fund about 15 applications and that they are waiting for the go-ahead on ranking.

He added that Continuous CRP enrollment has closed, but General is open and still available for those who may want to convert cropland into grass.

The Local Work Group will meet later than normal, possibly in May or June.

INFORMATION & EDUCATION REPORT

Washington D.C. Meeting

Alan Bartels, Information & Education Coordinator, reported that the Washington D.C. meeting is next week and those attending will be leaving Sunday. He added that the Nebraska Breakfast will not take place because the Senate is not in session. He also stated that NRCS involvement is limited so there will be new speakers.

Arbor Day Programming

Bartels reported that there will be an Arbor Day Program held at the Columbus Children's Museum that will include 4th graders from Twin Rivers School, St. Michaels in Albion, and Shell Creek Elementary in Columbus. Brant Bechtold, Information & Education Specialist, is organizing other presentations for the same day as they work their way back from Columbus. He added that there will be more in the weeks to come related to Arbor Day. He also reported that the 4th Grade class from Ord Elementary is scheduled to have a field trip to Pibel Lake and are working to set up something similar with St. Paul.

Bartels added that there are five new signs that will be installed in the Arboretum.

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Flow Meter Cost-Share – Quantity Areas 18,19, & 20

Tylr Naprstek, Assistant General Manager, reported that there are about a dozen fields without meters, and without applications submitted. He added that Harold Benton, Water Resources Technician, has been inspecting meters and is down to a handful remaining.

Naprstek reported that there was a producer irrigating cover crops that did not have a meter on. They were notified, got their documentation taken care of, and a flow meter was installed over the weekend.

Naprstek added that flow meters will be required in Area 19 next year, and 73 cost-share forms have been returned. He stated there have been 818 cost-share applications processed so far.

Recreation Areas

Naprstek reported that he and Kevin Gustafson, District Engineer, attended a BOR collaborative meeting with Nebraska Game and Parks Commission on February 3rd. He said he discussed storm damage and Gustafson discussed the Title 28 road project. Naprstek also reported that Game and Parks is planning to stock fish and have traps set for monitoring zebra mussels. He added that there are currently burn bans at both Davis Creek and Pibel recreation areas.

NRD Field Work

Naprstek reported that static water level readings started last week and that staff has about 500 sites to read. He added that there are a couple of sites that read good last fall but cannot run a tape down now. He stated that new monitoring sites were added as well.

Naprstek also reported that vadose sampling is being done in Nance County around Monroe.

Drought Monitoring

Naprstek reported on the new drought monitoring map which has not changed much for our area. He pointed out that Area 18 is still in “Severe” drought conditions, adding that Area 19 is showing as areas of concern. The rest of the District is showing “Moderate” drought.

Naprstek reported that we have not received any well interference reports with people not being able to pump. We are watching the rivers, which look good overall, adding that the South Loup River is slightly below normal.

Naprstek also reviewed the surface water and instream flow status.

FULLERTON DAM

Callan reported that he and Gustafson met with Fullerton representatives about the dam removal project. He said that the NRD made a 50/50 split proposal on preliminary design and work going forward; however, they countered with a 60/40 split proposal with the NRD carrying the brunt of the expense and a payment schedule for their repayment. Gustafson contacted them to have them come in to visit. He has received a letter back.

R. Vlach asked for thoughts on the matter. Kruse asked where they came up with the 60/40 split. Naprstek stated that was the consensus amongst them of what they wanted it to be, adding that they are working on their wells and other projects at the time so money may be short, adding that they want to make payments over a 3-year period.

Jeremy Eschliman asked about doing a 50/50 split, spread out over 5 years.

Petersen stated that their offer was better than he was expecting, adding that he thought they would need more assistance.

Mohrman commented that we are not the ones initiating the project and that he understands why they want to do it, but they are not sending any representatives and if they do not have money for the study, they are not going to have money for the work.

Bauer asked if this is just design and not construction, to which Callan replied, yes.

Kauk arrived at 4:48 p.m.

Callan stated that there is no commitment for the construction of the project by either party.

Mohrman stated that if they knew they had expenses for other projects, maybe they should have waited to bring it up to the LLNRD. R. Vlach agreed that they should have had a better plan before coming to the Board, adding that it may be cheaper to not remove the dam and just secure it, but thinks we would like to be part of the design process.

Gustafson stated there is debris, pillars and walls and he does not know if structures will need to be taken out above water, below water, or both.

Callan stated that with our offer of 50/50 and their counter offer of 60/40, he thinks the difference would be about \$25,000 for them.

Podolak asked what Callan thought the project would cost. Callan replied that he did not know.

Podolak added that we do not know what we are getting into and it may get big. Callan stated that a design was needed to be able to look into grants and funding sources.

Knutson asked if the County has any interest in the project. Callan stated that the County has been invited to meetings but they have not responded.

Smith stated that it deals with the population of their county, but it is disappointing that they have not responded. R. Vlach added that he would like to see their input but thinks that we need to move forward with design at their counter offer and make it clear that construction will be different.

Mohrman stated that as far as flood projects, our usual projects are better than this one as far as public benefit.

Jeremy Eschliman motioned, seconded by Bartak, to request Fullerton to come to the Committee meeting before any official action is taken and then discussion on monetary split will take place later.

Smith stated that we should have the County get involved. R. Vlach stated that we can send an official letter requesting them to attend our meeting. Callan added that we had sent them a notice that we were having a meeting but not sent a letter specifically asking them to be part of the project.

Bauer stated that we need to bear in mind that the design phase must happen to get anything else done and that this step will only delay the process further.

Mohrman stated that we are not wrong to hold out if they are going to ask for more.

R. Vlach stated that he knows it is a 30-day delay, but it will give the entities time to sit down and talk at the Program/Projects meeting, then come to the Board, and the Board can get a feeling for the project, adding that with discussion, there may be better understanding.

Callan added that at the first meeting he and Gustafson attended, they told the City that the NRD was not going to take over their project, but that we would help them.

Mohrman stated that we could ask for information on how they will pay for their portion.

Bartak asked if there are any grants available for this type of project right now. Callan replied that he does not think there are any, but there may be some coming up.

Mohrman asked if we can request financials be brought to the meeting. Those are items that could be discussed at the Programs/Projects meeting.

Vote was held. Motion carried by electronic vote, all present voting yes.

WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE

GWQMA – Pre-Complaints, Complaints, Violations

Nitsch reported that an update was given on groundwater quality management area compliance stating that pre-complaints, complaints, and violations were being reviewed, adding that producers have only a limited number of compliance violations. Common issues include late or missing reports, insufficient soil sampling, and improper nitrogen application.

NUE – Corn Board Program

Nitsch reported that an update was given on the Nitrogen Use Efficiency program, founded by the Corn Board. He added that May 15th is the application deadline and that the funds cannot be combined with Nitrogen Reduction Act Incentive funds.

Callan reiterated that they are not stackable.

It was added that the Committee discussed revisions to the Groundwater Management Plan Rules and Regulations, particularly as it relates to Phase 2 requirements, adding that staff

has suggested changes to the soil sampling timelines, sampling depth, allowable pre-season nitrogen application rates, etc.

Groundwater Management Plan – Stakeholder Meeting #2

Nitsch reported that the second Groundwater Management Plan stakeholder meeting held in February had good attendance and active engagement on water quality issues. The next stakeholders meeting will be held June 23rd at 4:30 p.m. at NRD Headquarters, and will focus on water quantity and triggers, i.e., drought, reservoirs, recharge, etc.

Irrigation Violations

It was reported that seven irrigation violations were identified using aerial imagery from the 2025 season and that notification letters were sent. Producers have been working with the LLNRD on compliance.

Naprstek updated that there are only two violations that need resolution.

City of Fullerton – Well Decommissioning Project

Progress on the City of Fullerton Well Decommissioning Project was reviewed at the Committee meeting, including mapping of wells slated for decommissioning and locations for the new municipal wells.

Nitsch reported that one test well for the city of Fullerton is being converted to a monitoring well to collect both water quality and quantity data.

Vadose Sampling Update

Nitsch reported that field work has begun and that the NRD hosted two nitrate management open houses in St. Edward and Fullerton, adding that there was better attendance at St. Edward, but that good dialogue and information was presented.

PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE

Loup City Dewatering Well Discussions

Kruse reported that the city of Loup City has a couple of wells used to lower groundwater, adding that they pump water directly into the Middle Loup River. It was reported that they are investigating the possibility of capturing the discharge water and collecting it for possible groundwater recharge and other beneficial uses.

Mud Creek WFPO

Kruse reported that the Mud Creek WFPO contains two flood protection dams designed for protection on the project. He added that currently the WFPO funds that originally were

available are now unavailable and that the project has been going on for a number of years. He also added that we are looking at other options and upper dam level to see if there is something we can do on our own.

Mira Creek WFPO

Kruse reported that the project looks at channel cleanout and widening for flood protection and that, again, the WFPO funds are currently not available. He added that there is discussion about funds through Senator Deb Fischer to complete the project, so we will look at pursuing funds there.

Kruse motioned, seconded by Smith, to communicate with Senator Deb Fischer on requesting funding.

Callan added that a letter has been drafted with JEO for the \$16 million project. Gustafson added that it includes funding from design through construction.

Vote was held, motion carried. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Bartak, Bauer, Jeremy Eschliman, Kauk, King, Knutson, Kruse, Mohrman, Nitsch, Petersen, Podolak, Smith, R. Vlach. Director not present for vote: DeBower. Directors absent: James Eschliman, Shadle, Thoene, A. Vlach.

Pibel Wetland 319 Grant

Kruse reported that there are Wetland 319 grant funds available for the Clear Creek Augmentation Project, on the property the NRD purchased. He added that we are looking at water control shut off to retain some of the water.

Gustafson added that we are potentially looking at a shallow water excavation off channel which is a local structure within the channel to raise the groundwater level in the area. He also stated that we would try to incorporate water level monitoring as part of it.

Naprstek added that it will work with the settling basin at the end of Pibel Lake.

One of the main things is getting partnerships. Callan stated our cut in it, without any other partners, will be \$200,000. The grant is for \$500,000, with a 60/40 split.

Kruse motioned, seconded by King, to proceed with the Wetland 319 grant for Pibel. Motion carried by electronic vote, all present voting yes.

NRD Recreation DRAFT Rules

Kruse reported that the Committee discussed drafts to the recreation rules. He added that we will have to hold a hearing for approval and that a more solid draft will be brought back for recommendation for the Board.

Village of Spalding Pool Project

Kruse reported that the Village of Spalding is requesting \$20,000 for their new swimming pool project and that they will come to the next Committee meeting to discuss their request.

Kamp Kaleo Playground Project

Kruse reported that Kamp Kaleo, where ACE Camp is held, is doing a playground renovation project and has requested \$10,000 from the NRD. He added that this was their first time, and they have been asked to come to a meeting.

Monroe Area Recharge Project

Kruse reported that the Committee and staff are reviewing potential recharge areas.

Sargent Flood Project

Kruse reported that staff has been collaborating with landowners as the project moves forward.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Loup City Dewatering Well

Gustafson reported that he and Jason Moudry, Water Programs Specialist, met with Kevin Holcomb, water operator for Loup City, and viewed the location of dewatering wells. He stated that they have two wells – what they call the “Shop” well and the “10th Street” well and are using those to dewater, or lower, their local groundwater in town. The shop well is using their storm sewer system to move water out. He stated that the 10th Street well has a dedicated pipe and outlet that drops water upstream of Highway 58, emptying into the same creek and into the Loup River. We may be looking at some options using pumping methods to help with the problem.

Smith asked how much water they need to get rid of. Gustafson replied that what they pumped into the river was eight times what they used domestically. If we can use that water somewhere else, it would be better.

Jeremy Eschliman asked about the benefit from pumping vs. capturing somewhere else down the stream. Moudry replied that they are in a ‘must pump’ situation or they have water in basements.

Mud Creek WFPO

Gustafson showed the site for the Mud Creek project. He reported that he got notified yesterday that Mud Creek was funded for design through NRCS. He added that we do not have an agreement in hand yet but were informed that money was available. Gustafson stated he will

be getting the agreements signed. He added that there was money returned from projects in other states that freed up money allowing for three new projects being funded in Nebraska.

Mira Creek WFPO

Gustafson reported that the deadline for getting the request into Senator Fischer's office had been moved to March 26th and that letters were submitted on Thursday, adding that it is a \$14 million request for both design and construction.

VARIANCE COMMITTEE

Ron Reece Variance

Smith reported that this was Ron Reece's second time in front of the Committee. He added that they are all in agreement to use the original allotment on the well and that there are currently 64 acres that will be expanded to 69 to complete the pivot.

Smith motioned, seconded by Kruse, to approve the Ron Reece variance request.

Amsberry asked if he would be limited to seven inches on his pivot. Smith replied yes. There will be no carryover from year to year.

Kauk asked who would monitor that. Callan replied that we will monitor the same as with how Rod Psota's is.

Smith added that he will be using telemetry.

Vote was held. Motion was carried by electronic vote, all present voting yes.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Resolution: Michael Lorenz – 21 Years of Service

Callan announced that, after 21 years of service, Mike Lorenz was retiring.

Callan introduced the following resolution for consideration:

*RESOLUTION: MIKE LORENZ – 21 YEARS OF SERVICE
Adopted by the Board of Directors
Lower Loup Natural Resources District
March 26, 2026*

WHEREAS, the Lower Loup Natural Resources District has provided long-standing service in the conservation of natural resources to the residents of the Loup River Basin,

WHEREAS, Michael Lorenz provided 21 years of exemplary service and valuable advice to the District as the Agronomist in Fullerton, and

WHEREAS, Michael Lorenz served the citizens of the District with agronomy knowledge while contributing to a successful program that protects the natural resources of the District

BE IT RESOLVED, by unanimous vote, the Board of Directors of the Lower Loup Natural Resources District extends recognition and commendation to Michael Lorenz.

Smith motioned, seconded by Knutson, to adopt Resolution: Mike Lorenz – 21 Years of Service. Motion carried by electronic vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Bartak, Bauer, DeBower, Jeremy Eschliman, Kauk, Knutson, Kruse, Mohrman, Nitsch, Petersen, Podolak, Smith, R. Vlach. Director not present for vote: King. Directors absent: James Eschliman, Shadle, Thoene, A. Vlach.

Callan presented Lorenz with a photo and a plaque with the resolution inscribed on it. Lorenz thanked everyone.

Water Strategies

No update.

Litigation

No update.

New Hires

Callan reported that there are ads for the two Agronomist positions to replace Derek Vogt and Mike Lorenz and that there will be NRCS summer interns coming in soon.

Non-action Reports

Callan reported that our Federal Audit was completed and that the official report will be back shortly.

Callan asked for any discussion about the Director's Retreat, adding that the topics discussed will get brought back to the Board. He stated that those present went through the Board responsibilities; rules and regulations, adding that there will be changes coming with the timing of soil samples, etc.; and that Bartels went over outreach activities.

Ryan Callan's science class demonstrated experiments relating to some of our vadose project work.

Kruse stated there was a lot of information and that he appreciated staff and others putting it together.

R. Vlach stated it was a good day, and time well spent.

NARD REPORT

Callan stated he does not think there has been a meeting since the Legislative Conference.

NRC REPORT

Amsberry reported that the next meeting will be on the April 29th in Kearney and that there will be seven spots open in May.

ANNOUNCEMENTS / FUTURE MEETING TOPICS

Callan stated that the Governor's Task Force met yesterday and the report has been uploaded to the iPads.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman R. Vlach declared the meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

Roster for attendance of this meeting and tally of votes cast on motions at this meeting are being filed with the official minutes of this meeting at the Lower Loup Natural Resources District's Headquarters Office, 2620 Airport Drive, Ord, Nebraska. Publication notification of this meeting was made via a newspaper in each county within the district. The next Board of Directors meeting will be held April 23, 2026, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

Larry Mohrman
Secretary